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"EDUCATIONAL, VOCATIONAL AND POLICY LANDSCAPES IN EUROPE"

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This submitted final report “Educational, vocational and policy landscapes in Europe” describes the various educational regimes at work in the countries or territories investigated and shows the analyses of the standard paths of education and transition to employment and the labour market.

The twelve national research teams analysed how these educational regimes integrate the labour-market requirements of a knowledge-based economy inter alia with respect to the factors of migration, technological change and aging societies; considered the issue of civic engagement and participation in community life at large; and assessed the concern for a balance between private life and working life.

Each partner identified the people who fail in the standard routes of education and transition to employment and the reasons for their problems; described how various educational regimes cope with them; analysed the provisions for school leavers, dropouts and people with problems in entering the labour market; and therefore added knowledge to the debates about educational regimes.

Hence, the aim of this report was not only to describe the educational and training systems, but also to see how they situate themselves in the nexus "education-employment-community/social integration". As a result, the educational system will not be considered as a self-contained institutional device, but as part and parcel of a more encompassing configuration in which initial and lifelong training are envisaged together as being required to integrate the economic, political, social, etc. concerns of a knowledge-based society.

Outline of insights

Holger Ziegler

Even though the situations in the countries and the proportions of young persons in vulnerable life situations after compulsory school differ to considerable degree, the reports make obvious that the identified "problem groups" are largely similar. They are

1. Young persons with parents of low educational background respectively young persons from low social class or manual working class;
2. Young persons with a migrant background (most typically from eastern and southern countries);
3. Young persons with actual or ascribed non-conformist behaviours;
4. Sometimes but not always and not primarily the major target group encompasses also young persons with physical or mental handicaps.

These young persons might be classified as "unemployed", as "socially excluded" or just as "pupils".
These classifications are not only rhetorical. Rather they tend to covariate with different social, educational and labour market philosophies and tasks.

Generally there are four major tasks which may be more or less found in every educational and labour market regime. However these tasks vary in their compositions and their relative significance in the different regimes.
A *first* general task is the attempt to remedy failures of the educational system. Typically the aim is to provide people with acknowledged certificates and qualifications. A challenge to achieve the task to remedy failures of the educational system is the unequal disposedness of given educational, vocational and labour market systems to acknowledge certifications which might not be acquired in the originally intended pathways.
A *second* task, which is gaining prominence within the investigated educational, vocational and labour market regimes, is to improve the employability of the young persons. The focus here is the transition to employment. This focus is particularly important in the context of "activating" social policy respectively "active labour market policies".
The *third* task is to improve the transition into vocational educational training (VET). This focus is different from a focus on the transition to employment. In particular in educational, vocational and labour market regimes where VET is not primarily provided by the state but rather by the market or in terms of a "dual system" it seems to make difference whether policies give priority to transition into employment or into VET.
A *fourth* task is to avoid "social exclusion". This includes the other three tasks but is seemingly broader. Beyond an employment or educational focus, such policies account for a range of problems, stresses and strains of the young persons.

The composition of the tasks and their order of priority are approximately reflected in the general orientations of the regimes.
A first axis of differentiation is whether the regimes are publicly provided "universal" systems or "dual systems" which combine on-the-job training in terms of apprenticeships in a company with vocational and technical education and training in school systems.

In particular with respect to regimes that give priority to employment over education and training there are also systems which are to a high degree market-based. In some cases also quasi-markets are installed which for instance use voucher systems. Most typically the market based systems seem to be least universalistic.
The universalism in the regimes might be further differentiated with respect to the degree of stratification. Even though a regime might be formally universalistic (for instance in providing vocational training for all) the kind of training might be highly stratified.

With respect to the focus on education there are typically two clusters of strategies. The first cluster of strategies (most typically in the Scandinavian countries) tries to *bring young persons "back to the main road"* of the educational and vocational systems. The second cluster of strategies tries to *create "new" or "alternative roads"*. However the problem of the second strategies might be that the "alternative roads" are sometimes hardly acknowledged and/or have a lower quality than the "main road" education. Thus there is a certain correspondence between the degree of universalism and the strategy of bringing young persons "back" to the "educational main" road.
The strategies of bringing young persons back to the educational main road depend on "brigdes" from different (and stratified) tracks or pathways to the other. Whereas in some regimes such bridges may exist only formally with rather few young persons being able to shift from one track to the other, other systems try to get more or less all young persons back to the "main road".
Another difference of the regimes reflects the question until what age of the young persons the attempts of repairing or compensating failures of the pathways of the main road respectively the re-entry to main road continue.
A second axis of differentiation between the regimes reflects the composition of the strategic and operational significance of national, regional or local levels as well as the convergence of these levels. In particular on the local level the differentiation between state and market may fall short, as a number of for-profit and not-for-profit private and third sector institutions are involved.

Generally there is a tendency that as well on the national as on the local level more or less fragmented markets of training emerge. At the same time however there is not a decreasing but rather an increasing influence of state level institutions in terms of funds, tendering and regulations. What is decentralised is rather the practical provision of programmes and services. This tendency is accompanied by an amplification of managerialistic modes oriented towards complying with external key performance indicators at the expense of professional scopes of discretion and latitude of judgement but also at the expense of participatory decision-making.

Beyond privileging education or employment the tasks of the different national systems differ with respect to the degree to which they give priority to enhancing competitiveness or ideas of social justice.

Depending on the prioritising of the tasks and their general orientations the educational and labour market regimes aim at remedy different system failures. These failures are broadly speaking

- failures of the main educational pathway, in particular with respect to young persons with no (or very low) certificate of the educational system or so called “school drop-outs”,
- failures in the transition for employment, and
- failures to enter the next step of VET.

Even though system failures seemingly play a role, the general strategy seems to be the attempt to adapt people to (labour) market demands rather than the other way round. This becomes particularly apparent in the emphasis of individual case management and the quest to find individualised solutions.

With respect to the individualised solutions the regimes vary in the degree to which they conceptualise qualification as a public good and to which they stress rights, opportunities and responsibilities of companies or the duties and responsibilities of the individual young persons. In particular those regimes which stress the latter, tend to ascribe comparatively high significance to aspects of “moral education” i.e. to “secondary virtue”, work ethics etc. Regimes which stress rights and opportunities of young persons and responsibilities of companies are typically oriented in enhancing both choice of the young persons and an idea of social equality. Against the background of a decreasing significance of companies in providing vocational education attempts of enhancing significant choice seem to be more and more restricted.

Institutional Mapping and Basic Ideas of the Case Study. National Report on France

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INTRODUCTION

In French society, initial education has a symbolic value which is larger than the basic objective of education and training. Based on republicans principles of equal opportunities and social mobility, initial education has, in France, a huge responsibility which consists in training and educating but also in ranking people. The latter point gives initial education a very high social importance (Verdier, 2000). Such principals refer to a conception of upward mobility more focused on changes between generations than during one's working life. Thus, for decades, there has been a general consensus in French society to always invest more and more in initial education as a key to individual and collective future success. So, since the middle of the 1970's, initial education has taken a new dimension as protection against unemployment risks.

From that point of view, the financing of initial education, rough five times higher than that of continuing training (respectively 6.9% of GDP and 1.5 %, in 2009), reflects the gap which separates initial and continuing training in their role within professional trajectories. The educational level among the French population is close to the European average, substantial progress having been made in the past 20 years. In 2006, 83.2% of the population aged 20-24 was qualified to ISCED level 3 (upper secondary education), compared with 75% in the EU-15 and 77.9% in the EU-25.

In France the education and lifelong learning system may be seen as a chronology of individual paths, as shown by Möbus, Quéré and Thery (2007):

- youth is dedicated to initial training under the central government responsibility
- the school - work transition may be accompanied by training sessions if deemed necessary under the responsibility of regional governments.
- adult life, dedicated to work under the responsibility of companies, may require training sessions during employment (generally during working hours)
- if the employment path is interrupted, job seekers may benefit from training courses aimed at helping them return to work under the responsibility of the unemployment scheme known in France as Pole Emploi (if it pays unemployment benefits during this period), the state or regional government (if the Allocation Spécifique de Solidarité is granted), or even the General Council (if on income support RMI).

The way the educational system and the labour market are set up has resulted in a sharper divide here, in France, than elsewhere in Europe, between the study period and working life. In 2004, however, the French continuing vocational training (CVT) system underwent some major reform. The measures adopted, which focused for example on an individuals' right to vocational training and "professionalizing periods", have transformed the relationships between learning and working. These measures do not yet suffice to shift the frontiers of continuing vocational training but set France on the lines initiated by the European Union with a view to creating a continuum of lifelong education and training.

Firstly, we will present the general and vocational initial education system (principles, results, structure). Secondly, we will focus on school to work transition (youth position on the labour market, youth unemployment and employment and training schemes). In the third part, continuing vocational training and recent reform in that field will be presented. The fourth part characterises French Life Long Learning regimes following Verdier (2009), explains how French reform in the education field take into account European references, and identifies main future challenges for the French system. Finally, the fifth part

emphasises the question of the early school leavers and dropouts when the sixth one presents the French WP4 case study.

1. Initial education and Training: main features of the institutional context in France

1.1. The evolution of the French initial education and training system

From the 1960s until the mid-1990s**,** the French educational system experienced major growth as a result of the extension of the length of the schooling period, a massive influx into secondary education and then into higher education. Nowadays, nearly all the individuals of a school age group reach the first stage in secondary education, twenty years before it was the case for two young people out of three. In comparison with other European countries, the French education system displays several specific features: the principle of the "single college" for lower secondary school without differentiated tracks since 1975; a single teaching body managed at the national level for lower and upper secondary school (college and *lycées*); an identical syllabus and very similar teaching methods for vocational and general training paths; the norm of full time education.

The expected number of years schooling for a 5 year-old child in 2000 was 16,5 years full-time and 0 year part-time in France; 14,6 years fulltime and 4,3 years part-time in the UK (OECD, 2000). Although the share of pupils occupying jobs while studying is growing and concerns nowadays more than 10% of young people into secondary education, the combination of training and employment out of apprenticeship programmes is concentrated on higher education students (Céreq, 2005).

Table 1- Pupils and Trainees in Education in 2009-2010

Pupils and Trainees in Education in 2009-2010	14 853 214
Primary Schools	6 647 091
Collèges General and Technical Lycées Vocational Lycées Trainees in Apprenticeship Others (Agriculture, Health …)	3 206 112 1 431 335 694 282 331 600 226 718
Higher Education	2 316 103

Source: Ministry of Education (http://www.education.gouv.fr)

After decades of continuing progress therefore, the trend of increasing education appears to have stopped: the increase in pupils and student population has declined firstly, because of a demographic decline in the school age population, however qualitative shifts are operating as well. Nowadays, almost all the school age generation complete secondary school, the average age of leaving education is 21, but the proportion of pupils going on to take the *baccalaureate* has remained stable since 1995. Access by a school age generation to the level of *baccalaureate* or equivalent doubled between 1980 and 1994; in recent years it remains at around 70%.

1.2. Principal characteristics of Initial education and training

In France, school is compulsory between the ages of six and 16, although most of children start nursery school when they are three years old. At the age of six they enter primary school, which they attend for five years. After that, normally at around age 12, all students go on junior high school (*college*) for four years, numbered, in reverse order, years 6, 5, 4 and 3. At the end of "year 3", students receive a national diploma (*the brevet des colleges*) based on their marks during that year and in a national examination.
On leaving junior high school, usually at age 15, students are steered towards either:

- a general and technical senior high school, to spend 3 years working for a general or technical diploma
- or a vocational high school to study over 3 years for a secondary vocational diploma[1]. These courses always include a work placement and they are designed to make the students directly employable. Students who chose this vocational route can also continue their studies within the framework of an apprenticeship.

At tertiary level, students have a choice of both general courses and technical and vocational courses at universities or in the *grandes écoles.*
Secondary-school courses comprise both compulsory and optional subjects, including exploration of vocational options. No vocational education as such is delivered at lower secondary school (*collège*) but there are number of courses aimed at introducing students to the world of work. Block-release work-and-school schemes are available form "year 4" onwards to give students experiencing difficulty at school some practical experience of a working environment and an introduction to different trades.
On leaving junior high school, students can choose one of three routes: general, technical or vocational. Each has particular aims and characteristics. The general route aims to prepare the great majority of students who obtain their senior school diploma for further studies. The technical route, which is specifically French, prepares students on the basis of their vocational aptitudes for high-level technical courses of at least two years duration. The vocational route enables students to acquire skills and know-how in the work-oriented environment of a vocational high school run by the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Agriculture or in an apprentice training centre. In recent years, some 37% of students in their final year of junior high school chose the vocational route, with 26.5% going on to vocational high school, 3.7% to agriculture high school and 6.7% into apprenticeship, while the others continued general schooling.
Initial vocational education and training is the first stage in lifelong vocational training. It take two forms:

- Vocational education inside the school system: vocational courses combine general education with a high level of specialised technical knowledge. Aiming primarily to prepare students for a trade, they also enable them to pursue further studies. In facts, an increasing part of students purse their studies in tertiary education. Vocational courses lead to the award of national diploma, attesting to vocational qualification to level IV with the secondary vocational diploma. They include compulsory periods of workplace training, for between 3 and 10 weeks annually. Students are able to switch between learning routes: they can move from general and technical education into vocational training or from vocational to technical

[1] Before 2008, in vocational high school, students spend 2 years working for a certificate of professional aptitude (CAP) or a vocational education certificate (BEP).

studies.

- Apprenticeship, during which apprentice, who has a contract of employment with a company, trains alternately in the workplace and in an apprentice training centre (*CFA*). Regarded as a form of initial training, it can prepare trainees for all secondary-level certificates, for tertiary-level qualifications or for vocational qualifications listed in the National Vocational Certification Register. Traditionally, it is craft-based sectors that make most use of this form of training. But in recent years, service sectors hugely increase their use of apprenticeship, in parallel with the increase of the share of women among apprentices. Funding of the apprenticeship system comes from the apprenticeship tax paid by private-sector employers (except those in the professional and farming sectors), and from contributions from the State and the regions. Figures of apprenticeship contracts have increased since 2003. In 2008, 300 000 news contracts had been signed.

The grading and diploma structure at tertiary level is changing following implementation of what has been dubbed the LMD ("*licence/master/doctorat*") reform, bringing the French university system into line with that of other European countries on the basis of a three-cycle system:

- Diplomas obtained after two years' post-baccalaureate study, equivalent to 120 ECTS credits and including the tertiary technical diploma (DUT) and the advanced technical diploma (BTS);
- Diplomas obtained after three years' post-baccalaureate study, equivalent to 180 ECTS credits and including the bachelors' degree and tertiary vocational diploma;
- The "masters", a degree obtained after five years' post-baccalaureate study and equivalent to 300 ECTS credits: a vocational masters degree prepare students directly for work, and a research masters degree leads on to what is normally three-year PhD course;
- The doctorate, a post-masters qualification equivalent to 480 ECTS credits.

(CEDEFOP, 2008)

Financing of initial educational training in 2009 (EUR **132 billion,** 6,9 % of GDP)

(Source : Ministry of Education (http://www.education.gouv.fr)

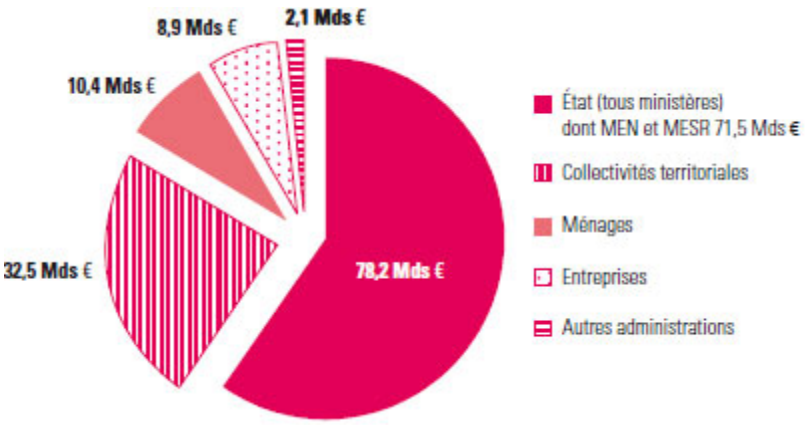


Table 2 - Institutional schooling competencies in France

Competencies	Level of education						
	Pre-compulsory schooling	**Primary school**	**Lower secondary (collège)**	**Upper secondary (lycée d'enseignement général)**	**Vocational education (lycée professionnel)**	**Public Apprenticeship (Centre de formation d'apprentis - CFA)**	**University**
Program definition	State	State	State	State	State	State	University
Diploma definition			State	State	State and social partners (CPC)	State and social partners	State
Diploma delivery			State	State	State	State	State
Building maintenance	Municipalities	Municipalities	*Département*	Region	Region	Region	State (private financing now possible)
HRM teachers	State	State	State	State	State	CFA - State	State
HRM administrative staff	State	State	State	Region	Region	CFA	State – University
HRM technical staff	Municipalities	Municipalities	*Département*	Region	Region	CFA - State	State - University

Source : http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid219/les-domaines-de-competences.html

2. School-to-work transition in France

This section outlines and discusses the main features of the current French situation related to the transition to work for young people. In terms of transition from school to work, the diagnostic might be that after seven years on the labour market, young people would have finished with school-to-work transition and started forging a career. But in France, school-to-work transition is far from being immediately achieved by all, even when the economic situation is favourable (§2.1). In France, as elsewhere in Europe, youth unemployment is high. Nevertheless, the traditional youth unemployment measures do not enable to put in prospect the figures for youth unemployment with their problems of access to the labour market (§ 2.2). The passage between school-to-work transition and starting a career can follow many different patterns (§ 2.21). At one end of the scale, higher educational graduates settle down more quickly into permanent employment, as well as achieving more favourable situations in terms of their positions and wage levels At the other end, young people with no diplomas are highly exposed to economic downturns and many of them are still looking for steady jobs after seven years on the labour market (§ 2.22). After outlining these main features, this section will describe the labour market policies for unemployment youths, i.e. employment and training schemes (§2.3).

2.1. After seven years on the labour market, the path to permanent employment is not yet at an end

As only one-third of young people enter their first job with a permanent contract, employment on fixed term contract is becoming the norm for new entrants on the labour market –- and it remains at a high level three years after entering the labour market: one quarter for the working cohort as a whole, more than half of employment for young people with no qualification and one third for school leavers with secondary qualifications (Marchal and al., 2004). Seven years after leaving school, permanent employment is the dominant status, it seems then that experience on the labour market pays off in term of access to internal labour markets with stable jobs and decrease in transition from employment to unemployment.

Table 3: School-to-work transition for Generation 98

Situation for Generation 98 on the labour market	1st year	3rd year	5th year	7th year
Proportion in Employment	74	83	85	86
- *permanent*	*50*	*69*	*80*	*85*
- *non permanent*	*50*	*31*	*20*	*15*
Annual Transition Rate from employment to unemployment (%)	18	13	11	9
Proportion in employment during 12 months continuously (for those in employment)	44	71	76	79
Proportion in employment but looking for another job	*na*	25	19	17

Source: Generation 98 Survey in Couppié, Gasquet, Lopez (2007)

2.2. Youth unemployment figures mask the great diversity of individual trajectories which depend on the level of education and vocational training achieved

A young person on four would be unemployed. This figure often advanced in the media causes social indignation and political mobilization. It however constitutes an erroneous measure of youth unemployment. The unemployment rate of the 16-24 years old, in the ILO sense of the term, is indeed of 23,3% in the first quarter 2010 but it relates to a part only of the young population. In this age group 28% of the individuals work and 8,5% are unemployed. The others, nearly two thirds, are still studying. Calculation thus relates to a third of the young people, those which left most precociously the education system, generally without any qualification or with a diploma of first level (CAP, BEP, general or technological Baccalauréat - school leaving certificate).

In order to assess in a precise way youth unemployment, it should be put in prospect with the problems of access to the labour market of young people. It is what do the “Generation” surveys of CEREQ, when they observe the entry in the working life of 700.000 young people at the end of their initial training.

When observed three years after the end of the studies in 2001, 2004 and 2007, the average unemployment rate of a generation of “beginners” is respectively of 13% (2001), 16% (2004) and 14% (2007). The results 2010 should not show a significant evolution. These results in particular allow measuring youth unemployment according to several parameters: the edu-

cation level, gender, national origins, place of residence. It appears that the so-called "over-unemployment" of young people is a much targeted phenomenon. Unemployment does not affect or little the school leavers with higher education. In the same way, the technological or professional graduates of industrial spheres know an unemployment rate equivalent to that of the whole of the working population.

Quite a large proportion of the higher educational graduates started off in a lower position than that to which their educational qualifications could have entitled them, but their levels of employment improved during the first three years, as if the healthy economic situation pertaining at the end of the 1990s enabled them to make their way up the corporate ladder or to leave the early "stand-by" positions for better jobs in other companies (Couppié and al. 2007). Against that, it might be said that the situation of the young not graduates, and, to a lesser extent, that of the CAP, the general and professional graduates tertiary is very difficult. Unemployment rate at three years is of 30% for non graduates against between 14 and 21% for the others school leavers. This situation precedes a durable maintenance in marginality. Ten years after their leaving school, unemployment of non graduates of the Generation 1998 is twice higher than the average unemployment of the whole of the youth working population (20%).

There is not "over-unemployment" of young people but, on the one hand, an elevated level of unemployment in general, and on the other hand, a series of subpopulations which reach employment with no little difficulty: young not graduates, graduate women of either a BEP or a tertiary sector baccalaureat, young residents of urban problem areas (in French ZUS for Zones Urbaines sensibles).

Besides, we have to admit hat the development of block-release training during the 25 last years very little contributed to solve what was to be at the core of the policies to fight against youth unemployment. The contracts of qualification or adaptation very quickly concerned especially person who has passed the baccalauréat or graduates of higher education and, in fact, they declined as soon as specific reductions in charges were reduced (2000).

2.2.1. Those without diploma remain the truth sacrificed vis-à-vis employment

Three main patterns of trajectory are characterised according to the successive situations on the labour market and employment status during the first seven years of working life (Céreq, 2007)

- 60% of the group of school leavers has got rapidly access to stable employment;
- 16% was stabilized in an employment, but more tardily;
- 24% of the other labour entrants, by contrast, was interspersed with long periods of unemployment or inactivity and were rarely employed.

It is about a specific population: those of the young people "without diploma". Leaving without any qualification (failure in the CAP or the baccalauréat for example) remains, again and again the more determining factor describing difficulties of access to employment. This population will have durable problems. They are often worsened by other factors: to be a woman, to result from a formation tertiary, or resulting from immigration or from a district classified in ZUS (Disadvantaged urban area)… For the graduates of the superior, these difficulties exist. But they remain temporary in the large majority of the cases.

By analyzing the process of school-to-work transition of young people over three years, the Generation surveys make it possible to relativize the abrupt statement of fact of an irreme-

diable degradation of the conditions of school to work transition. Initially, the young people employment over-reacts to the economic situation. It is thus not surprising that the crisis touches in priority this population. Then, the first months of the working life do not allow anticipating the result of the school-to-work transition. For thirty years, France has applied a generational flexibility by making young people (and seniors) the variables of adjustment of employment. It is not astonishing that, in economic crisis period, young people entering on the labour market remain apart from employment. Lastly, the first employment occupied by the young people is very massively fixed-term contrac, i.e. CDD (seven cases out of ten). But this kind of entry on the labour market with a precarious status allows nevertheless a faster school-to-work transition. The first employment is in general found in two months. Then, the rate of permanent employment increases very regularly with with the passing of time. Two thirds of young people are concerned after three years of working life. From school-to-work transition remains difficult but not as many as some describe it in most cases.

2.2.2. Those without diploma are the most highly exposed to economic ups and downs

The considerable differences observed between the trajectories of these labour market entrants are partly due to their heterogeneity, and they also refl ect the existence of many different types of labour management practices. The ease and speed with which G98 youths settled down into stable employment depended to a large extent on their diploma levels. Almost 90% of those who had gained third cycle diplomas (corresponding to at least 5 years' study after the baccalauréat) acquired permanent jobs either immediately or a little later, and kept them; whereas only 29% of those with no diplomas followed this pattern. The trajectories of most of the other labour market entrants without diplomas were interspersed with long periods of unemployment or inactivity, and if they did find jobs, they were rarely employed in permanent jobs in the end.

Those with no diplomas were also highly exposed to economic ups and downs. The numbers of those without diplomas who fell into unemployment increased significantly, for example, after the economic downturn of 2001, three years after they had entered the labour market, and these figures remained quite high during the following two years; whereas the numbers of those with diplomas who fell into unemployment decreased steadily during the first four years of active life and stabilised thereafter. The main concern of most young people with no diplomas, whether they were employed or not in 2005, was still finding or keeping a permanent job. Those with the highest diplomas focused more strongly on either developing their career or how to achieve a balance between work and their personal lives.

2.3. Employment and training schemes

Employment or training Schemes exists, in France, both at national and regional level. Since decentralisation laws, Regions had large competencies in the field of vocational training and had launched their own schemes. We do not, here, presented examples of them. The case study (part 6) will come back on that point. In paragraphs below, we present national training and employment schemes.

Since January the first 2010, a new contract had been created the **« unique insertion contract-CUI"**. This contract had two specific forms, one for the private and commercial sector "employment initiative contract -CIE", one for the non commercial sector "employment at-

tending contract-CAE". Its goal is to facilitate transition to work for people without job and presenting social and professional difficulties to access a job. It is not a specific contract for young people but they are eligible to. With this contract, a convention has to be sign between the employer, the employee and the employment public service or the Regional council, depending on the previous situation of people. The CUI takes the form of a specific employment contract, a fix term or open-ended employment contract, with attending and monitoring measures in order to facilitate long term professional insertion of people. Training period could be included in the contract, but it is not compulsory. Within the firm a guardian is appointed, within employment public service a referent person is also appointed. This contract lasts form 6 to 24 month. At the end of the contract, people received a "job experience certificate". Firms received financial supports and are exempted from social taxes.

The "Integration-into-society contract" (*in French, Contrat d'Insertion dans la Vie Sociale-CIVIS*) is devoted to young people aged 16-25 who have particular difficulty in finding work (young people who have been registered as a job-seekers for more than 12 of the previous 18 months) and young people who did not have a secondary school qualification, that is to say *baccalauréat* level. The CIVIS is not an employment contract but a scheme aimed to favour youth professional transition. The aim of this contract is to organise and structure actions in order to realise the insertion project to a sustainable employment. This contract is signed between the youth and a guidance and advice service (*mission locale* or *permanences d'accueil, d'information et d'orientation-PAIO*). Young people in that contract are attending by a referent person and benefit to an individualised program. The first three month are aimed to construct an individualised pathway to labour market, this program include provision for guidance and for obtaining qualifications or work experience. For example, a vocational training course might be proposed, including periods of in-company experience and extra help with job-seeking or the process of starting up a business. The CIVIS last one year and can be reconducted for another year. Young people, older than 18, could receive financial supports from the State, not over 15 euros daily, the amount depends on individual situation.

The professionalisation contract is available in two forms. Depending on the age of the job seeker: 16-25 or over. It is a fixed-term or open-ended employment contract on a basis of alternating period between job and training, comprising professionalisation action. Its objective is to allow employees to acquire a professional qualification and to promote their professional integration or reintegration. The professionalisation component involves periods of work in a company and periods of training, lasting between 6 and 12 months in principle but which can be increased to 24 months by collective branch agreement. The duration of the training must represent 15-25% of the duration of the contract. Beneficiaries aged 16-25 are paid a percentage of the minimum wage (between 55% and 80%) according to their age and their level of training; other employees receive a wage which may not be less than the minimum wage, or than 85% of the minimum set by branch agreement. The contract entitles the employer to an exemption from employer social security contributions when the beneficiary is 16-25.

3. Continuing vocational training

Continuing vocational training is designed for people who are entering or who are already part of the active work force. The starting point of the vocational training system date from a interprofessional national agreement concluded on training and professional development on 9 July 1970 which was transposed into law in the July 1971 Act. It established the founding principles of the vocational training system, introducing the twin principles of social advancement and adaptation of workers to technological change; and establishing training leave for employees and state finance to assist training in the form of subsidies. After tracing the evolution of the CVT system in France over the past nearly 40 years, this section outlines the main features.

3.1. The evolutions of the French System of CVT

The French continuing vocational training system has for nearly 40 years a regulatory framework unrivalled in other European countries. It was launched in 1971 in a context of full employment with the aim of accompanying the social promotion associated with the internal markets of large companies. But the 1971 Act is only a first step toward a series of agreements and discussions about various measures concerning CVT. The purpose here is not to present a history of CVT in France, but rather to show the way it was set up and developed.

The starting point of the vocational training system dates from the social arrangement following extensive industrial action and social disorder in support of political and industrial reforms in 1968. The *Grenelle Agreements* increased wages and social benefits, fixed legislative support for union delegates at the workplace to promote enterprise-level agreements, and invited the social partners to open national, interprofessional negotiation on training and other issues. An interprofessional agreement was concluded on training and professional development on 9 July 1970. The agreement was transposed into law on 16 July 1971 and established the founding principles of the vocational training system, introducing the twin principles of social promotion and adaptation of workers to technological change; and establishing training leave for employees and state finance to assist training in the form of subsidies. The legal obligation for companies to finance continuing training was accompanied by the creation of joint registered collection agencies (Organismes paritaires collecteurs agréés, OPCA), which are bodies collecting and administering funds for this. The 1971 law increased the funds available for training and stimulated an expansion in the volume of training, as companies were encouraged to invest in employee training and apprenticeships (Personaz and Méhaut, 1999). But, training was almost entirely determined by employers with large firms operating internal labour markets (Méhaut, 2005). The majority of workers receiving training were sent on courses by the employer, leaving little scope for individual initiative or co-investment (Aventur and Möbus, 1999; Fournier *et al*, 2002).

From the mid-1970's, as the situation evolved, continuing training progressively became an instrument for combating and preventing unemployment, a characteristic which it had lacked until then (Théry and Möbus, 2007). In the late 1990's, with a persistent level of unemployment and a significant decrease in manufacturing (rapid expansion of the tertiary sector and decrease in the industrial sector), CVT aimed at to accompany transformations in the labour market and companies, marked by a decrease in classic forms of line management in favour of "controlled autonomy". Hence, after 30 years, it was evident that the continuing training system established in 1971 and the internal labour market approach was

inadequate for the new socio-economic conditions and that the system was in need of reform (Merle and Lichtenberger, 2001).

In 1999 the Department of Vocational Training invited the social partners to make continuing vocational training an individual transferable and collectively guaranteed right. Thus, continuing vocational training is regarded as part of individual training paths for which employees themselves are partly responsible.

Following intersectoral negotiations which ended in September 2003, the social partners signed an interprofessional agreement known as 2003 ANI, which served as the basis for the French Law of May 2004 on lifelong learning and social dialogue. The 2003 ANI represents the most important agreement on vocational training since 1970 and marks a major departure from the previous 30 years. The system's foundations were not revolutionised insofar as the 2003 ANI reinforced certain elements of the existing system: it extends the principle of the employer training tax. Nevertheless, it also introduces change in two areas. First, it makes mobility and career development central objectives. The second deep-seated originality is in creating a new individual training right (DIF, *droit individuel de formation*). Hence, the 2003 ANI grants employees a formal right to 20 hours training per year which can be accumulated for up to six years. The individual right to training is therefore a bilateral encouragement to negotiate rather than a personal right. This is a very particular right, which has to be requested and even negotiated, since exercising this new right to training is left to the employees' initiative, but also requires the employer's formal agreement. Beyond the individual right to training, the agreement also aims to provide room for negotiating between employers and employees with regard to the latter's departure for the purpose of training whose goal is competences development. More precisely, for training aimed at developing competences, the law envisages the possibility for employers of encouraging training outside working hours (these hours will be paid at 50% of the employee's net wage) and, for the employee, the possibility of having a formal agreement with regard to the impact of training (eg. in the form of a better job, promotion, wage rise etc.) with an upper limit of 80 hours per year. Within this framework, the agreement specifies that career guidance may provide the means to formalise this agreement between employers and employees. For this purpose the 2003 ANI include the right to a career interview (in French, *entretien professionnel*) at least every 2 years to identify training and development needs, with opportunities to have a *bilan de compétence* drawn up and experiential learning validated and accredited. The mechanisms for this include a training passport and a new system to be developed at sector level for validating experience and issuing certificates. Specific actions are directed at training for employees who have not completed education to the first level of higher education or who have not obtained a recognised qualification, including the right to the equivalent of a maximum of one year study leave to gain qualifications.

In February 2008 the Government began a process of reforming vocational training for private-sector employees and job-seekers. It reviewed various aspects of the system, in order to give individuals more secure career prospects, enabling them to find or return to work quickly; to renovate the financing of training for people in work (reducing the number of bodies collecting contributions); to introduce a training 'savings account' based on the now-"portable" individual entitlement to training (known as the *DIF)*. On 23rd September 2009, the Act on « Life Long Vocational Training and Guidance » was adopted. Among the most significative changes introduced by this act, we can notice: reform of the guidance system towards an extensive use of dematerialized procedures, the definition of quality labels and diversification of school guidance counsellor's recruitment. We should also mention here the

creation of a competencies portfolio for pupils, a new fund aimed at financing security nets during labour market transitions, and a transformation of the region's programming tool (regional plan for developing professional training).

3.2. The specificity of the French continuing vocational training system

The specificity of the French CVT system may be described across eight salient features: (1) the first one relies on the important role played by collective bargaining agreements; (2) CVT depends on a number of different actors defining vocational training policy: central and regional governments, firms and social partners; (3) Unlike the other European systems, companies have an obligation to finance the training of their employees, which means that they are the major contributor financing CVT; (4) In addition its general organisation provides a range of opportunities according to the status of the individuals and their age (employee/unemployed people; young/adult); (5) Access to formal training stands out as an exception; (6) the CVT system benefit to those who might have less need ; (7) The training supply is segmented ; (8) guidance and counselling system. This section develops these eight points.

3.2.1. Important role played by collective bargaining agreements

A first salient feature of the CVT in France relies on the important role played by collective bargaining. Current continuing vocational training provisions are the result of collective agreement between the social partners and of National government initiated laws and decrees.

- At national level, there is a highly developed system for social dialogue over vocational training involving equal representation of employers and trade unions, negotiations on vocational training every 5 years and mechanisms for integrating agreements into legislation. All legislation relating to continuing vocational training derives from National Agreement (ANI) negotiated between the social partners. First, labour organisations negotiate interprofessional agreements at the national level, and then legislators incorporate all or part of these regulations into a law.
- At regional level, the social partners meet with the authorities in Coordination Committees for Regional Apprenticeship and Continuing Vocational Training Programmes (CCPRs, Comités de coordination des programmes régionales), which oversee the harmonization of regional continuing training and apprenticeship policies.
- At sectoral level, the social partners decide funding volume and prioritise certain types of training.
- At enterprise level, social dialogue over training was traditionally rare. The statutory framework that generalises collective agreements throughout a sector was to some extent designed to compensate for weak local institutions of collective bargaining.

3.2.2. A multilevel configuration of actors defining vocational training policy:

The central government, the 26 regional government, companies and social partners all work together in defining vocational training policy.

The Central Government
The central government votes the laws but since 2003 the regional government has the responsibility of implementing vocational training.

The Regional Government
The decentralisation process, which began in the 1980s and was stepped up in the 90s, resulted in the 26 Regional Councils (regions) taking on a central role in vocational training, particularly for young people between the ages of 16 to 25, vocational training interns, and young people working under apprenticeship contracts. The last law of this process, relative to the liberties and to the local responsibilities of August 13th, 2004 strengthens the role of regional councils by widening the regional governments' responsibilities in the vocational training of the unemployed adults. Henceforth Regions define and implement the regional policies of apprenticeship and vocational training, not only for young people, but also for unemployed adults.

Trade Associations and Labour union
They participate in developing continuing vocational training policy and co-operate in its implementation through the creation of bodies which manage and collect specific funds.

Firms
Firms are privileged sites for training, and together with the central and regional government, are the major contributors financing CVT.

3.2.3. Expenditure on vocational training: firms are the major contributor financing CVT

CVT is an important economic activity. Figures place French total expenditure on continuing vocational training and apprenticeship at € 29.8 billion in 2008 (Mainaud, 2010). It remains, around 1.5% of the gross domestic product (GPD). This expenditure is broken down between various funding sources. A third salient feature of the CVT in France is that it is predominantly funded by employers due to their obligation.

The legal obligation for employers to finance vocational training

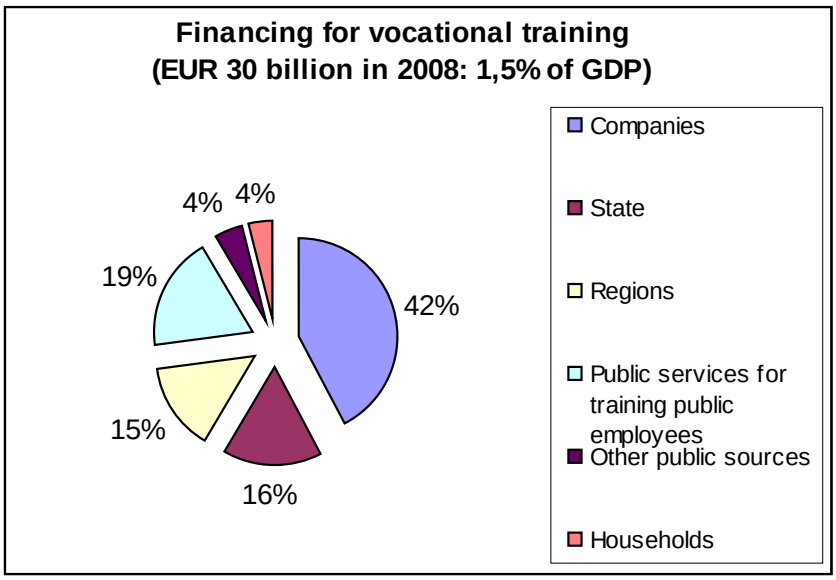
The legal obligation for employers to finance vocational training has been instituted in the July 1971 Act. The company's financial contribution is currently 1.6% of payroll costs for businesses with 20 and more employees, 1.05% for businesses between 10 and fewer than 20 employees and 0.55% from January 2005 for businesses with fewer than 10 employees. Some of these contributions are paid to joint registered collection agencies (OPCA), managed by the social partners. They are in charge of gathering funds for vocational training at company level, pooling funding provided by companies. Company managers and self-employed workers pay a contribution of 0.15% of a special base to funding Joint registered collection agencies.

The central government
The central government, and particularly the ministry of employment, allocates special budgets for training possibilities for job-seekers. It undertakes all or part of training expenditures, as well as the remuneration of trainees. It central government contribution is also devoted to targeted groups: disabled, immigrant workers, incarcerated, illiterates, etc. It also grants to the regional governments.

The regional governments

Each regional government devotes funds both for initiatives for young people and adults and for specific regional training priorities. As a result of successive ways of decentralization since 1982, the regional governments are now the principal funders of CVT for job-seekers.

As mentioned in the figure below, this expenditure is broken down between various funding sources. CVT is financed by the central and regional governments and by companies. Companies are the major contributor financing CVT. Both private and public employers accounted for 61% of the financial burden arising from CVT, which is devoted to their salaried workers. Employers are followed by the authorities who account for a third of CVT expenditures, mainly for young people who experience difficulties in the transition to work and active people looking for an employment. Finally households pay for only a comparatively small share of the total expenditure on continuing vocational training, i.e., 4% of the total expenditure.



Employees from both the private and public sector, self-employed and job seekers benefit from training measures. Employees are the main recipients of CVT funds: 60% of the expenditure is devoted to them. The expenditure for young people is stable and remains 25% while expenditure of job seekers is increasing last years for reaching 12%.

Table 4. Total expenditure by type of beneficiaries, in 2007 (%)

For Young People	**25**
Apprenticeship	16
Alternance training contract / Professionalisation	5
Other training &accompaniment of young people	4
For Job Seekers	**12**
For the active work force of private sector	**43**
For the active work force of public sector*	**19**
Investment**	1
Total	**100**

Source: Budget Plan 2010. * Except for investments, ** including investments for public services agents.

3.2.4. Training measures are based on the status of the individuals and their age

A fourth salient feature of the CVT in France is that self-employed workers, job-seekers benefit from training measures based on their status and their age. Hence people can access training in different ways.

Continuing Vocational Training for people in work

Whatever they work, people in work can benefit from CVT during their career through three ways. They can benefit within the framework of (1) the company training plan, (2) the individual training leave (CIF), (3) the individual training right benefit (DIF). In addition, either workers or employers can initiative use of professionalisation course.

- *The annual training plan*, drawn up by the company, describes the entire annual training programme that the employer intends to develop at his own initiative, even if the plan is subject to consultation with the works council. The employee undergoing training is occupied on a professional task and is paid by the company. An employee's refusal exposes him / her to redundancy.
- *The Training Individual Leave (CIF)* is by virtue a true individual right for working employees, to long-term training leave, defined according to their personal project. It allows an employee to follow a training course of his or her choice during working hours, separate from those included in the company's training plan. On average it lasts for one year. The employee is paid (from 80% to 100% of the basic salary) during the leave of absence. He or she has the right to return to the company. As part of personal leave for training, an employee's access to training is on the initiative and under the responsibility of the employee. The right to training under the 1971 law (which was only effective from 1982) operates through the CIF whereby individuals apply for finance from FONGECIF: the decision depends upon the priorities established by the social partners and only a proportion of requests are supported due to budgetary limitations. At their own initiative, employees can access also the leave for validation of experience (*Congés pour la Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience*: CVAE) or the skill-assessment leave (in French *Congé de Bilan de Compétences*)

With regard to funding available, in 2009, 40 000 employees benefit from personal leave for training while 5 million employees gained access to training within the framework of the training plan. Hence, almost all training was on the initiative and under the responsibility of employers.

- *The individual training right: DIF* (*Droit Individuel de Formation*) is an innovation introduced by the 2003 ANI concerns the new. The 2003 ANI awards employees a theoretical right to 20 hours training per year which can be accumulated for up to six years. Once specific training is agreed between the individual and the employer, the latter bears the direct training costs and pays 50 per cent of normal earnings for the training hours outside working time. Thus there is a degree of co-investment (the employee is effectively investing half the time spend on off-the-job training) and individualization but trade union influence is maintained through collectively negotiated rules which determine issues such as sector priorities. Law voted in May 2004 now states that under specific conditions, vocational training financed by firms can take place outside people's working hours, and that trainees in this framework will be entitled to company allowances amounting to half their normal salary. This gives employees a much more active role: they can either take the initiative of undergoing CVT in the framework of individuals' right to vocational training (DIF), or they can reach an agreement with their employers as to what CVT they can undergo in order to develop their competences. In 2009, almost 6% of employed workforce was trained under the DIF. The number of both employees and companies involved in this scheme is growing regularly: in 2009, 24% of companies used it, compared to 6% in 2005 and 14% in 2006.
- *Professionalisation period* is another innovation introduced by the 2003 ANI, which precise that each workers or employers can initiate use of the professionalisation course. The objective is to enable people to obtain a recognised qualification. It combines general, vocational and technical learning with the acquisition of skills through experience within the company of one or more types of work related to the qualifications required. In the private sector, this scheme is funded from compulsory contributions by employers. The Joint registered collection agencies responsible financed 400 038 periods of training time in 2006. Most of them were short-term (64 % entailing fewer than 40 hours of training) although in 4 % of cases more than 300 hours were involved. More than 47 % of employees taking training time worked for companies with a workforce of more than 500.

Measures to help job seekers

Mainly based on regional government funding, continuing vocational training for job-seekers takes two main forms: training courses (funded by regional government) and individual employment contracts with a training component. The situation of job-seekers depends on their status, i.e. whether they are or not covered by the unemployment insurance.

Training courses: various ways exist according to job seeker status, i.e. whether they are or not covered by the unemployment insurance.

- If they have been in paid work for at least six of the previous 22 months, job-seekers come under the unemployment insurance system. This means that they receive a benefit payment for a limited period: namely, the return-to-work allowance

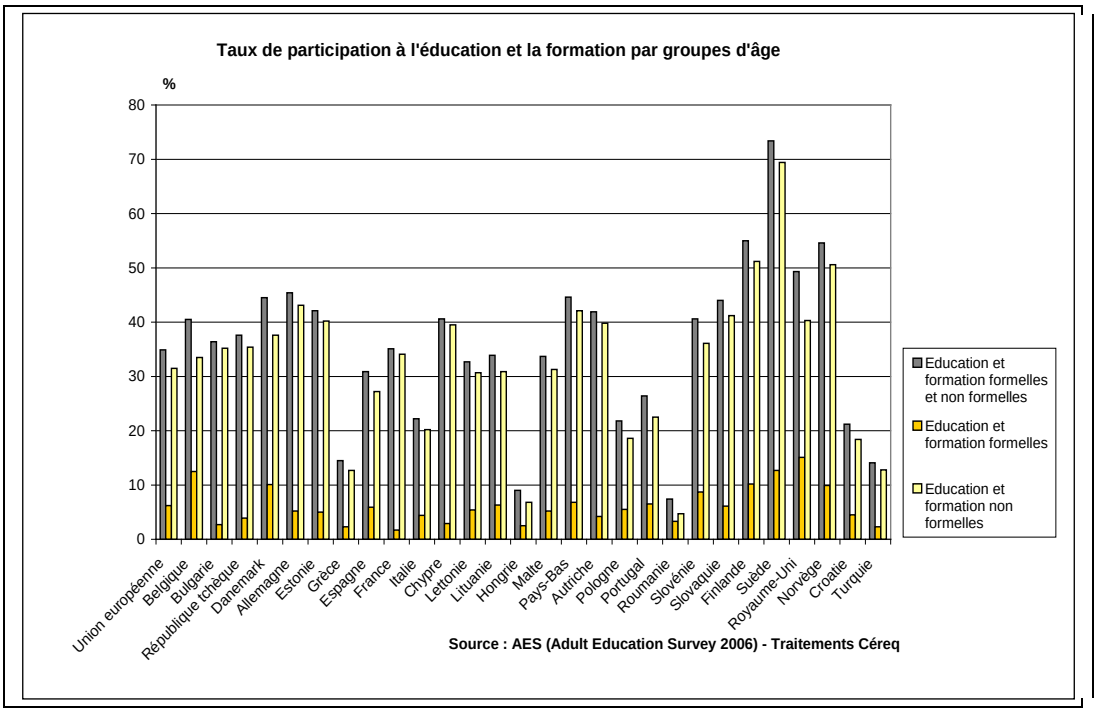
(*Allocation de retour à l'emploi* or ARE). During their period of entitlement to this benefit, job-seekers can undertake training courses financed by the ASSEDICs. In fact, insured job-seekers agree to participate in measures that will enable them to find new work. The measures in question are formally listed in a personalised access-to-work plan (*projet personnalisé d'accès à l'emploi* or PPAE). Training courses (which may or may not lead to certification) are crucial elements of the plan. In this situation they grant access to a return-to-work training allowance (*Allocation de retour à l'emploi-formation* or AREF), which is paid out by the ASSEDICs for the duration of the training (in place of the ARE).

- Job-seekers not covered by unemployment insurance may however carry out vocational training and, in certain circumstances, may be funded by central or regional government or for the duration of the training course.

Individual employment contracts: Two contracts are use for people aged 16-25, i.e. the apprenticeship contract (which is part of initial training in the French law) and the professionalisation contract included in continuing training. In addition, a support measure associated with CVT is available, i.e. CIVIS. They have been presented earlier in the paper (part 2).

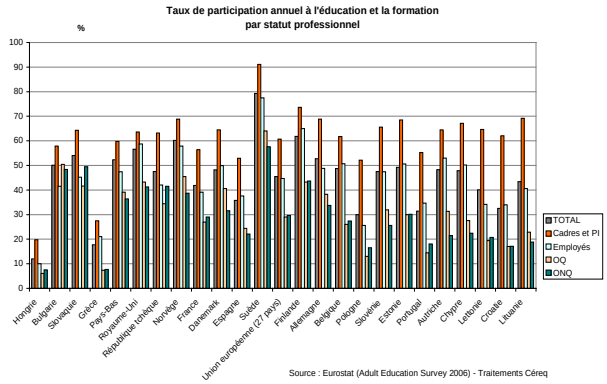
3.2.5. Access to qualification and diploma stands out as an exception

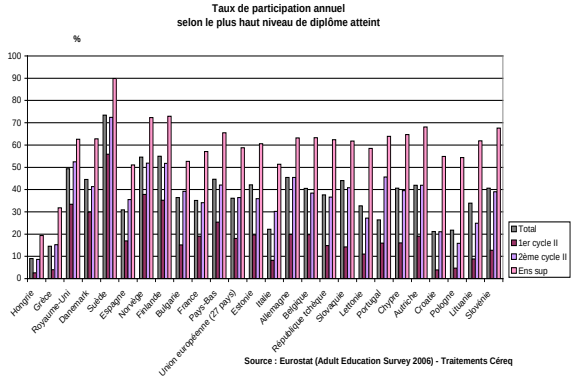
The fifth salient feature deals with the training system's ability to provide tangible training perspectives during individuals' careers, particularly for the least qualified. In this respect, the French situation is atypical. Although French companies are amongst the leading ones in terms of training for their employees, i.e. non formal training, France is in the very last position in the European Union in terms of formal training for adults leading to a qualification or a diploma.

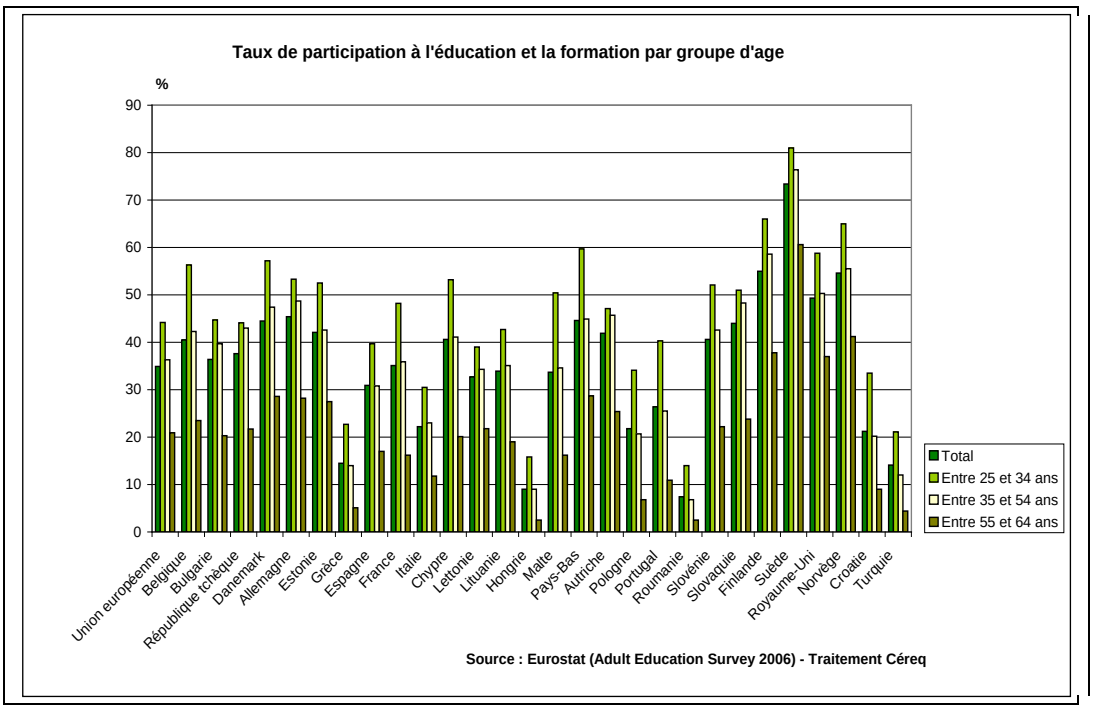


3.2.6. The CVT system benefit to those who might have less need

The main criticize addressed today to the system taken as a whole: to carry the effort on those which would have for less need (qualified and stable employees) instead of the groups threatened by unemployment and exclusion. The European data on Adult education show diverging participation rates of subgroups in different types of adult education in each member states, differentiated by educational background, position (among others: age, firms size, etc). These results are well known: lifelong learning increases with growing education, position, etc.







3.2.7. The training supply is segmented

By instituting a collective financing obligation, the historic July 1971 Act encouraged the development of continuing training in France. Thus, there is nearly 45,000 training bodies, as compared to only 25,000 20 years earlier. In addiction, 85 percent of training revenues are

generated by some 17 percent of the bodies, which have an annual turnover of 150,000 euros.

The training market in training provision is open and competitive. Hence, training providers include both public and semi public training bodies and private bodies. Public and semi-public training bodies include mainly GRETA (training centres on the aegis o the ministry of education); AFPA (National Adult Training Association) under the responsibility of the ministry of employment, bodies covered by other ministries (agriculture, commerce, industry). Private training bodies comprise non-profit-making association, private profit-making enterprises and self-employed trainers.

Theoretically, all these bodies can train any of the groups requiring CVT: job-seekers, people in work. But, in practice, there is a segmentation of the training supply (Vero and Rousset 2003). Overall, more than 90 percent of the total continuing training product now obeys three main rationales. The first targets categories of publics and is linked to specific sources of funding. One-fifth of the continuing training supply is positioned on specific categories of trainees: the largest share targets job-seekers and is thus dependent on public funding; the remainder is centred on the training of wage-earners, which is financed by the companies. The training aimed at job seekers generates 14 percent of the overall continuing training product and is essentially carried out by public bodies or those in the non-profit-making association. The training of job-seekers dispensed by the latter generally comes under the "social handling" of the most disadvantaged publics, who are more likely to receive basic knowledge than work-related knowledge. The public bodies, mainly represented by the Association for Adult Vocational Training (*Association nationale pour la formation professionnelle des adultes*, AFPA), basically concerns Level V skilling training for unemployed persons whose return to employment seems less problematic. The second rationale places the emphasis on certification. The third is oriented towards the sale of training content.

3.2.8. Guidance and counselling management involve a network of multiple public actors multiple slightly coordinated.

At continuing vocational training level, various guiding schemes have been introduced, but they are slightly coordinated (Berthet, Grelet, Romani, 2008).

Among the guiding schemes figures notably the skills assessment procedure (VAE) for people in work or seeking it, support schemes for job-seekers and personal interviews (for workers in the private and public sectors).
Guidance tools take various forms and numerous Internet sites and portals have been created.
The major and only national portal is the lifelong training guidance portal opened in 2006 at the initiative of the Government, the social partners and the regions – through the Association of Regions of France. This site is intended for everyone, including young people, people in jobs or job-seekers, to support them in accessing vocational guidance and lifelong learning. It brings together information form different public or private institutions (*ONISEP, Pôle Emploi, CNFPT, Centre Inffo…*)
The offices of Ministry of Employment are in charge of the enquiries/information/guidance system for adults who are seeking employment or whish to retrain, relocate or learn additional skills. This provision is delivered by employment advisors through the countrywide network of employment agencies. New structures have been created like "employment

houses" which purpose is to help the various agencies involved, work more closely together on the basis of an area plan. Another body reporting to the same ministry is the national information centre for continuing training known as *Centre INFFO.* Its task is to disseminate information to all who work in continuing vocational training in the broadest sense. As the only national public body working in this field, *Centre INFFO* is in charge of the portal for information on vocational guidance and initial and continuing training.
At regional level, information about continuing training is disseminated by training action, resource and information centres (*CARIF*). These comprise a network of regional contact points for training professionals. Financed jointly by the State and the regions, they have links with the social partners and with public and private bodies involved in vocational training. They maintain up-to-date documentation on training provision at regional level. Since 2008, they worked in network.
Local offices (*Missions locales*) and enquiry/information/guidance points (PAIO) have been established since 1982, as local authorities and the Government have sought to coordinate grassroots efforts to help young people in the 16-25 age bands overcome barriers to social and vocational integration. According legislation, since 2005, these structures, linked through a nationwide network, have had the task of implementing the right to support for young people at risk of exclusion from the workforce, notably through use of the 'Integration-into-society contract'. Other bodies also provide vocational guidance and advice: national training organisations (AFPA, GRETAs network), joint bodies that manage training-insurance funds, trade associations, inter-institutional skills-assessment centres.

4. European dimension and future challenges for French educational and training system

4.1. The "non-continuum" of lifelong education and training

Following Verdier's (2009) Life Long Learning regimes, France is mainly characterises by an academic regime, "where "everything is played before 25 years" and then the firms adapt the individual skills to their needs, with the active support of public authorities" (p. 11).
First "the French meritocracy" is set on a strong permanent selection throughout the school career. The second cycle of secondary education is structured by a three-way segmentation and by an high exit rate at the end of the 1st cycle of secondary education knowing that the situation is worse when taking into account 1/ the exits without qualifications (over 20% of a generation) and 2/ the failures in the first year of higher education. Thus, although undeniable progress, the democratisation of the education system is so much ambiguous that some authors speak of "segregative democratisation".
Access to higher education has significantly expanded so that the proportion of graduates amongst young French aged 25 to 34 years, is as high as in Sweden and Denmark, but thanks to the development of short higher education tracks (France remains behind many European partners regarding the rate of graduates at master or PhD levels) and without changing the predominance of very selective "*Grandes Ecoles*" which still forms the "scholar gentry": indeed, according to the highest degree of diploma, the influence of social origin stays very high in France. Since the 80s, under the explicit influence of the German dual system, the French policy has greatly developed the alternating vocational training and especially apprenticeship, including for diplomas of higher education with an undeniable success. Thus

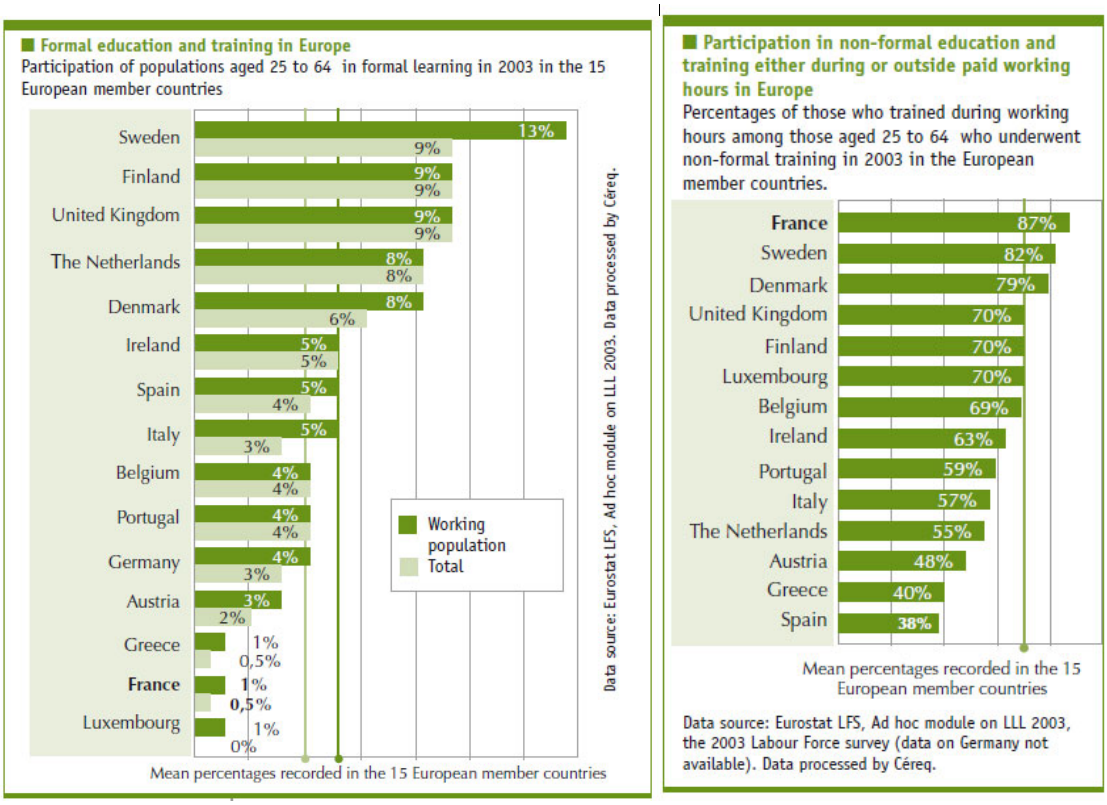
the corporatist regime has played a greater role in regulating initial education and training, albeit within the framework of the hierarchy of academic levels which still predominates.

Since 1971, the continuing training is supported by tripartite governance (government, unions and employers) which results in short courses more accessible to the most skilled employees. Thus the role of business for organizing training - is predominant and is characterized by a large attendance but the rate of access to education during the working life is less than half the European average.
The recent industry-wide agreement (2003) on 'lifelong learning', which was written into law in May 2004, ultimately gave the industry bodies more than their due, while the negotiations had begun in 2001 on the basis of employers' proposals based on a regulation in terms of an organised market (Méhaut, 2006). The emblematic new rule is distant from those of corporatist regime and even more than one mode universal: an individual right of 20 training hours per year was indeed created but on the one hand the transferability of this right is limited, on the other hand the duration granted, in spite of a possibility of office plurality over 6 years, confines de facto the recipients with the short term adaptation of their skills.

Now, the French model which combines academic and corporatist regime faces the problem of a social stigmatisation of educational devices which favours a strong hierarchy of different knowledge (academic versus practical) with corresponding segmentations in the business organizations.

The way the educational system and the labour market function in France has led to the existence of a wider gap than in other member countries of the European Union between the age at which people undergo their studies and that at which they pursue their careers.
Adults aged 25 years and over who pursue or resume their studies with a view to obtaining a diploma account for lower percentages than elsewhere. (see the graph "Formal education and training in Europe").
This is no doubt one of the reasons why alternative paths, such as the validation of past experience (VAE), have been set up for obtaining diplomas. France is one of the European countries with the highest rates of young people over 18 years of age who are still in the educational system: in 2003, this figure reached 80%, versus 54% in the United Kingdom and 75% on average in the 15 European member countries as a whole. On the other hand, the number of years of education people can be expected to undergo during their lifetime is lower in France than in the rest of Europe as a whole.
In France, the educational system is set up in such a way that it tends on the contrary to promote distinctions between age-groups: youth is expected to be devoted to studies and adulthood, to work.
Although adults rarely pursue formal educational programmes, this does not mean that they do not undergo any vocational training. In 2003**,** one quarter of all those between 25 and 64 years of age were involved in CVT courses or conferences or workshops, and in this respect, France ranks fairly high, since the mean figure recorded in the 15 European member-countries on the whole was 22%. On the other hand, more time was devoted to CVT during working hours in France than anywhere else in Europe that year. Among those between 25 and 64 years of age who had jobs and also participated in CVT courses, conferences or workshops in 2003, 87% underwent these CVT activities during their working hours (see the graph "Participation in non-formal education").

It therefore emerges that there are two main age groups in France, each of which shows specific patterns in terms of the timing of the learning periods and the financial onus: youth is a period of full time education for which the State is responsible; whereas the training undergone during adulthood has been traditionally initiated by firms and has taken place up to now during people's working hours.



4.2. European dimensions within French framework and reform

France is proceeding with implementation of the EU's Lisbon, Copenhagen and Bologna processes to strengthen the role of education and training in society: it has overhauled its university system, introducing the three-cycle structure for university diplomas, and has established the National Vocational Certification Register, thus making for greater transparency between French qualifications and those of other European countries and the European Qualifications Framework.

Lifelong education and training are cores priorities which have informed recent legislation in France in the fields of education and initial vocational training as well as continuing training. The practical objectives adopted by the Lisbon European Council have served as reference points for reform of the French education system with the law of April 2005 (the Outline and Enabling Act on the future of schooling). That law is seen as a tool for raising the quality of education and training to the highest possible level for all, promoting recognition of learning and skills throughout the European Union, and enabling people of all ages to access education and training throughout their lives. Informed by European thinking on key skills, the Outline Act establishes a common body of knowledge and skills to be mastered by the end of the compulsory schooling. Diversification of school courses and options, upgrading of the

vocational route and emphasis on a new approach to career guidance all echo commitments within Europe to combat early school leaving.
One of the major challenges for vocational policies is to help people achieve career security. This aim reflects not only the national expectation of lower unemployment rate but also the Lisbon objectives. The Act of May 2004 on lifelong vocational training thus establishes an individual right to vocational training (the *DIF*) and to professionalisation courses. In September 2003, the social partners signed an interprofessional agreement known as the ANI, which served as the basis of the French Law of May 2004 on lifelong learning and social dialogue. This legislation has completely changed the occupational training landscape in France, especially as far as alternating training is concerned. In particular, it has instituted a "professionalising contract", which has considerably changed the respective roles of firms and training organisations in the transition to work of young people and the reintegration of the unemployed. New paths have thus been forged towards possibly creating a new balance between learning and working. The occupational branches seem to be having some hesitation in taking these paths, however.
In the foot steps of European Union, France formalised the principle of Life Long Learning in the law of 2004, which tackles the question of social bargaining to a larger extent. These new terms take over from previous references, "permanent education" in the 1960's which targeted social and cultural objectives and then "continuing training" after the 1971 law, aimed at both modernizing the production system, and developing adult continuing vocational training.
The European reflexions in the *Mémorandum sur la formation tout au long de la vie* (European Commission, 2000) as much as the law of the 4th of May 2004 on "*La formation tout au long de la vie et le dialogue social*" establish these notions. The stacks are not only semantic but political. The change in terminology reflects new directions by sharing responsibility of training and professional path between employers and employees. The sharing of responsibility in companies is one of the main point of the reform, in particular with the creation of the individual right, the DIF. But it is ambiguous because in one hand it enables individual actions, and on the other hand it lays the burden of responsibility for the lack of training and professional development only on the workers.

France is continuing to implement the work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of education and training systems in Europe against the background of the Lisbon process. The outline and Enabling Act on the future of schooling (2005) includes stipulations on language learning as part of a European approach. It also defines a common body of knowledge and skills, in which several aspects correspond to key skills for lifelong learning recommended by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union. The establishment of trade high schools (*Lycée des métiers*) is a response to both European objectives of strengthening links with the world of work and improving the quality of vocational education.
Vocational education was revamped in the 1990's with the creation of the *baccalauréat technologique* (technological baccalaureate) and the *baccalauréat professionnel* (vocational baccalaureate), the development of higher-level technical courses *(Bac+2)* and the introduction of tertiary vocational diplomas (*Bac+3*).
In parallel, the Government decided to relaunch the apprenticeship system, to increase the number of young people obtaining a certified vocational qualification through apprenticeship. To encourage both employers and young people to make greater use of the system, a Social Cohesion Enabling Act (January 2005) included provisions to improve the status of apprentices and, more generally, to develop and modernise apprenticeship.

Access to qualifications was further encouraged with the establishment of a right to have vocational experience officially recognised in the obtaining o diploma or recognised qualification (*VAE system*). Equality of access to training has also been encouraged with the creation – at the initiative of the social partners – of an individual entitlement to training (*DIF*).
It is undeniable that the European 'lifelong learning' referent influenced national negotiations in 2003 but without re-shaping the French model. In addition, the poor positioning of France vis-à-vis emblematic benchmarks of the European strategy, namely the proportion of young people leaving initial education without a degree, contributes to structure the national debate on the necessary individualized support to disadvantaged students and to emphasize the limits of a "uniform model of integration" in secondary education that France shares with other Latin countries (Verdier, 2009).

5. Early school leavers and dropouts

This last section is devoted both to a broad presentation of the French case regarding the early school leavers matter.

5.1. General overview and policy issues

Studying the drop-out question leads taking into account several dimensions including the demographical, sociological and political ones.

5.1.1. Statistical overview

The estimation of the population of French school leavers is difficult to conduct since multiple definitions of the phenomenon are engaged in the debate. However, the structure of qualifications for school leavers cohorts displays some significant changes since the middle of the last decade. Since 1994 onwards, nearly one quarter of pupils leaves school with *baccalaureate* qualification and one fifth of pupils leave school with the BEP-CAP qualification (second stage vocational qualifications). The share of higher education qualifications increased from 30% in 1990 to 36% in 1994, it remained stable till 2000 and then improved up to 42% of a school generation in 2004. Actually, despite the rise in access to the *baccalaureate* level which is the compulsory credential to enter tertiary education, a growing proportion of pupils passing the vocational *baccalaureate* do not intend to or find it difficult to pursue higher education. The drop out rate from tertiary education is quite high: 25% of students leaving higher education in 2001 do not succeed in passing a higher degree[2].

At the opposite side of the spectrum, the category of school leavers with no qualification declined from 30% in 1990 to 17% of the school leavers cohort in 2004. This category includes two distinctive groups: 8,5% are early school leavers (dropouts prior to completing secondary school) and 8,5% are pupils who completed secondary education without obtaining a qualification. The first group concerns young people who are said not to have the minimum training level defined by the 1989 guideline Act, it represents a stable proportion of 8 to 9% of school leavers over the last decade. Thus, despite considerable

[2] In 2001, one out of ten school leavers is out of higher education without a higher qualification (Céreq, 2005).

progress in recent decades, the French education system has not eliminated the hard core of school failures which often occur as early as primary school.

5.1.2. Problem framing and agenda setting of the dropout question: two critical moments

The question of early school leavers has reached the political agenda quite recently in France. This process has been conducted around two critical moments.

The first one is a knowledge phase during which the sociological dimension of the phenomenon as well as its definition question has been investigated. It takes place in 1999 when an interdepartmental call for tender was launched to investigate the topic of early school leavers. This bid has produced a large range of interdisciplinary scientific studies on the issue which have constituted a first insight for the French decision makers.

The second critical moment is far more dramatic. During the fall of 2005, a bunch of cars, schools, public transportation devices were burned down during 2 weeks of suburban riots. Several explanations have been given concerning this youngster's rebellion (racial discrimination, poverty, housing segregation, etc.). But among all these factors, an emphasis was put by the French government on professional integration matters. The following causal explanation was raised by experts: if the youngsters started to burn down cars it is mainly because they are unable to find a job, if they can't find a job it is due to a lack of qualification due to both school drop out or bad schooling guidance, the first being the result of the second. The way the problem of school leavers was defined on the political agenda established a direct link between truancy, guidance malfunctioning and urban violence. The response of the political system to urban riots was then to lower the age of apprenticeship, to create a new working contract with a longer probation period (the CPE that was defeated by massive demonstrations) and to reform the school based guidance procedures. This reform was conducted all the way through 2005 to September 24th 2009 with the adoption of the Vocational education and Guidance Act (see above section 2.1 for the main changes introduced by this act).

This framing of the dropout problem constitutes a shift of paradigm or more precisely the definition of a specific paradigm as the dropping out matter was previously ignored by both academics and decision-makers. Rapidly said, this question is now framed this way. On the one (sociological) hand: dropping out is above all a matter of truancy which implies a specific action towards pupil's families and an efficient monitoring system of attendance. On the other (educational) hand: dropping out concerns pupils who failed in finding an accurate schooling way which implies to reinforce guidance procedures and target these procedure towards an efficient integration on the labour market. The accountability is now targeted on the families and the guidance's system.

This explains why guidance and counselling are now considered as major tools in order to reduce the rate of school leavers with no qualification. To go further in present the French case about dropouts it is necessary now to describe the institutional actors and the policy tools aimed at reducing early school dropout.

5.2. Dropout prevention and resorption in France: actors and instruments

The early schools leave have for consequence the absence of qualification. If its prevention remains mainly conducted inside the educational system, many solutions can be found outside of it and rely on a strong partnership with many different actors including at first row the state and the regions.

5.2.1. The Ministry of education

The Ministry of Education offices are responsible for responding to enquiries form, and providing information and advice to people undertaking initial training. This is done primarily through Information and Guidance Centres (CIO's) in the whole territory, intervening in centres and also in schools and colleges. Ministry of Education is also responsible for an important organisation tasked with producing information about courses and jobs; the National Office of information on courses and professions (ONISEP). The guidance advice is provided to the pupils using its network of psychological careers advisers (CO-P) within the orientation and information centres (CIO). For the time being, its implementation lacks of visibility. By the creation of a public service of the orientation throughout the life, the law of November 2009 will strike this organization. In the recent years, many reforms have concerned that field. At initial vocational training level, new provisions have been put in place at the start of the 2007/2008 academic year:

- at junior high school, a personnel guidance interview in 'year 3', as matter of course, and the extension to all junior high schools of the option of three hours per week of learning for work (*découverte professionnelle*) in 'year3';

- at senior high school level, a personal guidance interview for all pupils in 'year 1' in general, technological and vocational streams. The aim of these interviews –conducted by the form teacher and a student counsellor- is to make the young people aware of the different routes they can take as they enter a new orientation phase, helping them to firm up the choices they will need to make in their final year at school.

A plan to boost priority education and further reduce the school dropout rate was presented on February 2006 with measures targeted to the most disadvantaged pupils and establishments, including professional discovery programmes and specific schemes to assist pupils who are at risk not mastering basic skills. Newly introduced and highly debated, the definition of a "common knowledge base" presenting a list of specific and transversal skills for lower secondary education was adopted to enable the education system and pupils to set targets and be assessed.

Concerning the early school leave, the State intervenes in the establishments using preventive actions or of remediation through the general mission of insertion teams (MGI) established in the colleges or colleges. These teams are working in relation with the teachers, the head teacher, the career advisors intending to conduct bridging actions with the local economic actors.
The September 28th 2010 act aims at struggling against truancy by putting pression on the families using the threat of social benefit suspension.
The action of the state's authorities is mainly targeted towards disadvantaged territorial zones. Several tools can be mentioned here: the « open schools operation » (*opération classes ouvertes*) aims at reconciliate the kids with the school using extra help and educational

activities. The schools located in the most disadvantaged zones are given an extra-funding « the priority education zones » (*zones d'éducation prioritaires*).
Another tool created in 1998 is designed to fight against dropping out. It is called the « relay classes » (*classes-relais*). It relies on a partnership with the non-profit sector ot develop integrative activities aimed at helping the youngsters in finding a accurate professional integration.
Finally one can mention the personalized programs of educative achievement (PPRE). This program intends to help the teachers identify the pupils having problems at school and build a personalized action plan in partnership with the families.

All these actions are being seriously reduced due to a drastic general reduction of the ministry's budget.

5.2.2. The regions

As mentioned before, the French regions enjoy a general competence on VET of adults and young people. If the State authorities are enjoying a quasi monopolistic competency upon the compulsory school pupils, the regions are still responsible for the young people of less between 16 (age of compulsory school) and 25 years left without qualification. On the basis of this competency, several regions are engaged in coordinating the guidance and VET networks. Due to the important regional differences in these policies, it is impossible to summarize them here. But generally their action pursue two goals: to facilitate the construction of individualized access to the qualification and to raise the qualification level of the young people. They act in close relationship with the existing networks (missions locales, BIJ, CIO, etc.).

5.2.3. Social partners

The educational policies oriented towards dropouts often promote a closer relationship of the schools with the business world. But it is generally considered, especially by teachers and trade unions, as a kind of submission to the local labour markets. The actions conducted to help dropouts find a professional integration are generally built in close relationship with the local employment needs. Theses actions are often used to compensate for the local and/or sectoral recruitment problems.
The recently created (November 24th 2009 act) Fund for securing the labour market transitions engage the social partners in financing the job seekers and employee's qualification improvement. This fund could well be an opportunity to develop specific integration actions for dropouts.

Table 4 - Guidance Services in France

	Establishments (number of advisors)	**Public**	**Responsible bodies**
CIO (Guidance and information center)	600 (3757)	Secondary pupils and all age	Ministry of education
SCUIO (University Common Services of information and guidance)	81	Students	Ministry of Education
AFPA-SOP	210 (800 advisors)	Employees/unemployed	Ministry of Labour
Pôle Emploi	1300 (27 631 advisors)	Employees/unemployed	Ministry of Labour
CAP EMPLOI	119 (1100 adiv	Disabled people	Ministry of Labour
Missions Locales	471 (10 000)	Unemployed youngster after compulsory school and before age of 25	Ministry of Labour - Regions
APEC	48 (400)	Executive/managers	Ministry of Labour
CIBC	+ de 250 (1300)	Employees	Social partners
FONGECIF	(220)	Employees	Social partners
PIJ	1303	Youngsters	Ministry of Youth

6. WP4 Case study: regional policies aimed at reducing early school leaving in two French regions (Aquitaine and Rhône-Alpes)

As shown by the previous sections, guidance policies constitute the principal answer to the early school leavers' problem in France. The institutional mapping of public actors and their competencies regarding school guidance remains unstable and both the state authorities and the local bodies (i.e. The French regional councils) enjoy a legitimacy to implement regulation policies of the guidance networks for pupils. These networks are organized by status of beneficiaries. The ministry of education's guidance and information centres (CIO) and general mission of integration (MGI) deal with pupils while the local missions for professional integration (missions locales) deal with the unemployed youngsters between 16 and 25 by delegation of the national employment agency (*Pôle emploi*). On top of that several public agencies and ministerial local services propose their own guidance services adding a little more complexity to provide what can de described as a highly segmented system of networks. One the major challenge is then to provide to youngsters at risk of dropping out an adequate and clear level of service. The institutional instability about what public actor is able to coordinate the local services of these networks ends up in different manners according to regional specific configurations. Mainly depending on the state of relations established between the national state regional bodies and regional councils, different patterns of coordination can be observed. Because of this vagueness in the division of responsibilities between the State and the regions on the issue of guidance, the regions reaction is both slow and differentiated. Despite fifteen years of regional initiatives and strong incentives from the European Union, the institutional issues at the national level on Guidance throughout life in France are just emerging. The political capacity of regions to take responsibility for guidance services is strongly questioned in France.

6.1. General objective and overview

For the purpose of WP4 we have chosen to present the policies aimed at preventing and reducing the early school dropout within 2 regions presenting some similarities and strong differentiation in dealing with the dropout problem. These regions are Aquitaine and Rhône-Alpes.

General information on Rhône-Alpes and Aquitaine

	Aquitaine	Rhône-Alpes
Superficie (km²)	41 309	43 698
Population	3 150 890	6 065 959
% of national GDP (rank)	4,5% (6)	9,9% (2)
Capital city	Bordeaux	Lyon
Académies	Bordeaux	Lyon, Grenoble
Unemployment rate	9,4%	7%
Income	18 514€	18 997
Political majority	PS	PS

6.1.1. Rhône-Alpes

The Rhône-Alpes region is a pioneer region in many policy fields including education, guidance & VET.

A regional agency of guidance the *Pôle Rhône-Alpes de l'Orientation* (PRAO) was created in 2004 by the State, the Regional Council and the social partners. Four principles led to its establishment as a public interest group. It brings together, all the actors involved in guidance: the Public Employment Service, the Ministry of Education, the social partners, the guidance networks, and the families. At the operational level, the PRAO undertakes actions aiming at the improvement and development of support, information and guidance throughout life (AIO). It ensures the cooperation between different guidance networks and contributes to the development of complementarities, continuity and the quality of services. The PRAO develops activities in three areas: production, dissemination and sharing of information on training, employment, and certification; support for new approaches to cooperation; to professionalisation, to mutual recognition between actors; and the emergence of a common culture for guidance provision. The PRAO has a particular responsibility to support networks on the validation of prior learning. It integrates the functions of the OREFRA (regional observatory for employment and training in Rhône-Alpes) and CRIFRA (Regional Coordination of information on training in Rhône-Alpes).

Concerning the dropout question and according to a study conducted by the PRAO, the population of youngsters (20-24 years) without a qualification is estimated at 50 000, around 10 000 pupils are exiting the educational system each year without a qualification or a VET diploma. The regional percentage of dropouts is at 5% (Céreq).

6.1.2. Aquitaine

The Aquitaine region is an average region in both terms of strength and weaknesses of its educational system.

Aquitaine is also one of the few regions enjoying an all age guidance agency: *Aquitaine Cap Métiers*. *Aquitaine Cap Métiers*, created on 1 January 2009, has three key missions: information and publicity campaign for the general public, and also young people, on job sectors and the way they are evolving; provision of support services for training and career guidance professionals from all organisations: schools, academic institutions, employment offices, associations, etc.; collection of statistics for the Region as a contribution to the development of future policies on training and career guidance. This agency has also taken on the activities of the *Observatoire régional emploi-formation* (OREF, Regional Employment and Training Organisation) and of the *Centre d'animation, de ressources et d'information sur la formation* (CARIF, Training Programmes, Resources and Information Centre). The Agency has four divisions which are responsible for career guidance, development of job sectors, internet site, and permanent exhibitions.

According to the Cereq regional database, the percentage of youngsters without a qualification on the labour market is estimated at 3.5%. This percentage is low compared to the national ratio of 6.3%. The region has enjoyed a decline from 6% to 3.5% of this population between 2000 and 2005 higher than the national level (-0.7%).

6.2. Objectives and methodology of the French WP4 case study

The qualitative survey to be conducted for WP4 in France will deal with the regional policy responses to the dropping out problem. Our main objective is to explore the relationship between institutional capability of stakeholders and individual capability enhancement. To conduct such an analysis, we would like to compare two different regional situations in terms of political capacity and coordination building and see the impact of such differences in terms of services delivered to beneficiaries. The capability framework will provide not only an interest to the resources provided but also to how individual conversion factors are included in the design of the public policies. To evaluate this later dimension, we will focus our analysis on the nature of the service given to beneficiaries. This bottom up analysis will allow us to seize how individual capabilities are enhanced or not by the public action towards early school leavers.

We aim at underlining the regional disparity of these policies by studying a region where the regional council has decided to launch a territorial policy to prevent and reduce the school dropout using a strong partnership with the Ministry of education (Rhône-Alpes) and another region (Aquitaine) where the policies are carried separately by the regional body of the ministry of education (*Rectorat*) and the regional council. On the one hand, we have a territory enjoying a strong partnership among state, region and the social partners allowing an ambitious regional policy in terms of education. On the other, Aquitaine is one example of strong oppositions between and the regional council and the state authorities which leads to segmented public action and the marginalization of both the social partners and the civil society.

After a set of preliminary interviews, we have chosen to focus on two programs targeted towards dropouts. In Rhône-Alpes, we will study the regional action plan and in Aquitaine,

we will analyze the program conducted by the *Rectorat*. Both programs struggling against drop out and exit without a qualification.

Rhône-Alpes's regional plan against early school leaving (Plan régional de lutte contre le dcrochage scolaire et les sorties sans qualifications)
Adopted by the regional council in january 2008, its aim is to reduce the annual number of exit without any qualification and diploma. It's target is the initial VET's institutions (*lycée professionnel*). It relies on a partnership agreement signed with local state authorities (*Rectorat and Direction régionale de l'Agriculture*) and the « mission locale » network. The action relies on 3 axis: prevent the dropout and provide a first level of qualification; develop the turning back to school possibilities; set an observatory of drop out. The regional action plan is financed for 3 years by the regional council (€1.5 million euros).

Aquitaine's initiatives
Due to the institutional segmentation of the public action, we will study here a set of different initiatives.
The first called *« leave no one on the side of the road »* is conducted by the regional administration of the ministry of education (Rectorat de Bordeaux), this plan is based on 3 levels of intervention:

1. Reinforce the efficiency of the existing educational tools and extra help devices (see above section 4.2
2. Bring a specific attention to the public at risk of dropping out (*éducation prioritaire*)
3. Prevent and struggle against drop out at all levels of schooling by creating prevention and following task force in every secondary and high school using a territorial approach with a built in partnership with the local guidance networks agencies.

On behalf of the regional council, we will study two initiatives.

1. The first is one example of the few coordinated actions with the state's authorities. It is called « The second chance network » (Le réseau de la deuxième chance). It consists in a networks built from the « mission locale » with a set of territorial actors[3] to help dropouts find their own way to qualification. The target of this program is of 1600 youngsters identified and followed by the 23 missions locales of the region. It relies on a funding proposed by both the region and the state.

2. The second one is called « local networks for the perseverance and achievement of young *aquitans* » (*Les réseaux locaux pour la persévérance et la réussite des jeunes Aquitains*). The objectives of this project are multiple. In particular it aims at encouraging the partnership and the network building of local actors engaged in preventing and treating the school dropout, encouraging the young people showing a particular potential blocked by an disadvantaging environment to engage in long term qualification processes. It also aims at structuring, coordinating and developing at the regional level, the programs and existing actions which contribute to encourage the "*persévérance*" and bring more security during the school-to-work transition

[3] Les clubs de prévention, les organismes de formation expérimentés, Maisons familiales rurales (MFR), Centres de formation des apprentis (CFA), Maison Départementale de la Solidarité et de l'Insertion (MDSI), centres sociaux, Centres communaux d'action sociale (CCAS), prévention spécialisée, Service pénitentiaire d'insertion et de probation (Spip) et Protection judiciaire de la jeunesse (PJJ), Maisons des jeunes et de la Culture (MJC), mairies, …

Our study will be based on documentary analysis, statistical data analysis and semi-structured interviews conducted with regional and local stakeholders in both regions. We will pay a specific and central attention to the reception and use of these actions by the beneficiaries. By using panels and focus groups, we intend to shed light on the way these programs succeed or not in enhancing the capabilities of youngsters to achieve what they have reason to value.

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The institutional mapping of Italy's education system: Europeanization, centralization and regionalization

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Introduction

Over the last twenty years the Italian education system has undergone a series of more or less completed transformations, at times announced and then abandoned, disavowed or only formally implemented, all against a background of constant political instability and fragmented policies. Furthermore, this scenario of uncertainty is made even more complex by a resistance to change in the ministry offices and educational establishments. This was compounded with a tendency to cultural conservatism and scarce perception of education as a common good enhancing the development of both individual and collective capacities[4].

The incessant and equally incoherent doing and undoing has accentuated the complexity of the system, piling on layer after layer and overlapping more or less virtuous experimentation. Moreover, it never resolved the issue of unequal access to education and training. Inequality and imbalance are still substantial on a national level, especially in the north/south divide but also between the different kinds of educational establishments and between individuals: social, class and rank inequality lead to the creaming out and branding of weaker pupils in a context where different education/training courses are extremely rigid and hierarchical.

The aim of this paper is to offer a general overview of Italian educational policies and identify and discuss some important aspects of the system. It will be carried out in the following stages: (1) the identification of the key institutional actors in the system together with a picture of their competences; (2) the identification of the figures for public spending and the financing channels; (3) an analysis of the specific features of the system with special attention to disadvantaged pupils and the problem of drop-outs; (4) an indepthing of the relation between education and employment; (5) the presentation of two case studies: the first dedicated to the Lombard Region (in the north of Italy) and the second to the Region of Campania (in the south), to give an account of the progressive regionalization of education in Italy.

The institutional picture was defined by means of a series of passages and enquiries which included: a first phase of analysis of the literature on the transition education/employment in Italy; a documentary analysis of legislative texts and plans both on national and local levels; a phase of depth interviews with key witnesses. The latter involved institutional representatives from the Ministry of Education and Research, Regional School Authorities, Re-

[4] Though for reasons of space, a full account cannot be given of the parliamentary history of the innumerable legislative interventions over education (reform of the school cycles, secondary schooling, university), a brief, paradigmatic outline will be useful for indicating the path that has led to the lengthening of compulsory schooling. In 1997 the Berlinguer Reform (centre-left majority government) raised it from eight to ten years, a move which was abolished in 2003 by the Moratti Reform (centre-right government) only to be re-introduced in the 2007 Financial Law by Fioroni (centre-left majority). In 2008 the present Minister for Education Gelmini (centre-right majority) intervened again, classifying all possible vocational training courses as compulsory education.

gional Offices responsible for training and employment, employers' associations, welfare authorities and training bodies.

1. The governance of the Italian educational system: actors, powers, relationships

The principal institutional bodies governing the Italian education system are: at national level, The Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR)[5]; at regional level, the Regional School Authorities (USR) and the Regions[6]; at local level, the Provinces, Municipalities and schools.

The Ministry of Education, University and Research has complete authority over the programming/funding of the education system, school rules/regulations and personnel recruitment. The Regional School Authorities act as the peripheral seats of the Ministry and are territorially responsible for implementing national policies through their administrative, supervisory and inspectorate duties. The USRs assign the economic and human resources to the schools (MIUR, 2003).

The competences attributed to the Regions are undergoing redefinition at the moment, in the wake of a constitutional reform. This, which began in 2001[7], led to the 2009[8] Law on fiscal federalism which decreed the transfer of powers/ competences from the State to the Regions (Poggi, 2010). At the moment, however, relations between the various levels of government are suffering from overlapping, conflict over competences and hedging/holding back in an institutional scenario which is instable, inorganic and incoherent. Devolution introduces on paper a reorganization of the competences shared between State, Regions and local authorities which effects government decision-making over education. MIUR is to be left with jurisdiction over the definition of general norms[9], the essential levels of services (LEP), while the Regions and local authorities are to be in charge of regional programming as well as managing and allocating staff and personnel over the territory. What the results will be is uncertain, apart from the fact that they are already producing regional diversifications in a system now going ahead at different speeds (Bordignon, Fontana, 2010).

The Provinces and Municipalities have also found an increase in their duties and functions over the last few years. The Provinces are in charge of the plans for organizing the school network as well as running, maintaining and building new secondary schools, while the Municipalities are responsible for kindergarten and primary school buildings.

Since the year 2000, educational institutes have enjoyed greater organizational autonomy in compliance with art. 21 of the Law 59/1997[10]. They can plan and realize interventions in education, training and instruction, adapting them to different contexts in line with the objec-

[5] Besides the Ministry there are the National Council of Public Education, the Higher Council of Public Education, the National Institute for the Evaluation of the Education and Training Sysem (INVALSI),the National Institute of Documentation for Innovation and research into Education (INDIRE).

[6] Also: the regional councils for Education and the Regional Institutes for Research into Education.

[7] Constitutional Law (Legge costituzionale 18 ottobre 2001, n. 3 "Modifiche al titolo V della parte seconda della Costituzione").

[8] Law (Legge 5 maggio 2009, n. 42 "Delega al Governo in materia di federalismo fiscale, in attuazione dell'articolo 119 della Costituzione").

[9] That is: the definition, limits and contents of school autonomy; definition of school regulations; evaluation of learning; compulsory school; public exams, rules and proceedures for issuing school certificates, diplomas; definition of essential levels of services; evaluation and monitoring; criteria for the training, selection and recruitment of school personnel; rights and duties of private and accredited schools.

[10] Legge 15 marzo 1997, n. 59 "Delega al Governo per il conferimento di funzioni e compiti alle regioni ed enti locali, per la riforma della Pubblica Amministrazione e per la semplificazione amministrativa".

tives of the National Education System. The above law introduced the concept of autonomy into the Italian system, providing for each school to draw up its own annual list of offers (POF, educational offer plan), to be presented to pupils/families in the enrolments phase. Schools are allowed to adopt flexi-hour timetables and activate personalized courses (for example, in order to integrate disabled pupils or non-Italian speakers), create training programmes to answers the special needs of the territory, choose methods and instruments in line with the training/teaching opportunities on offer. Nonetheless the autonomy should observe the freedom of teaching and the indications and objectives established at national level by the Ministry. The introduction of school autonomy has certainly created opportunities for renewing the education system bottom up, favouring projects for tailor-made teaching/training courses, though in an extremely centralized scenario where economic and human resources are distributed in an ever-decreasing quantity top down. (Bertagna, 2009; Campione, 2008).

1.1 Which governance for the Italian educational system?

As mentioned above, the Italian educational system is characterised by a specific relationship between the centre and the peripheries. One of its main distinctive features is the relation and distribution of powers, responsibilities and roles between central and local levels.

In this respect, two issues have to be considered: the first is the 2001 reform of Clause V in the Constitution, that tried to reset competences and powers between State and Regions, attributing new powers to the Regions and local bodies. The second is that Italy features decentralization processes especially in the social policy field. So that many Italian Regions have developed and tested very different approaches according to their political outlooks. The result is a fragmented policy landscape and ever-increasing inequalities in the welfare system[11] (Bifulco, Bricocoli, Monteleone, 2008).

The education system belongs to this context, as can be seen by some of its characteristics. While it is grounded on an authoritative formal model based on the sole rights of the State and its hierarchical and centralised administration, it is also inserted in a regionalization of the education system which has passed through a series of reforms and experiments and has created very different educational situations and contexts shaped by varying administrative policies tied to different territorial considerations.

In this respect the constitutional law 18/2001 granted new legislative functions for the Regions in the field of educational policies. A distinction was drawn between “education” entrusted to the integrated legislations of State and Regions (except for the general norms and fundamental principles which remain the exclusive prerogative of the State) and “professional training” under the exclusive legislation of the regions, except for the LEP (essential levels of services), which belong to the State alone.

More precisely Clause V, article 117:

- authorizes the State to issue «general norms on education» for the government of the national education system;
- keeps State authority over decisions on the modalities of evaluation/controls over the

[11] However, this differentiated context “opens opportunities of experimentation on institutional and organizational structures at a regional scale, creating a variety of practices for research and policy analysis” (Bifulco, Bricocoli, Monteleone 2008).

functioning of the system and pupil progress;

- assigns the running and normative organization of the education system on the territory to the integrated legislation of the Regions, who take the decisions on the basis of the «general principles » established by the State;
- reformulates the old concept of regional “trades and crafts training” and speaks meaningfully of “training and instruction” under the sole legislation of the Regions;
- confirms that since in all fields regarding the satisfaction of “civil and social rights”, the essential levels of services must be “guaranteed over the whole National territory”, the State keeps exclusive legislation over the LEP (Bordignon, Fontana, 2010; Poggi 2010).

In spite of the reform and the constitutional law on one hand and the strong territorialization and regionalization of policy systems on the other, the Italian education system still features Regions and local authorities with limited power. At the same time the central level reveals a loss of power and responsibility, so risking leaving local actors without relevant guidelines capable of defining priorities and directions. And yet the system remains centralist over two issues of fundamental importance: personnel management, totally financed by the State (it covers 80% of the total spending on the education system) and the allocation and management of other financial resources. The process of decentralization, as can be seen, is substantially incomplete.

As will be shown in the section dedicated to the case studies, the Regions have significantly different modalities and political targets in following the management of the new competences deriving from devolution, with consequences also on the governance of the regional education systems.

2. Funding the Italian education system

In 2007 spending on schooling was recorded at 4.5% of the GDP, slightly lower than the average of OCSE countries, which stood at 5.7%, and corresponded to 9% of total public spending, against the 13.3% of the OSCE average. One reason for the lower spending on schooling (in GDP percentages) is the modest contribution made by private financing: 92.3% of funds for schooling are public, 6.0% from families and only 1.7% from privates (OECD, 2010).

The overall spending in 2009 stood at €52,901 million. In 2007 82% of these sources came from the State, almost all of which was transferred to the USR. The State is the main financer of the system and bears almost all the costs of teaching and non-teaching staff (over 80% of the total resources is used for salaries). 11.5% of expenditure comes from the Municipal Authorities, who also deal with school buildings and some services like transport, canteens, and support for handicapped pupils ; 2.9% is borne by the Provinces who are responsible for school buildings and some of the expenses for running upper secondary and vocational training buildings; the Regions bear directly 3.4% of the total, transferring their own resources to the local bodies (provinces and municipalities), to finance school assistance, independent schools and less wealthy pupils (Bordignon, Fontana, 2010; MIUR, 2009).

Contrary to what happens for the overall spending, the per capita spending for primary and lower secondary schooling is above the OSCE average (7,252 dollars against 6,611), while it is lower in upper secondary schools and even more so at tertiary level (5,531 dollars against 8,467) (OCSE, 2010).

There follows below the breakdown of public expenditure for the different levels and types of instruction and disbursing body for 2007.

2007	**Pre-school and primary education**	20,428
	Pre-school	4,748
	Primary	15,680
	Secondary education	22,254
	Middle	9,019
	Secondary	13,236
	Post-secondary courses & diplomas	101
	Higher Education	8,140
	Research and Development for Education	22
	Education not otherwise classifiable	789
	Total Education	51,734

Tab. 1: State expenses for education by category (millions of euros). Source: Rendiconto generale dello Stato. (Bordignon, Fontana, 2010).

	State	**Regions**	**Provinces**	**Municipalities**	**total**
total	43,138	1,311	1,510	6,024	53,648

Tab. 2: Consolidated public spending on schooling according to disbursing body in 2007 (in millions of euros) (Bordignon, Fontana, 2010).

3. The characteristics of the Italian educational system

Overall, there are nearly 9 million pupils in Italian schools (MIUR data: school year 2007/2008) and 941,756 teachers (MIUR data: sch.yr. 2009/2010). In sch. yr. 2007/2008 there were 57,459 schools: 43,032 public, 13,252 recognised private and 1,175 unrecognised (MIUR, 2009). A breakdown of the Italian population by education level, as in the table below, records one of the lowest percentages of degrees and diplomas in Europe, although younger annual take-ins are filling in the gap rapidly, partly as a result of the university reforms, which have introduced three-year and master's degrees.[12]

	qualification	**2008**
Italy	elementary/primary school	20.1%
	middle /technical schools	40.9%
	secondary school	28.7%
	degree	10.3%

Tab. 3
Source: ISTAT (2009a)

In 2010 the high school system (classical, scientific, pedagogic, linguistic and artistic) was chosen by 49.3% of secondary school pupils while the other 50.7% opted for technical institutes and vocational schools. The following tables record the distribution of students per upper secondary schools in Italy and a comparison with other European countries.

[12]Law on teaching autonomy in universities (Legge 15 maggio 1997, n. 127, attuata con decreto del Ministro dell'Università e della Ricerca Scientifica e Tecnologica 3 novembre 1999, n. 509 "Regolamento recante norme concernenti l'autonomia didattica degli atenei").

classical upper secondary schools	8.4%
scientific u.p.s.	24.9%
pedagogical u.p.s.	6.6%
linguistic u.p.s.	5.5%
artistic u.p.s.	3.9%
technical schools	30.9%
vocational schools	19.8%
total	**100%**

Tab. 4: The types of schools in upper secondary education (2010).

	General	**Pre-vocational**	**Vocational**	**Combined school and work-based**
Denmark	52.0	-	48.0	47.5
Finland	32.1	-	67.9	13.4
France	55.8	-	44.2	12.4
Germany	42.5	-	57.5	42.8
Ireland	66.1	31.8	2.1	2.1
ITALY	40.6	32.7	26.7	-
Netherlands	32.9	-	67.1	20.2
Norway	44.8	-	55.2	15.9
Portugal	69.3	8.5	22.2	-
Spain	56.2	-	43.8	1.8
Sweden	43.2	1.0	55.7	-
Switzerland	35.2	-	64.8	-
U.K.	68.6	-	31.4	-
OECD average	54.9	3.5	43.5	11.7
EU average	47.3	5.0	47.9	16.1

Tab. 5: Upper secondary enrolment patterns according to course typologies in some European countries (2008) (values % secondary school enrolments =100). Source: OECD, *Educational at a Glance*, 2010.

The system works along three very hierarchical training tracks:

- high schools (*general*): the programmes/ syllabuses are designed to build up a strong, general knowledge, but not to train pupils for specific professions/trades, nor undertake any further courses of professional/technical training.
- technical institutes (*pre-professional*): the pre-professional courses are mainly designed to introduce pupils into the labour market and train them to go on to further courses of vocational/technical instruction. No professional qualification with a direct impact on the labour market is awarded.
- vocational institutes: vocational courses, which lead to technical /vocational qualifications, train pupils for direct access to specific professions without any further training.

The 1923 Gentile Reform set up the Italian school system on a model placing at the centre the classical high school as the centre of excellence, with all other types of school in de-

scending order. The old structure still exerts a marked influence on the choice of contents and teaching methods in Italian schooling:

- the central position of the teacher, considered the expert in the subject, the only source of knowledge, so that successful teaching/learning is perceived exclusively to be due to the teacher's academic competence and charisma.
- a prevalently deductive kind of teaching, which hampers the use of methods, practices and teaching centred on pupil activity, focusing on single pupils or groups.
- a clear-cut separation between the school and the outside world, in particular the labour market (Associazione TreeLLLe, 2008).

The public offer is extremely unelastic, and furthermore since the 1990s some partial education reforms have uniformed courses, basing them around a nucleus of key abstract competences, and consequently putting to the side technical and practical know-how.

The system creates hierarchies among pupils and programmes, between those destined to go on studying and those destined to go out and work. There are in fact still marked distinctions of prestige and social recognition between the different school choices with foreseeable results of social selection over access to upper secondary school instruction.

In such a scenario, choosing the school to go to can become an act of exclusion. Less able pupils are directed towards technical/vocational training, which tends to lead them towards less prestigious social positions. Career guidance becomes a negative operation, with pupils not choosing technical training according to tastes and competences, but because of a poor school performance. This leads to mechanisms of "self-selection", or school courses grouping together those with similar socio-economic status and levels of achievement (*ibidem*). Thus pupils' needs are defined and classified once and for all by the State. They are generally not recognised as citizens able to express their voice and capability to make choices in the educational process. More often than not the State's offer turns out to be unheeding of family requests and the interests /projects of the young.

There seems to prevail a tendency towards seeing compulsory schooling as an obligation to attend school rather than an obligation towards education understood as attending school or training courses or mixed learning-working courses (Benadusi, Niceforo, 2010). In this direction, over recent years, the school has seen a reformulation of its function as a social ladder, its role to help rise through social stratifications; so that it has often found itself delegated to secondary, more or less explicitly attributed roles (custodian, parking lot, site for disciplinary action).

The 2006 PISA researches highlight another particular characteristic i.e. the great variety of results obtained by the regional systems, in spite of being a formally uniform. There are exceptional regional differences, with a divide between north and south. For example, in 2006 the average science mark in national testing was 534 in Friuli Venezia Giulia (north east of the country) while it was only 433 in Sicily (south) (with a deviation of > 100 points) (INVALSI, 2010).

3.1 Italian and foreign pupils

The number of foreign pupils in the Italian school system has risen sharply and consistently only over the last ten years, climbing from 86,522 to 628,876. In 2007/2008 there were 574,173 foreign students, representing 7.4% of the overall school population.

In secondary schools there are fewer foreign students than in the primaries (4.3 for every 100 enrolments, against 7.7 in primary schools), but the number has more than doubled since 2003/04, and has risen ten-fold over the last ten years.

After obtaining their middle school certificate, foreign students opt for schools facilitating access into the labour market, like technical institutes, where almost 41% of non-natives enrol, against 19.4 % of Italian students (2007-2008 data).

A very meaningful indicator of the difficulties met by foreign students in their school career is the high percentage having to repeat the school year, limited in primary schools (0.9% against 0.2% of Italians), but consistent in middle schooling (6.3% against 2.7%) and slightly lower at secondary level (9.2% against 6.9%) (MIUR, 2009; 2010b).

3.2 Students with disabilities

In 2007 172,114 disabled pupils, corresponding to 2.2% of the total in primary and secondary schools, obtained special help at school from 80,000 support teachers. Disabled pupils are put in ordinary classes and are not singled out for different courses/classes. In this Italy is considered abroad a positive example to follow (Rossi-Doria, 2009: 96), even though cuts in school finances over the last few years have been weakening this potentially inclusive system. Though access for disabled pupils is better than elsewhere, there are still barriers and continual bureaucratic, financial and organizational difficulties to be met and overcome.

The following table furnishes data on the distribution of disabled pupils in upper secondary schools. As can be seen, almost 82% attend technical or vocational schools.

classical upper secondary schools	1.65%
scientific u.p.s.	2.37%
pedagogical u.p.s.	5.22%
linguistic u.p.s.	0.22%
artistic u.p.s.	1.48%
art schools	7.39%
technical schools	19.36%
vocational schools	62.31%
total	**100%**

Tab. 6:Students with disabilities in upper secondary education a.s. 2007/2008 (MIUR, 2009).

3.3 Drop-outs

In the Italian school system, the transition between the various grades and orders of educational/training tracks gives rise to wide-scale dropping out and dispersion, with structural factors of imbalance and social exclusion affecting first of all the more disadvantaged. About 900,000 youngsters between 16 and 24 (20.9% of this age group against a European average of 14.9%) leave school with no qualifications at all. In the present situation the school is unable to give sufficient support to or emancipate those starting off with social and cultural drawbacks: the territories where the greatest poverty is concentrated are those with a high level of teaching/training failure. In the south in particular the young are greatly penalized because they have to face a situation which is precarious on several fronts - not only schooling, but also health, economic, training and work. In Italy in fact 2,623,000 families (11.1%) live under the poverty threshold with 1,713,000 in the South (Rossi-Doria, 2009: 116).

The phenomenon of dispersion is consistent within the education system especially in the first year of upper secondary schooling, and in technical and vocational institutes where there is a concentrate - due to dynamics of selection and self-selection - of the most disadvantaged pupils. Those risking dropping out are normally male, with cultural and social drawbacks in addition to unpromising school performances. For them, the rite of passage from lower to upper secondary schooling is more critical than for others (MIUR, 2009; Benadusi, Niceforo, 2010).

The most important systemic actions directed at containing school losses come from programmes sourced by the European Structural Funds (FSE, FESR). Public vocational and technical schools have benefited from these, besides many primary schools of the Italian Regions/ Objective 1 of the European Intervention Policies (Benadusi, Niceforo, 2010).[13]

If school drop outs are considered a sign of the inclusive capacity of the system and the quality of teaching rather than a sign of individual failure, it must be underlined that this phenomenon points to some of the principal problems of the school system and more in general of the Welfare State. In general terms it must be said first of all that what is offered is substantially rigid and standardized, with little possibility of personalizing curricula according to the needs of the weaker pupils. Furthermore, the chronically weak milieu is shot through by left-over welfare policies and scarcely integrated policies and social services, all of which should be guaranteeing support and opportunities for the disadvantaged.

The state education system, built to access all citizens to instruction and compensate for cultural and social inequalities of individuals at the starting point, does not appear to be able to absolve the function of redistributing social opportunities. As Marco Rossi-Doria (2009: 14) remarks, “the hundreds and thousands of boys and girls who fail at school are saying many things about the general malfunctioning of the school itself […]. The school has fallen so seriously ill that it excludes the weaker part of those who attend”. This process of creaming out the young and vulnerable often reinforces processes of ethnic, gender or geographic discrimination instead of opposing them. The institutional resources set up to face the problem of access to education do not seem able to reduce social inequalities, which risk being taken for granted and almost naturalized by an education system which makes selections, without distinguishing the disparity at the beginning , so giving rise to deeply iniquitous effects.

3.4 Lifelong learning

In 2007 in Italy the participation in vocational training for the adult population (25-64) was 6.2%. These figures are quite distant from the European target of 12.5%: the international comparison below shows the great disparities in adult training opportunities. In fact Italy lies in one of the bottom places in Europe for lifelong education (ISFOL, 2009; OECD, 2010).

Country	Adult Education Survey (AES)	Labour Force Survey (LFS)	AES Ranking	LFS Ranking
Sweden	73.4	32.0	1	1
Finland	55.0	23.1	2	3
Norway	54.6	18.7	3	4

[13] For the seven-year period 2007-2013, following the entry in the EU of other late devloping countries and regions, the number of Italian regions to benefit from European structural funds in Objective Convergence went down to four Campania, Calabria, Puglia and Sicily.

United Kingdom	49.3	26.6	4	2
Germany	45.4	7.5	5	7
Slovakia	44.0	4.1	6	14
Estonia	42.1	6.5	7	10
Austria	41.6	13.1	8	5
Cyprus	40.6	7.1	9	8
Bulgaria	36.4	1.3	10	17
Lithuania	33.9	4.9	11	12
Latvia	32.7	6.9	12	9
Spain	30.9	10.4	13	6
Italy	**22.2**	**6.1**	**14**	**11**
Poland	21.8	4.7	15	13
Greece	14,5	1.9	16	16
Hungary	9.0	3.8	17	15

Tab. 7: Percentages of adults taking part in scholastic and non scholastic learning/training, ages between 25 and 64 (AES and LFS-2006 survey, %). Source: Eurostat, 2008.

4. The relation between education and employment

The transition from education to employment is one of the most delicate moments in the Italian context. The times of transition are long and cause long-term unemployment, at higher levels of qualifications too, while the results themselves are fraught with difficulties. Indeed, the percentage of those with degrees or diplomas whose jobs have nothing to do with their qualifications is the highest in Europe. Italy is also the European country with the lowest number of young people finding work immediately after training, while the percentage of those taking two years to find a job is the highest (ISTAT, 2009a). In spite of this, the probability of entering the work market increases by 2.4% with every year of school attendance and the effect of each teaching year on the probability of getting a job is an average of 1.6% and 3% in the South. (Rossi-Doria, 2009: 96).

Within the Italian context where educational, economic development and employment policies have a greater tradition of separation than integration, the corporate and school worlds also live a mirroring condition of self-reference, with very few exchanges and poor capacity for communication, with some virtuous exceptions.

It is an economic context in which the labour market shows difficulty in expressing a clear-cut demand for training, partly because companies are prevalently small in size and consequently need no highly specialised workers. In general employers ask for "diploma-holders with some work experience however limited". Nevertheless, we have to highlight that *a diploma would not have been necessary* for almost half diploma holders with permanent jobs, and only 35% of those with technical diplomas have jobs where their particular diploma is essential (Associazione Treelle, 2008). These figures become even more worrying if it is taken into consideration that more generally 43% of 15 to 35 year olds have jobs which have nothing to do with their training. Moreover, 35% of teenagers between 15 and 19 are inactive, non-school attenders - a figure much higher than the European average (*ibidem*).

In September 2009 the Minister of Work, Health and Social Policies together with the Minister of Education, Universities and Research, presented a project entitled "Italy 2020. A Plan of action for youth employment by integrating learning and working", based in particular on re-launching technical-vocational education, enhancing apprentice contracts and on the need to reform the university offer to reduce *mismatches* between demand and offer of work. This strategy has led up to now to the reform of the second cycle of education which

passed through parliament 1° September 2010, providing for a completely reorganized and simplified panorama of choices, in order to replace the hundreds of experiments that have followed one another in attempts to renew the secondary school offer since the 1990s.

The Law provides for: 6 high schools; two sectors of technical institutes with 11 courses typologies; 2 sectors of vocational institutes with six course typologies; a system of vocational instruction and training run exclusively by the Regions (IFP).

The technical institutes have been reorganized and reinforced with a new identity based on a scientific-technological axis, while vocational training concentrates on economic and productive matters.

The Regions control the IFP courses leading to a three-year professional qualification or a four-year professional diploma recognised at national level. Prevision is also made for re-entry in the school system to obtain a secondary school certificate or attend a specific training course organized jointly with universities (MIUR, 2010 c-d).

Aiming to establish a connection between education and employment, the system of higher education has been undergoing reform since 2000, in the context of the Bologna process, an international reform of higher education which aims to realize within 2010 the European Space of Higher Education.

The reform introduces into the university regulations a first level degree (three years) and a second level specialist degree (two years). The new short three-year and specialist degrees were intended to reinforce professional competences to be spent immediately in the labour market, and strengthen the link between education and labour market. However, the three-year degree system has not encouraged the access of the young into the work market; it has rather led to an incredible and uncontrollable multiplication of degree programmes, with self-referential and self-serving moves from the universities.

The development of IFTS (Higher Education and Technical Training) (IFTS)[14] is still very uncertain and has not managed to assert itself as an alternative to tertiary academic education, partly because of the centrality and hypertrophy of the university in spite of the legal innovations [15]. Some regions, however, (especially Emilia Romagna, Tuscany and Piedmont) are making investments in these post-secondary non-university courses.

5. Towards the regionalization of the education system?

As we have seen, the Italian education system reveals severe inequalities and imbalances between the territories, especially between the north and the south of the country. The process of re-organizing powers between State and Regions is leading progressively towards the constructing of regional education system with different strategies, organizational models

[14] The IFTS system is a training channel of higher technical specialization which aims primarily to facilitate the access of the young into work or requalify workers with previous experience. It is a training track integrating school, vocational and university resources with the labour market.

[15] The IFTS system was introduced with the law (legge n. 144/1999) entitled “Measures for investments, delegation of power to the Government for the reorganization of incentives for employment and norms regulating INAIL, as well as dispositions for the re-organization of social security bodies”, and amended with the DPCM del 25 gennaio 2008 “Decree of the Prime Minister with the wording "Guidelines for the re-organization of the system of Higher Technical Education and Training and the creation of Upper Technical Institutes" in order to accelerate the entry of young people into the labour market and re-qualify those with also previous work experience.

and objectives. In order to give an account of this increasing complexity and at the same time offer a more vivid and dynamic picture of the transformation in progress, a comparison will be made between two different regional systems, bearing in mind some of the dimensions already investigated in the above analysis of the national context: the issue of access to education and training, the contrasting dynamics leading to dropping out and dispersion, strategies for reducing *mismatching* between education and employment.

The next paragraph will focus on Lombardy, the economic engine of the country, since the nineties involved in creating a strong regional government calling for autonomous competences and powers in the prospect of devolution, a political workshop and avant-guard of federalism at a national level. The paragraph following will be instead dedicated to Campania, one of the four Italian regions of the Objective Convergence (together with Puglia, Sicily and Calabria), one of the poorest and most densely populated areas in Europe, featuring a strong informal economy fed by broad swathes of unofficial work.

5.1 Lombardy

Lombardy has 9,852,170 inhabitants (as of 04/30/10), 16.3% of the Italian population. It is the largest region in Italy, considered one of Europe's four power-houses, producing 18% of the GDP (2010). Eurostat data class Lombardy in second place in Europe, behind the region of Île-de-France, with a GDP of €326,130,5m.

5.1.1 The labour market

According to ISTAT data on the workforce in the second quarter 2010, there are 4,294,000 in work in Lombardy. Male unemployment stands at 5.2%, female at 6%, while for the same period the national level is 8.2% (ISTAT, 2009b).

However positive these data may seem, a recent research promoted by Milan's Chamber of Commerce and Unioncamere Lombardia reveals how the effects of the present economic crisis have affected the young and, though to a lesser degree, the better educated too. In 2009 20% of the previous year's graduates had not found work and the overall rate of graduate unemployment under thirty rose from 7% in 2008 to 10.8%. Of those who have found work, only one out of four has some stable form of employment. Overall, one job out of three (36%) is temporary, offering a low level of security. Thanks to internships, more than one out of ten graduates has worked, though often not remunerated. Instability affects women more than men, given that in spite of being better educated (55.7% of graduates at a regional level), 70% of females have temporary jobs against 56% of males.

5.1.2 Education and training

13.5% of the schools present in Italy are in Lombardy: 3,074 kindergartens, 2,463 primary schools, 1,216 middle, 888 secondary, 12 universities. Of the over 7,500 schools present on regional territory, 67.5% are public and the remaining 32.5% accredited. Lombardy has 19% of accredited schools with 9% of pupils in 2007/2008 against a national average of 5.1%, up 0.6 points in the last few years (0.4 the national average) (IRER, 2010).

In 2007 public spending on schooling in Lombardy was 7,137 billion euros, with a cost per capita of 6,721 euros. (Bordignon, Fontana, 2010).[16]

Schooling rates in Lombardy are higher than the national average: 17.4% of the population has only an elementary school certificate (national average 20.1%), 42.6% possesses a lower secondary school or vocational qualification (national average 40.9%), and 28.6% has a high school leaving certificate (national average 28.7%) while 11.4% are graduates (national average 10.3%) (ISTAT, 2010a).

In Lombardy the drop-out rate from education/training stood at 19.7% for 2009, a figure well above the ceiling set by Lisbon at 10% for 2010. Of the northern regions only Piedmont recorded a higher level (20.6% in 2009), while there is a clear distance from the other northern regions (11.3% in Liguria, 15.0% in Emilia-Romagna and 16.3% in Veneto). The Lombard drop-out rate has risen in the last three years (from 18.3% in 2007 to 19.8% in 2009), a trend which puts Lombardy with other northern regions (Piedmont and Veneto but not Emilia-Romagna or Liguria), and which is a real reversal of a moderate long-term reduction in drop-outs (IRER, 2010). As we shall see, the recent reform of the regional system of vocational education and training furnishes the main strategy for opposing school drop outs at a regional level and is worth discussing for its implications and importance.

Lombard figures for lifelong learning are not very different from national statistics, which see about 6.2% involved in courses (ISFOL, 2003, 2009). As confirmed eloquently by the words of the Regional Secretary of a specialized trade-union:

"The education system is insufficient in that it forgets the forty and fifty year olds. There is no education on offer for adults, it does not exist. We need a system of lifelong training to be just that, capable of following the needs first of primary education and then the rest, training, capable of meeting requests for conversion and in-training, or simply to have a good life, a dignified life in terms of knowledge and competences".

5.1.3 Lombard governance of education

The Lombard method of governance is defined by a particular neo-liberal interpretation of the principles of subsidiarity. While horizontal subsidiarity is seen in terms of attempts to build conditions of competition, with an emphasis on freedom of choice, vertical subsidiarity is perceived in terms of a regional, strongly hierarchical neo-centralism. Within this framework Lombardy privileges the role of the demand of "citizen-recipients" in choosing services to purchase, thanks to a voucher system of money transfer. This is very evident mainly in health care, but it is also a progressive tendency in the social sector and, as will be described, in education, introduced by a gradual "voucherization" of services. The Lombard mode of governance mixes a hierarchical structure with a marketing rationale, so tending to weaken all intermediate subjects and reinforce the power of the centre as the dispenser of resources and distributor of benefits. Such a centralist type of governance is characterized by a strong tendency to privatize services (Bifulco et al., 2008).

Over the last ten years the Lombardy Region has been very active in the field of educational policies with interventions in line with its dynamics. For this reason it created a single council department for education, training and work (Arifl – Agenzia regionale per l'Istruzione, la Formazione e il Lavoro), which deals with regional programming. In the year 2000 a school

[16] The distribution of spending in Lombardy per public body source , expressed in millions of euros is the following: State 5733m; Region 4m, Provinces 225m, Municipalities 1175m.

voucher was introduced, distributing funding for all children enrolled in primary or secondary schools secondary level, either public or private. The voucher was configured as a right to purchase educational services from accredited public or private providers. It gave a partial re-imbursement of the sums paid for fees, taxes, enrolment charges and school attendance. Between 2001 and 2007 417,000 pupils benefited from this voucher for an overall cost of about 275 million euros. In this period of time there was a rise both in the number of beneficiaries and annual costs (IRER, 2010).

In 2007 the Region then presented a law of organic reform of the system of education and training (l.r. 19/2007), assuming total control over the running of these courses. The law provides for the unification of the system of public technical and vocational training (IFP) under the control of the Lombard Region. The cardinal principles of this law place emphasis on the central importance of the individual, freedom of choice and the educative function of the family (art. 2). It was established that in order to remove obstacles to access and free choice of educational courses, the Region can attribute contribution and subsidies (art. 8). The Region has decided to no longer finance training activities directly, but distribute individual tokens which can be used to buy training packets offered by accredited training bodies. The voucher principle has been put in place in the whole education system by means of the introduction of the so-called "tokens" including: "school token" (ex school voucher); "vocational and training token" which finances attendance at vocational /training courses; and "training tokens " for lifelong learning for those beyond school age. The token is a funding instrument aimed at demand, and designed to replace the distribution of resources according to offer[17].

5.1.4 Education and reformed vocational training

The three years of vocational courses reformed by the 19/2007 Law have registered a notable increase in pupils, passing from 620 in 2003 to 36,296 in 2008. 13,555 pupils enrolled in the first year in 2007/2008, and counted for 13.1% of the total number of first year students in secondary schooling. The regional system of vocational instruction / training is affirming itself as an alternative to traditional studies, to such a point that Lombardy is the region with the most pupils in vocational courses in Italy. In general terms Lombardy's 2007 Reform seems to have drawn up a model for an early streaming and division between traditional education and vocational training. With this model, education for academically weaker pupils passes exclusively under the Region, which directs them to be quickly inserted in the labour market. Thus there is a risk of creating a dual model based on inclusion/exclusion, reflected in terms of opportunities and taking part in a democracy and having aspirations (Appadurai, 2004).

Vocational courses are offered by about a hundred accredited operators (public and private) all belonging to a Regional Register, and receiving funding of 120 million euros a year. The offer is based, however, on only a few traditional qualifications (hairdressing, beauty care, catering, mechanics, electrics, electronics) which count for more than 70% of the courses on offer in the various Lombard provinces. Their professional profiles do not coincide completely with employers' demands and do not appear to be in line with the economic development of the territories involved. As an interviewee confirms:

[17] Resources destined to the token system in Lombardy were distributed as follows: schooling was financed for €195,921,000 euro (€120,439,000 for vocational education and training and €75,482,000 for the school system), and for training €25.000.000 euro (IRER, 2010).

"the risk (is) having totally fragmented education levels with peaks and exaggerated dips and with discriminating policies the consequence of the fact that you know you can take part in the democratic life of your country and contribute with your ideas to your country, if instead you do not know, do not know, you cannot take part. Therefore, besides, the risk is of a very heavy process of exclusion. In short, if I know I have a right to take part, if I do not know even if I want to I have no right to take part, because I have not got the competences to withstand comparisons" (Regional Secretary of specialized trade-union).

In this context the introduction of a token system has accelerated competition between training bodies who try both to cut costs and to guarantee for themselves foreseeable funds by offering the most requested courses in order to reduce risk of failure. A recent study on the token system for schooling and vocational training, commissioned by the Region itself, holds that "the token, which the Region proposes as a mechanism to stimulate competition among the bodies and nail the offer of training to the demand, has for the moment awarded the bodies most adept at applying for tokens and not necessarily those offering more innovative courses and new job openings. It has awarded students quicker at enrolling and not necessarily those making better job choices". As confirmed in our interviews:

"To manage the mechanism (of the token) a lot of work and bureaucracy goes into the information system and calls for attention to procedures and admin which has changed the work of operators: I deal with coordination and much of my activity is taken up in telling centres how to work and what the procedures and times are, with an eye on detail which is not at the heart of the educational offer […] Not all courses reach the maximum number of students […]there are not tokens for everybody. The Region decides that there are 50 tokens for mechanics at Lecco, and when they are finished there are no more, but every body can present offers for mechanics. In order not to get in one other's way, bodies make agreements, but in some situations, like beauticians, there is much competition" (Head of vocational training institute).

There is in fact little pupil guidance, briefing is not organized and anyway entrusted almost exclusively to the training bodies themselves. The token eliminates all mediation because it assumes that token-holders apply directly to the service providers, and therefore individual needs are not perceived in social terms. And then the system leaves token-holders very little time in which to obtain information and thus make informed choices, paradoxically creating an asymmetric power relationship allowing very little freedom of choice to students and encouraging the construction of unadaptable training packets which are difficult to personalize.

"*Furthermore it's a rigid packet because once I have decided (on a personalized individual project) or a teaching project, it is difficult to change it, the procedure is complex and not immediate and this hampers any change of direction"* (Head of a vocational training institute).

5.2 Campania

With its 5,824,625 residents, Campania is the second most highly populated region after Lombardy, and has the highest density of population (428,15 inhab/km²). It is a region with very marked imbalance, first of all in the distribution of its inhabitants over the territory. Some provinces are scarcely habited while the regional capital, Naples, is one of the most heavily populated cities in Italy (2,632 ab/km²). On a social level, an insufficient and poorly

distributed quota of socio-sanitary infrastructures, an increase in poverty and unemployment, supply a fertile ground for social unrest and an ever-increasing criminality.

Campania is one of the poorest regions in western Europe: the Region's GDP is 6.3% of the Italian whole and the GDP per capita in 2005 was 15,492 euros, against an Italian average of more than 24,000 euros per head, and a Lombard one of more than 30,000 (ISTAT, 2010b). Nevertheless, as will be explained below, the role of illegal work and its GDP production needs to be remembered, though obviously they cannot be considered in these statistics and numbers. In ISTAT estimation in 2008, illegal work in Italy is between 16.3% and 17.5% of the total GDP (ISTAT, 2010a).

As one of the Italian regions belonging to the EU Objective Convergence, Campania has a total EU funding of €6.9 billion, with €3.4 coming from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), 11.8% of the total EU funds coming into Italy in the 2007-13 Convergence campaign (Regione Campania, POR 2007-2013). Nowadays, though the Region possesses a substantial economic potentiality, it is still afflicted by some endemic, apparently insurmountable problems (refuse disposal, gangs and organized crime, submerged workforce, a sluggish economy).

5.2.1 Educational and employment systems

In 2009 there were 1.59 million with jobs, with an employment rate of 40.8%, well 16.6% below the national average and poles apart from the Lisbon target of 70% (*ibidem*). The unemployment level is about 14.3% against the national 8.2%. The gap between men and women is very wide: male unemployment is about half the female level (11.9% against the female 20.8%). For the 15-24 year-olds it is 38.8%, in comparison to a national rate of 24%. In addition, 50% of the young unemployed have been on the search for jobs for at least 12 months.

The data reveal in fact a labour market with a great many structural problems. On one hand there is a gap between demand and offer, partly due to the low demand for personnel and an unskilled/semi-skilled offer. On the other hand, there is a high level of illegal work, which in 2007 stood at 17.3%, well above the national rate (11.8%). This is a partial reason for such low GDP figures in Campania: a substantial part of work productivity cannot be included in the official statistics. It can neither be perceived nor identified, given its invisibility. For this reason there have been many projects to make this issue emerge and transfer workers to the legal job market. Over the last few years, in fact, there has been a noteworthy reduction of illegal work, falling from 23% in 2001 to today's figure of about 17 % (*ibidem*). Lastly, the low participation of women in the working environment and the higher level of female unemployment indicate the lasting resistance to women entering the labour market, but it is also partially explained by the high level of illegal work.

On the education level, the indicators on schooling in the region – percentages of primary and secondary school education and diplomas – are not only lower than the national average and the Lisbon target, but also under regions in the Convergence area. There are high levels of dropping out between the ages of 6 and 14. Campania is, indeed, one of the Italian regions where middle-school children are regularly enrolled, though never attend. The Lisbon indicators show that in 2005 27.9% of those between 18 and 24 in Campania possessed pre-secondary school certification, and did not follow any further courses of instruction/training. The figure goes down to 27.4% for the Convergence Area and, still further

again to 22.4% for Italy (Regione Campania, POR FSE 2007-2013). The percentage of secondary schooling among 20 to 24 year olds is on the increase, but in 2007 only 66.9% of 20-24 year-olds possessed a secondary school diploma, against the 73% of the national average. There is also a high percentage of adults (25-64) who have at the most a middle-school certificate. 49.4% of those between 19 and 34 possess a secondary school certificate (national average 57.9%) (Regione Campania, POR FSE 2007-2013). As regards lifelong learning, there are lower percentages than the national average (5% against 6.2) for workers or non-workers in post-school age who take part in training activities (ISTAT, 2009a).

In the adoption of teaching equipment Campania seems to be growing well above the national average (131.8 against 100), but the high regional average depends largely on the figures registered in the province of Naples, which with an index of 188 registers a value that is above the regional average and almost twice that of the Convergence (103.6). Nevertheless, the significant increase in the adoption of teaching equipment does not always go side by side with an efficient, continuous and widespread use, and risks a slow and progressive decline in quality and functioning.

Though a tendency to create paths for facilitating transition from education to the labour market can be identified, education and employment are both complicated areas in a poor region like Campania. Unemployment, indeed, makes Campania one of the most problematic regions in Western Europe, which is why it is included in the Convergence Objective, the EU cohesion policy aiming at converging European regions with slow development.

5.2.2 Multilevel policy making

The context of the Region's educational policies reveals some specific logics, dynamics and interventions. In particular it is relevant to highlight the roles of EU and the Region that are, for different reasons and institutional duties, the two main actors in the frame of policy intervention.

Since Campania records a GDP 75% lower than the EU 25 average, it is included in the Objective Convergence, the EU cohesion policy aiming at converging European regions with slow development. Two EU funds play a part: one is ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) and the other ESF (European Social Fund). One of the axes of the POR (Operating Regional Plan) 2000-2006 FESR was the focus on human resources with special attention to the labour market and training/education. It focused especially on reinforcing and guiding territorial and individual competences towards innovation and the creation of resources in the region. In the FESR POR 2007-2013, the axis "Urban development and life quality" refers particularly to education and smoothing the passage of young people into the labour market with the "Supportive cities and open schools" programme. It takes the form of general interventions helping the young and facilitating their getting jobs[18].

Nevertheless, the investments have not produced the desired results, and the region is still one of the poorest and most problem-afflicted in Western Europe. Trying to reduce the inter-regional gaps and inequalities, the POR EFS 2007-2013 has followed in the footsteps of its predecessor, increasing and diversifying the context and modalities of intervention. 54%

[18] Interventions including polyfunctional neighbourhood centres for the young willing to collaborate with schools, universities and youth associations; the creation of centres for the potentially emarginated, socially and economically, also to help them re-enter the labour market; the creation of social, sports, cultural and leisure infrastructures in schools, so as the favour access out of school hours as well as the quality and accessbilitity of eduactionl services and to incentivate use to promote occasions fo metings on the territory (P.O.R FESR 2007-2013).

of the expenditure will be placed on the objectives of the Lisbon strategy, with a significant support to research and development, technological innovation and its diffusion through the region. The intervention is divided into seven axes: Adaptability, Employability, Social inclusion, Human capital, Trans-nationality/Inter-regionality, Technical assistance, Institutional capacity. The first two focus on training and employment, the third on moving actions opposing discrimination also at work (with specific reference to immigrants) and the fourth focuses on education systems, training and lifelong learning, drop-outs, access to education and training, vocational and university.

Even if the actors identified are just the same as in Lombardy, a real model of education and training does not exist. This is partly due to the comings and goings of councils and the consequent modifications in competences and departments. In fact, in the past there was only one department in charge of educational and vocational policies, but nowadays there are two: one is a department covering education and school buildings, cultural promotion, museums and libraries, while the other deals with work, training and training guidance, emigration and immigration policies. The issues of corruption and patronage/string pulling, the problem of organised crime in the region are part of the political decision-making. They play a relevant role in administering all policy levels and create some peculiar dynamics that need to be considered in order to understand the context and circumstances.

With the aim of achieving the targets set by the Lisbon Strategy, helped by the financial support of the EU, Campania has invested in the last few years in education and training. Hence the passing of the Regional Law[19] guaranteeing the full exercise of the right to study and training as well as life long learning, not only foreseeing instruments of economic support but also projects preventing pupils dropping out. The region keeps the function of financing, general and specific programming, coordination and experimentation, while the Provinces will approve intervention plans, drawn up jointly with the Municipalities, schools, training bodies and cultural institutions present on the territory, and will manage resources and intervention together with the Municipalities.

The general norms for vocational training are in the Regional Law 14/2009[20], passed by the previous city council towards the end of its mandate. A legislative intervention was set up to create an integrated regional system of services for the use and creation of an agency for work and the schools, with the function of monitoring and implementing the programming lines defined by the region and containing measures for sustaining female, immigrant and disabled employment as well as for contrasting unemployment and social exclusion. Also foreseen are interventions for vocational training and apprenticeships. The specific target of the T.U. is to bring into the open all the irregular work, which is about 20% in Campania, as well as decentralize the training functions between Regions and Provinces. As for the system of vocational training, the Region carries out the role of total system coordinator via programming, controlling and supplying of support services, passing to the Provinces the implementation, management and monitoring of vocational training. An Individual Formative Plan was also created. It is a tool for fragile pupils that aim to define for each of them an appropriate training course and extra-scholastic activities in relation to the qualification to be obtained.

[19] "Norme regionali per l'esercizio del diritto all'istruzione e alla formazione".
[20] "Single text for the betterment of work and professional training".

5.2.3 Access, opportunities and capabilities

As shown above, both European and regional programming seem to be equipped to answer the main problems of the Region. Nevertheless, the level of policy implementation reveals aspectswhich are worth discussing and analyzing. In fact, as has emerged from some privileged witnesses, the resources destined for the vocational training of the young and adult lifelong learning are improperly used, side-lined for social welfare in a context of a labour market with ample margins of illegal labour, very high percentages of unemployment and little work for some specific groups (women, immigrants, the young):

"about vocational training politicians have always reasoned in an incorrect way in the sense that they have used it as social benefits without any professional outlets. Unfortunately it has always been an investment for unemployment benefits, which has led to two distortions: the person is in some way "drugged" into not working, in that he/she is not directed into the labour market. Unemployment benefits should come in monetary form not training. Besides, trainers should be trained, to avoid operators staying in training for life" (President of a Campania employers' association).

Moreover, a different kind of deviated use of resources emerges. In some cases, as different interviewees explained, funds for vocational courses and non-public secondary instruction have been used for patronage. Since its institution in 1978 vocational training has become an instrument for distributing power among various interested political groups rotating around the council departments and the Region. As the President of a big consortium operating in the Naples area providing paths of escorted insertion in the labour market and courses of vocational training:

"vocational training is a big problem in the region... Three years ago an enquiry was carried out at regional level showing that training serves to combat unemployment among the trainers. In the sense that the students are selected by the regions, the rationale of belonging to workers' movements prevails over the selection; therefore they serve to distribute power and money among them, but the people come a couple of times a week for two hours and sign as if they were there all the time. And if you throw them out, you risk it, because you go against the association, the movement, the party they belong" (Head of a vocational training agency in Campania).

What emerges from the interviews is a very confused panorama, especially from the point of view of the vocational training of the young and the channels for inserting the more disadvantaged into work. As the President of the Consortium underscores:

"and especially for boys and girls, training practically does not exist. The previous town council made Law 14, a regional employment law which provides for schools making applications to bans; only that the bans are not published because the money has already been used up with courses for adults in workers' movements and the basic income measure. To give an idea, since we have been a training body the only bans to come out in 3 or 4 years have been for the 306, in-service training for those in employment" (Head of a vocational training agency in Campania).

The situation seems therefore to be far more complex than it appears from statistics and number-crunching. If in fact from an analysis of the regional operative plans and the measures drawn up to tackle the question of unemployment and the education/employment transit, the possibility seems to emerge of building personalized paths and interventions adapted to specific circumstances, difficulties emerge on a practical level regarding both capabilities and opportunities. It is not that only personalized programming

based on specific student needs does not exist, but neither does programming itself. The only chance is in "self-financed" private courses held by recognized private agencies, where fees must be paid without any hope of financial help or reimbursement:

"for self-financing, there are no problems: students pay and should have 600 or 800 contact hours. At the end they have an examination and certificate recognized by the State. It's about 2000 to 3000 euros; but often you come to an agreement, pay half, under the counter, and we say you have attended even if you haven't, you buy the certificate and do your workshop" (Head of a vocational training agency in Campania).

The message that is spread, the rationale arising from these practices is that the "real" craftsmanship is only learned via an apprenticeship. Nevertheless, to access this possibility, a privileged channel is needed, which can be purely economic or the result of string-pulling. And in this case self-financed courses are a quick way of accessing vocational training and the labour market. It is however a channel opens only to a few, and ruled by the rationale of patronage and payment rather than equality and the promotion of a student's capacities.

Moreover, there is the issue of the European funds which Campania and the South of Italy have used both in these and similar fields (health, social policies), which seem to have gone down in value because of the continual transfer of financing duty from State to Regions. The situation has worsened in the last few years partly because of the economic crisis. What seems to have happened is that resources coming from the EU and the programmes based on them have ended by taking the place of State intervention:

"we have the feeling that the South has not used national but European funds for normal activities and for IT, and therefore there is no surplus of IT in the school of the South of Italy" (Campania regional department for work).

Furthermore, the emergency habit, i.e. the political definition of every question of every issue as an emergency, means that funds allocated are always channelled for projects that aim to fill in existing cracks, not for long-term programming:

"yes, if there was a POR for 13 million, it is lost money, not really used... if perhaps the will was there chances would be there too, but the emergencies are so many that other things are done. Beside the fact that vocational training has been used very much for patronage" (Head of a vocational training agency in Campania).

As for the drop out rate, Campania features high levels in the age-group 6-14. In 2003, 4.7% of the children did not appear to be enrolled in a regular course of study (against 4. 5% in the South and 3.7% in Italy as a whole) (DPS Annual Report 2006[21]). However, between 1994/95 and 2004/05, the number of pupils attending upper secondary schools increased by 20%, settling at 90.6%, while the percentage of drop-outs in the first two years of the secondary school remains high (10.6% in 2004/05, against 9.3% in the Convergence Area and 7.1% in the whole of Italy) (ISTAT, 2010a).

Social policies targeted at minors and families, which have seen the multiplication of services and projects have helped reduce the number of drop-outs from the educational circuit by cutting down losses at primary school level. Nevertheless 4. 7% of children between 6 and

[21] 1st DPS on interventions in under-used areas 2006.

14 are not recorded as enrolled in regular courses of study (against 4.5% in the South and 3. 7% in Italy).

The gap registered between national averages and other indicators is worrying. An example is given by the figures relating to losses in middle schools. The highest percentage in all Italy is in Campania, and seems to be linked to the unemployment rate and the level of relative poverty. What helps worsen the situation is the drop-out rate in the first year of the secondary school, which in 2003/04 was at 14.7%, above both the national level (11.7%) and that of the south (13.4%).

In order to contrast this situation, the Campania Region issued "Guide Lines to contrast dropping out of school and for new integrated courses" in 2006. An overall strategy is described – involving all the bodies interested in the educational/training system of the Region – to sustain the full exercise of the right to study for a whole schooling career, but also to prevent, contrast and retrieve school losses and training failures. Thus the creation of PAS, experimental alternatives courses, which aim to try to bring back and keep in the system the young who have been mislaid, those who have completed the middle school successfully but who do not appear in any school/training course. The PAS aims to forge a link between schools, training bodies and employers.

Nevertheless, the situation is discouraging, from what the operators say. Schools are perceived as cages for pupils from the weaker classes, who find it difficult to go along with the regularity and obligations required by the formal courses and contact lessons featured by the school system. The scarcity of other options, paths and tracks means that these students can only exit the system. As the head if a vocational training agency says:

"those expelled do not find a suitable school for their competences, which are anyway complex, like those of the students still in school [...]. We must have the strength to say that a school does not necessarily mean being shut up in an institute and that education is not just what is in the Gentile Plan. Partly because those lost do other things, but there is also a percentage who does nothing. As for the latter, either the families do not know it and imagine they still go to school, or they do nothing" (Head of a vocational training agency in Campania).

No voice seems to get promotion: the students or in general young people coming on to the labour market and particularly those in difficulty struggle to find solutions and paths which allow them to structure effective opportunities and promote capacities and free choice. The driving force behind these types of courses are need and zero-choice in a regime of opportunities out of kilt with a capacity approach.

In spit of the creation of policies and interventions based on rights and the definition of the young as citizens, the low level of resources leaves no space for effective capacitation practices.

Conclusions

As we have seen, the process of constitutional reform has tried to re-adjust relations and powers between the various levels of government with overlapping and conflicting competences, uncertain and contradictory results.

The national education system is undergoing a progressive diversification operating at different speeds in the various regions. In general terms structural factors of imbalance remain among the regions, risking emphasizing inequality in the access to education and worsening the disparities affecting the most disadvantaged pupils.

If education is not held in consideration, protected and supported by public policies as a common good, the running of education systems according to criteria of economic performance risks making meaningless the concept of the right to education itself. In the context of the Italian policy, the institutional resources destined to education appear insufficient for keeping count of the differing starting points of the students and upholding heir capacities. The school system is unable to emancipate those who start with social and cultural disadvantages by redistributing opportunities via education. Consequently the areas where most poverty is concentrated generally feature a high level of drop-outs.

The high rate of pupils dropping out of school points to intrinsic limits in the overall functioning of the system. The numbers can be considered to highlight the inclusive capacity of the system and the quality of teaching. Failure cannot be reduced to being an indicator of individual failure alone, but should be recognized and discussed publically as the sign of an institutional stalemate. Public agencies should be measured on their capacity to furnish support and a system of opportunities to the weakest individuals. As Marco Rossi-Doria (2009:15) suggests, “a request for special attention and help from the weakest group of pupils must not be understood as being just for them - for those who have fallen out of the school - but instead involves everyone. Indeed the pupils who have fallen out of school are doubtless in a state of total exclusion from opportunities and are bearers of special urgency and requests”.

But what Italian schools offer is too rigid and standardized, with very little chance of any personalization to suit the training/teaching needs of pupils. Pupils’ needs are predefined and generally they themselves are not recognized as individuals with a right to voice within the training process which concerns them. Programmes and subjects are mainly indifferent to the requests of the young, and poorly equipped to recognize their capabilities. Educational policies are above all scarcely integrated with social and work policies. The sectoral nature of the interventions does not allow sufficiently structured courses which take into account the social background of the pupils. This explains why weaker individuals are creamed out and discriminatory processes are not forestalled.

Even the move from education to employment is anything but seamless: in the third quarter of 2010 the percentage of unemployed youngsters reached 24.7 per cent with a peak of 36% for women in the South (ISTAT, 2010a). The young take a long time to enter the job market and the passage has its problems: the percentage of employed possessing diplomas or degrees which are inappropriate for the work they do is the highest in Europe. It needs to be added that given that education, economic development and employment policies have a tradition of separation rather than integration, the widespread use of atypical contracts for the young and the international economic crisis risk transforming in the Italian context the “credit crunch” into a “youth crunch”, or into a real and proper instrument for mincing the young (Ferrera, 2009).

It is interesting to highlight how the Regions use their own institutional and organisational arrangements to respond to the problems of education and the transition form education to employment. Lombardy has laid its stakes on building a regional system of vocational education and training as an alternative to the traditional school programmes. Diversifying the system is seen as the principal strategy to contrast school drop-outs and at the same time

seamlessly link education and employment. A precocious channelling model separates off education and vocational training, which is considered the natural point of reference for more disadvantaged pupils, who are to be oriented towards getting jobs.

Lombardy has introduced a new means of financing education and vocational training based on accredited training agencies set in competition against one another in order to attract students with education vouchers. The personalization of course programmes is brought about via these instruments, which are recognized and defined as devices capable of sustaining by themselves freedom of choice for students, who can seek out the offer which is more in line with their own needs in the quasi-market of professional training. Freedom of choice is exercised via the acquisition of a predefined training packet from competitive service providers. The latter try to minimize work costs and at the same time guarantee a foreseeable source of financing by offering the courses most requested not necessarily by the labour market but by the training market in order to reduce the risk of failure. The voucher mechanism eliminates any social mediation from the applications and no mechanisms of collective and social elaboration are foreseen.

Campania has instead to take into account the highest national drop-out rate in lower secondary schooling plus widespread poverty. Resources coming from EU finances to Objective Convergence regions are programmed to take the place of state interventions rather than flank them. What stands out is that resources destined for vocational training are widely used incorrectly for social benefits, and distributed to educational agencies via a rationale of string-pulling, in a milieu featuring wide swathes of illegal work and very high levels of unemployment.

The links between employment and education are weak and poorly structured, left above all to the whims of local initiatives. Though regional programming of events to contrast schools drop-outs and unemployment refer continually to the language of social and citizen rights, the scarce and distorted use of resources does not appear to leave much space for effective capacitation practices.

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Institutional Mapping and Basic Ideas of the Case Study. National Report on Switzerland.

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Part 1: Institutional mapping

I. Education in Switzerland, a plurilingual and federalist country

Before presenting an institutional mapping of the Swiss education system, it is important to remind that Switzerland is a confederal State, a federation of 26 cantons. This means that regarding education affairs (as it is also the case in other domains such as social or tax policies), the question of the division of responsibilities between the different institutional and decisional levels is of crucial importance as are questions of harmonization (and/or uniformization) and coordination, given the decisional autonomy left to each canton. Beside general yardsticks, a quite complex picture appears when getting into details. The federalist and decentralized organization of the Swiss education system appears as a pragmatic response to cultural diversity within one country that recognizes 4 different languages as official languages (German, French, Italian and Romansch) and experiences different regional educational traditions.

A quick overview of the Swiss educational system organization

The Swiss Education System is broadly composed, as is commonly the case, of three main levels: primary, secondary and tertiary.
A pre-school level (école enfantine, Kindergarten), preparatory to the primary school, can be moreover distinguished. Compulsory in half of the 26 cantons, it is considered as an opportunity in the others. It generally lasts from one to two years (three in the Italian-speaking canton Ticino) and a vast majority of children attend the public (and free) pre-school.
Compulsory schooling generally begins at 6 years old and lasts nine years. Although there are differences from canton to canton, the Swiss education system splits between primary and lower secondary school. In most cantons, primary school lasts six years and lower secondary school three. Completion of this stage of education ends the obligation to attend school. Compulsory schooling is then composed of the primary and lower secondary level.
Upper secondary level constitutes the first phase of non-compulsory education. It lasts three to four years and ends with an upper secondary school qualification entitling students to enter directly professional life or tertiary education. Two main pathways can be distinguished at this stage: vocational training and education (around two thirds of all Swiss youth participate in some form of vocational training and education at the upper secondary level[22] and it lasts up to four years) and full-time schools providing a broad general education preparatory for the tertiary level (about a fourth of all Swiss youth). While almost 90% Swiss youngsters (89% in 2009) obtain at the age of 18 or 19 an upper secondary school qualification (OECD average is 82% in 2009[23]), almost 35% of the current Swiss population do not have a post-compulsory schooling education (Flückiger, 2007).
More precisely, there are four types of education open to students at the upper secondary level:

1. Vocational and education training generally combines theoretical courses at a vocational school and on-the-job training at a host company. This so-called « dual system » is close to the German and Austrian systems where the apprentice's training is also divided between two bodies: the employer and the vocational school. In Switzer-

[22] Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (2010). *Vocational and Professional Education and Training in Switzerland*, p. 3 (http://www.bbt.admin.ch/themen/berufsbildung/index.html?lang=en). See also Haefeli K. (2000). *Vocational Education in Switzerland: Facts, Figures and Prospects* (http://www.nccte.com/events/profdevseries/20000810kurthaefeli/haefelipaper.pdf).
[23] OECD (2009). *Education at a glance* (http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/41/25/43636332.pdf).

land, there are over 200 careers to choose from[24] and apprenticeship is the predominant form of vocational education. In the « dual system », apprentices do not pay any fees: the vocational courses are free for anyone who has an apprenticeship contract, which is approved by the cantonal authorities. The apprentices go to school one or two days per week and for 40 weeks per year during their training. Either during or after their apprenticeship, students can attend further training to qualify for a professional baccalaureate, a diploma that opens the doors of the universities of applied sciences without any entry exam (entry at the « generalist » university is also possible after passing a supplementary examination).

2. A smaller number of students choose however to learn a trade in a full-time vocational school, i.e. without apprenticeship at a host company. Trade or commercial schools generally offer these programmes. In both cases, at the end of their basic training, students take a final examination. If they are successful, they are awarded a Federal Apprenticeship Certificate (CFC), which is recognised all over the country. In terms of quantity, the most important sectors for vocational education are industry, crafts, trade, banking, insurance, transport, restaurants and hotels, the other service sectors, and home economics (Haefeli, 2000).

3. Students can attend a Matura School (lycée, cantonal school, grammar school), which provides a broad general education. It is the usual path for students who wish to go to the university. Holders of a baccalaureate or of a « gymnasiale matura » (maturity certificate) have directly access to the traditional academic university and can furthermore gain access to a university of applied sciences after completing a one-year internship.

4. Students may attend a specialized middle school which provides both general and specific subjects required for certain professions in health and social work, education, arts and music. This educational pathway can lead to a professional graduating certificate after completing complementary courses and additional training.

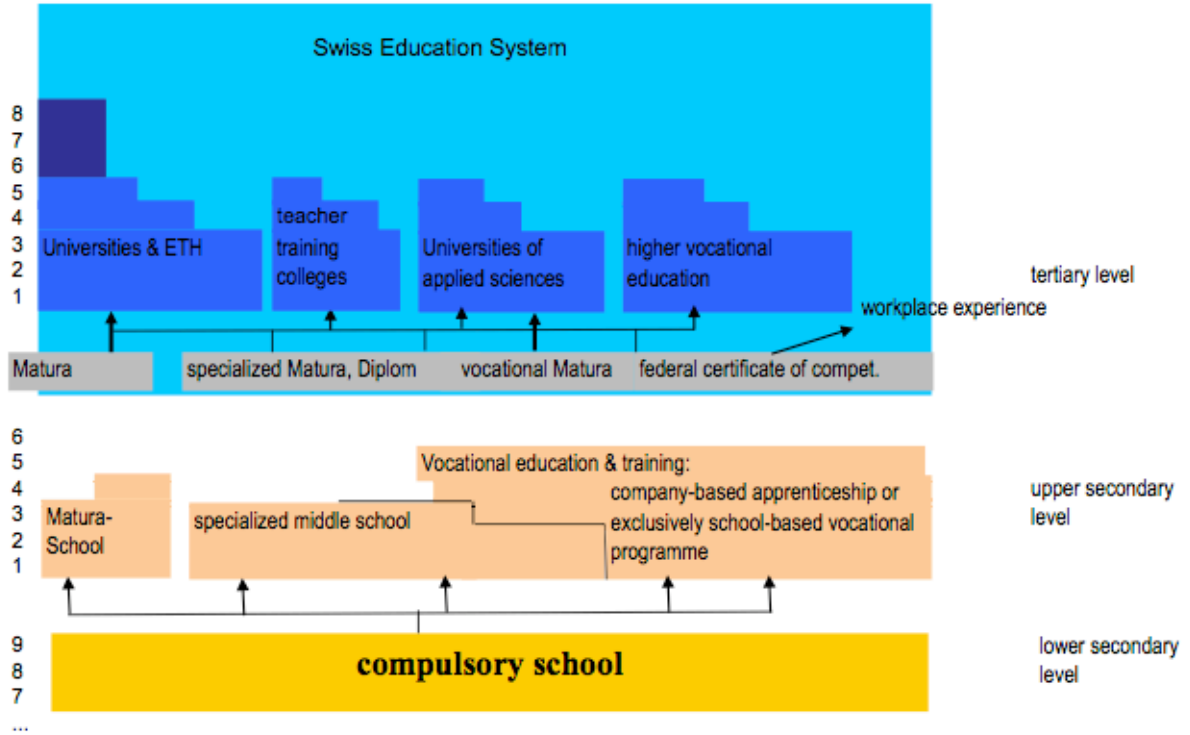
At the tertiary level, there are two types of higher education institutes with differing education pathways: on the one hand, the traditional universities (cantonal universities, federal institutes of technology and federal research institutes), centred on basic and academic research, and on the other hand, the universities of applied sciences (« hautes écoles spécialisées ») where teaching is based on applied research. The recent expansion of the Swiss higher educational system, through the establishment and growth of the universities of applied sciences, aimed to integrate this new type of university as an equal, although different, partner of the traditional academic universities.

We can finally evoke further education, which completes the educational system in Switzerland. Adults, i.e. the persons who have left the educational system and are working (or not), usually participate in further educational programmes for one of the two following reasons: either because they want to gain a formal qualification they failed to attain earlier in their life course, or because they want to further and complete their learning. Usually, the former is called « making up for credentials missed earlier in life » and the latter « further education ». Since the new Swiss law on vocational training was passed in 2004, it is possible to obtain work-based awards and professional qualifications through assessment. On the basis

[24] Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (2010). *Vocational and Professional Education and Training in Switzerland*, p. 3 (http://www.bbt.admin.ch/themen/berufsbildung/index.html?lang=en).

of a dossier and an interview, candidates must demonstrate that they have the operational skills required for the diploma of basic vocational training chosen. Any gaps in these skills can be addressed through additional training or more experience. If the candidate meets all the requirements, he graduates and obtains a vocational qualification recognized by the Confederation. From 2005 to 2009, the vocational training partners (confederation, cantons and labour organizations) have tested a validation procedure. Since the end of this test-phase, implementation has begun (2010).

Figure 1. Simplified view of the Swiss education system



Source: educa.ch

According to Seitz, Metzer and Kobler (2005), the main feature of the Swiss education system is a high level of differentiation. Indeed, stratification within the system starts already by the time of transition to and in lower secondary school, i.e. during the last years of compulsory education. Secondary schools are divided into two or three types according to different academic requirements (basic – intermediate – advanced). Again, upper secondary level is clearly differentiated as it is divided into full-time academic schools on the one hand and vocational education on the other hand. Following Seitz, Metzer and Kobler (2005), we can note that differentiation is associated with a limited permeability, both horizontal and vertical, between these different pathways of education and training.

More precisely, differentiation begins very early in educational pathways. Transition from primary to secondary school is of great importance as the achievement group pupils belong to determines to a large extent their further educational careers. Indeed, without attending a school of advanced or at least intermediate requirements, there are low prospects for entering a gymnasium, an intermediate school or a vocational education, which leads to the opportunity of obtaining the vocational Matura. Schools providing only basic requirements do not prepare pupils intensively enough for this transition because they focus less on « academic » content than advanced and intermediate schools, what corresponds also to pupils

with lower capacities and different motivations (Seitz, Metzer and Kobler, 2005). Furthermore, at upper secondary level, the general Matura alone opens access to all transitions within tertiary education. By contrast, the vocational Matura provides restricted transition opportunities since direct access to universities is not possible and entering a teacher training college for primary school teachers requires the completion of additional courses.

Main actors of the Swiss Education System

In Switzerland, both the education system and its administration have a federal structure: competencies are shared between the Confederation, the cantons and the municipalities, i.e. the basic local government units. All three levels have to cooperate, given the fact that legislative, implementation, follow-up and financing competencies differ according to the level and the type of education considered.

However, the Constitution places the main responsibility for education in the hands of the cantons that, along with municipalities, finance up to 87% of public sector education spending[25]. The latter have to ensure that all children receive adequate and free (in public schools) basic education (Art. 62). More precisely, responsibility for pre-school facilities and compulsory schooling (primary and lower secondary level) lies with the cantons.

The upper secondary level is regulated either by the Confederation (responsible in the field of vocational education) or the cantons (responsible for general education). Both authorities determine together the requirements for final upper secondary qualifications and the Confederation recognizes at national level the diplomas obtained.

At the tertiary level, the Constitution clearly divides the competencies between the Confederation, the cantons and the professional organizations: on the one hand, the Confederation regulates tertiary-level vocational education and education in the universities of applied sciences and in the two Swiss Federal Institutes of technology; on the other hand, the cantons are responsible for the cantonal universities. Employers and professional organizations are responsible for certificate and diploma exams of higher vocational education and training and for some of the colleges of higher education and training.

In sum, the Confederation:

- Supervises and funds the two federal institutes of technology;
- Is responsible for promoting research;
- Legislates on higher vocational education and training and on universities of applied sciences;
- Funds vocational education and training, the universities of applied sciences and the cantonal universities.

The cantons:

- Are responsible for the universities and are the main source of their financial support;
- Run the universities of applied sciences and a high number of higher vocational education and training colleges;

Supervise the universities of applied sciences.

[25] www.educa.ch/dyn/62904.asp.

Table 1. Swiss educational system: competencies/responsibility by level of education

Competencies	Level of education				
	Pre-compulsory schooling	Compulsory schooling	Vocational education and training	General education	University
Legislation	Canton	Canton (Confederation)	Confederation (Canton)	Canton (Confederation)	Canton (Confederation)
Implementation	Canton Municipality	Canton	Canton Professional associations	Canton Municipality	Canton Confederation

Source: OECD 1991

Public and private actors

The Swiss education system is broadly public. During compulsory schooling, only 5% of all pupils attend a private school. At upper secondary level, decisive for tertiary level and professional life, the differentiation between full-time schools and the dual-system of vocational education is reflected in different financing systems. Whereas both the gymnasium and intermediate schools are financed by the cantons (students pay small fees, if any), the vocational education is partly financed by the canton, partly by the professional associations and partly by the companies, which bear the training costs for their apprentices, including their salaries (vocational schools charge only small fees, which are paid by the students personally or by the companies).

In the field of vocational education and training, private sector organizations enjoy considerable prerogatives: they define the curriculum, organise vocational education and training and create apprenticeship slots in higher vocational education and training.

Let's finally mention one salient feature of further education in Switzerland: it is predominantly organized by private bodies and is mostly in the hands of institutions outside formal educational structures. According to Wolter et al. (2003), one third of all further education courses are run directly by employers, one quarter by associations, clubs or similar structures, and only 34% of all courses take place in private or publicly run schools, colleges… Although formal educational institutions have been increasingly involved in further education and adult learning by both federal and cantonal governments in their fight against growing unemployment, these figures confirm the primacy of the « private market » in the field of continuing education.

Recent inflexions and major changes

- Monitoring: The Confederation and the cantons have implemented together a monitoring of the educational and vocational system at national level.

- A new funding system for vocational education and training: the period 2008-2011 has brought about major changes in the funding system for vocational education and training. The eligible costs are calculated along performance-related criteria (which implies the reliable implementation of an information system able to collect and produce comparable data).

- Cooperation/decentralization (between cantons / between cantons and the confederation)

- Harmonization: since August 1st, 2009, the « HarmoS » concordat between the cantons has standardized a set of features of compulsory schooling on a national basis: the age of entry in compulsory schooling (from 6 years old to 4, equivalent to an extension of compulsory schooling from 9 to 11 years), the duration (reorganization of primary school timetables and introduction of « continuous schedules » - « horaires blocs »; towards an 8-year duration for primary school and a 3-year duration for lower secondary school) and the objectives of the different levels of education (introduction of education standards on a national basis and of evaluation and assessment of these objectives through monitoring), the bridges between these levels, the recognition of the diplomas.

In Switzerland, further education is primarily organised and paid for by private actors, even though an ever larger portion of the education market is covered by public sector providers, i.e. “traditional” universities and universities of applied sciences. Organised according to market economy criteria, continuing education offers advantages, on the one hand, as it is supposed to be tailored to the needs of the labour market and is flexible in terms of the available offers. On the other hand, there are also disadvantages, particularly with regard to access to education (Wolter 2001). Indeed, not all citizens can afford to attend continuing education or have an employer willing to cover the costs. As a matter of fact, participation in continuing education in Switzerland varies greatly depending on the group of people concerned. As it is assumed that a higher rate of continuing education would generate individual as well as economic and social benefits and that it is primarily financial factors that prevent non educationally active people from participating in continuing education, the Swiss confederation has considered the possibility of introducing education vouchers (instead of provider financing) as the right incentive tool to increase participation in continuing education (Messer and Wolter, 2009).

II. Some facts and figures about youth unemployment in Switzerland

Over the last two decades, inequalities – and especially income inequalities – have increased in most developed countries between highly qualified workers and those having achieved only intermediate or basic education. A large literature has documented what is called a skill premium on the labour market. Inversely, lack of qualifications usually comes with lower incomes and higher unemployment risks on the labour market. Among all workers, young adults are particularly concerned by these trends affecting developed economies. This general picture needs however a more precise description in the Swiss case, known for a long time as a place where youth unemployment was not considered as an urgent problem.

Swiss unemployment in a comparative perspective

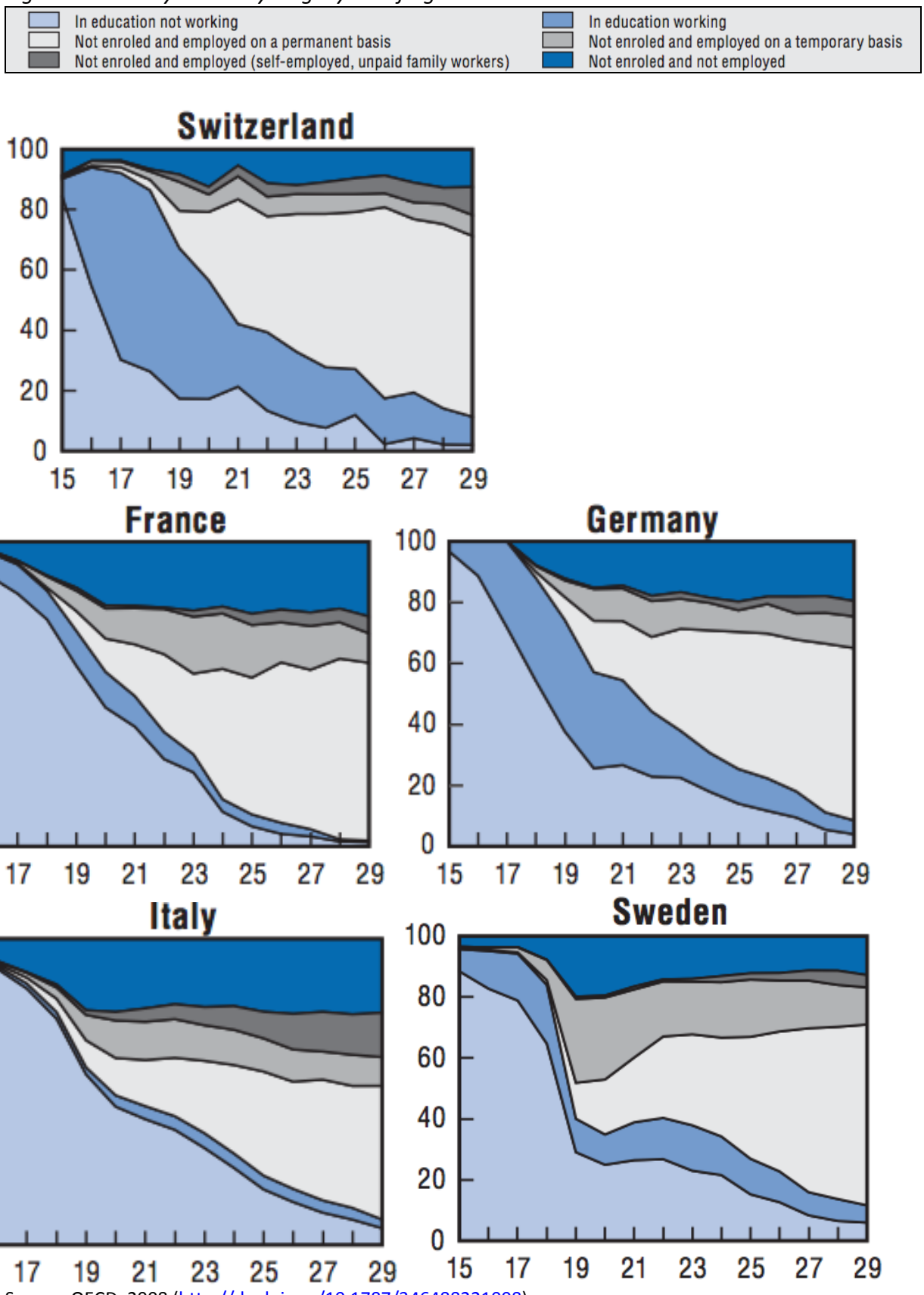
In Switzerland, unemployment is relatively low compared to other OECD countries (around 3.5-4% vs. 8.5% for OECD countries and 10% for the EuroZone in 2010). For the period 2000-2010, whereas adult (over 25 year-old) average unemployment was 3.1%, youth (15-24 year-old) unemployment has fluctuated around 3.7%. Moreover, despite the recent recession, the youth-to-adult unemployment rate in Switzerland still remains far less important than in other OECD countries (1.2 compared to the 2.9 average for other OECD countries in 2009). In particular, Italy, France and Spain are known for experiencing much higher youth unemployment rates and youth-to-adult unemployment ratios. More precisely, in terms of youth employment rates one year after leaving education, Switzerland ranks second among OECD countries (behind Iceland): whereas France and Spain are below 70% and Italy below 60%, Switzerland is over 80%. Furthermore, Swiss young adults wait 0.7 year in average before starting work after leaving school while the average school-to-work transition period for the EU15 is around 2 years.

As age rises up from 15 to 29 years, there is a cumulative shift away from schooling and toward employment in all OECD countries. However, there is also considerable cross-country heterogeneity in the distribution of school leaving ages, including how many youth opt to enrol in tertiary education and how long these studies tend to last – and whether the entry into work, subsequent to school exit, is more or less immediate or delayed (OECD, 2008).

For example, enrolment rates remain quite high in the late 20s in the Nordic countries (like Sweden) and in Switzerland, while relatively high shares of school leavers move into non-employment (becoming “NEETs”, i.e. “Not in Education, Employment or Training”) in central European countries or Latin countries like Italy or France. The data in Figure 2 below also show that a substantial share of students work in some of these countries and that a substantial share of school leavers who find jobs move into temporary employment in some European countries. In a few countries, like Italy, a considerable share of young adults move into self-employment (or become unpaid workers in a family business). There is also considerable cross-country heterogeneity in the share of school leavers moving into NEET status, as in whether the initial increase in the NEET rate persists (e.g. France and Italy) or partially reverses as initially non-employed school leavers gradually find jobs (Sweden).

In the Swiss case, the global NEET rate for youths (9.1%) is below EU15 (11.5%), but for low skilled it is almost the same (57.6% vs. 58.1%). Moreover, school drop out rate for teenagers (15-19) figure is even higher (6.3% vs. 5.3%) (Falter, Ferro-Luzzi, Garibian & Weber, 2010).

Figure 2. Activity status by single year of age in some OECD countries in 2006



Source: OECD, 2008 (http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/346488221008)

In Switzerland, an opposition between Latin cantons and German-speaking cantons

Along with these differences among OECD countries, there are notable differences within the Swiss confederation between the Latin cantons (French and Italian speaking) and the Swiss-German cantons due to cultural and structural factors. Although the former experience systematically higher unemployment rates and longer durations of unemployment (Brügger et al., 2009), the ratio of youth-to-adult unemployment in the latter is comparatively higher. This implies that unemployment as a whole is a greater problem for Latin cantons but that young workers are more at risk with respect to elderly workers in German speaking Switzerland.

Figure 3. Official unemployment rate in Switzerland

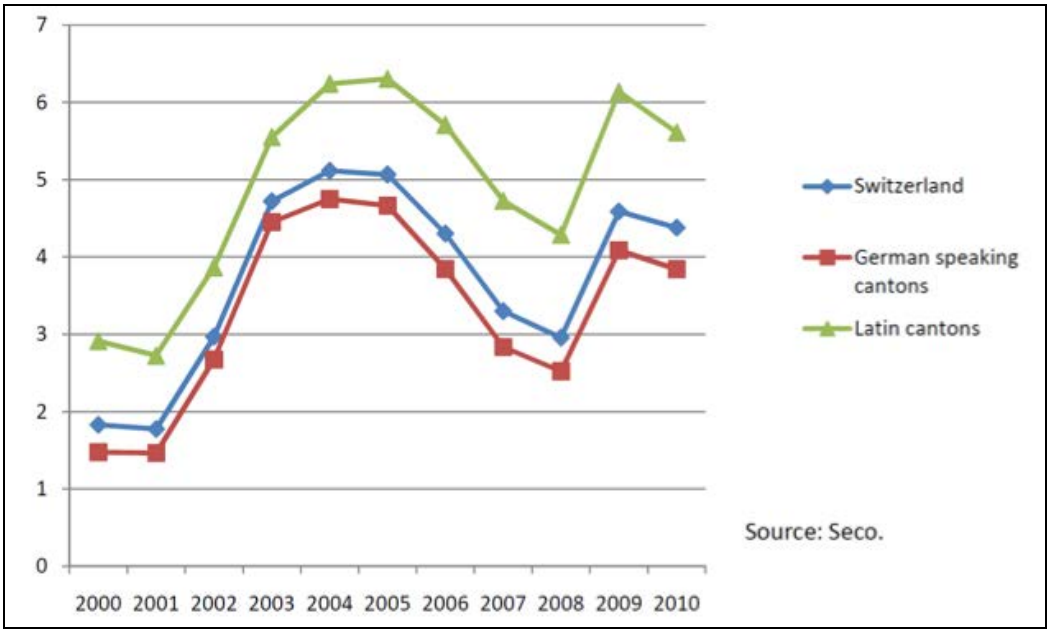
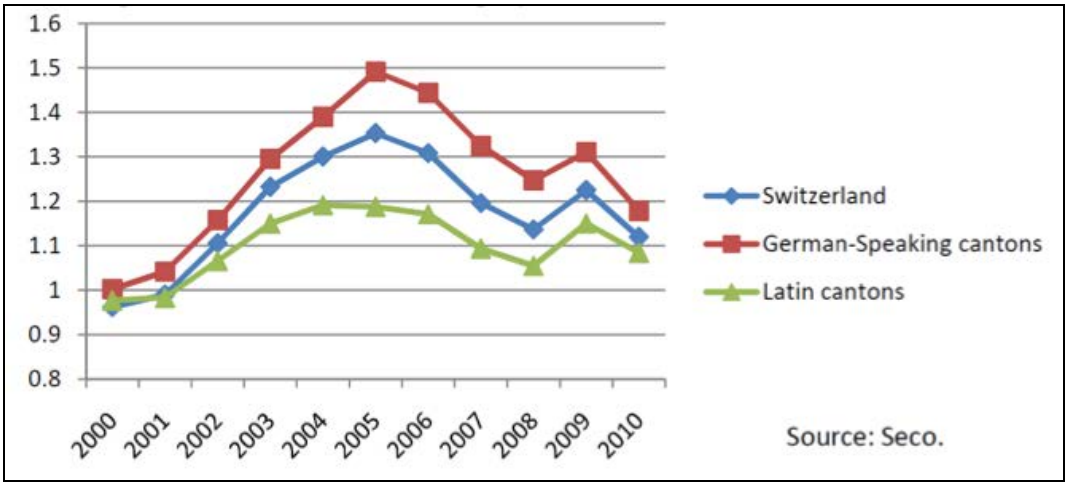


Figure 4. Youth-to-adult unemployment ratio in Switzerland

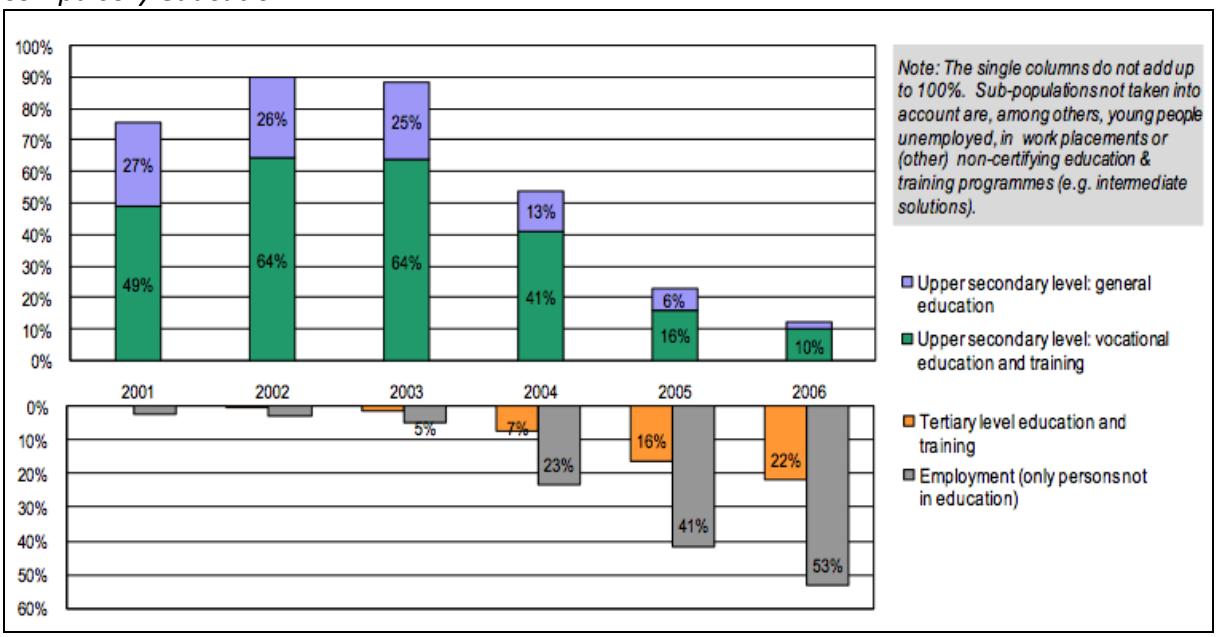


Results from the TREE survey in Switzerland: following a cohort of Swiss school leavers in 2000

Let's now push forward the analysis of the situation of Swiss youth not only in terms of education and training but also of employment. At this point, the TREE research project is of great interest. Not only because TREE is the first longitudinal survey in Switzerland to address issues concerning the transition from youth to adulthood at national level, paying special attention to their paths of education and employment once they have left compulsory education. But also because this longitudinal survey gives an overview on the investigated cohort (compulsory school leavers in 2000) situation in terms of education, training and employment during the years within which the category of "struggling young adults" (which stands for the French "Jeunes adultes en difficulté") was constructed in the Canton of Vaud and the FORJAD programme was launched (in 2006) as a specific answer to the difficulties faced by this population in the canton.

As Bertschy, Böni & Meyer (2007) stress, in 2006, i.e. six years after the end of compulsory schooling, the investigated cohort is 22 years old on average. At this point in time, the share of the employed (for most of their time) crossed the 50% threshold for the first time (53%), while the part of the cohort still in education dropped to one third (compared to the almost 90% in 2002). Those still in education or training are mostly enrolled at the tertiary level (university, technical college, applied universities, etc.) It is, however, worth noting that every eighth person in the TREE cohort is still (or again) in upper secondary education six years after leaving compulsory school. In international comparison, Switzerland displays a relatively low rate of enrolment in education and a high employment rate in this age group (OECD, 2007).

Figure 5. Education/training and employment situation, 1-6 years after the end of compulsory education



Source: www.tree.ch

By 2006, approximately four out of five young adults of the surveyed cohort have graduated from upper secondary education and training[26] (Bertschy, Böni & Meyer, 2007). About 60% have obtained a certificate in vocational education and training (VET), while about 20% have acquired a diploma of general education. Approximately one fifth of the cohort has not obtained any post-compulsory certificate or diploma up to 2006. About half of this group has left the education system by then, be it temporarily or for good. Due to an insufficient number of available upper secondary education and training opportunities in Switzerland, acquiring a first post-compulsory certificate seems to be a slow process for Swiss youth.

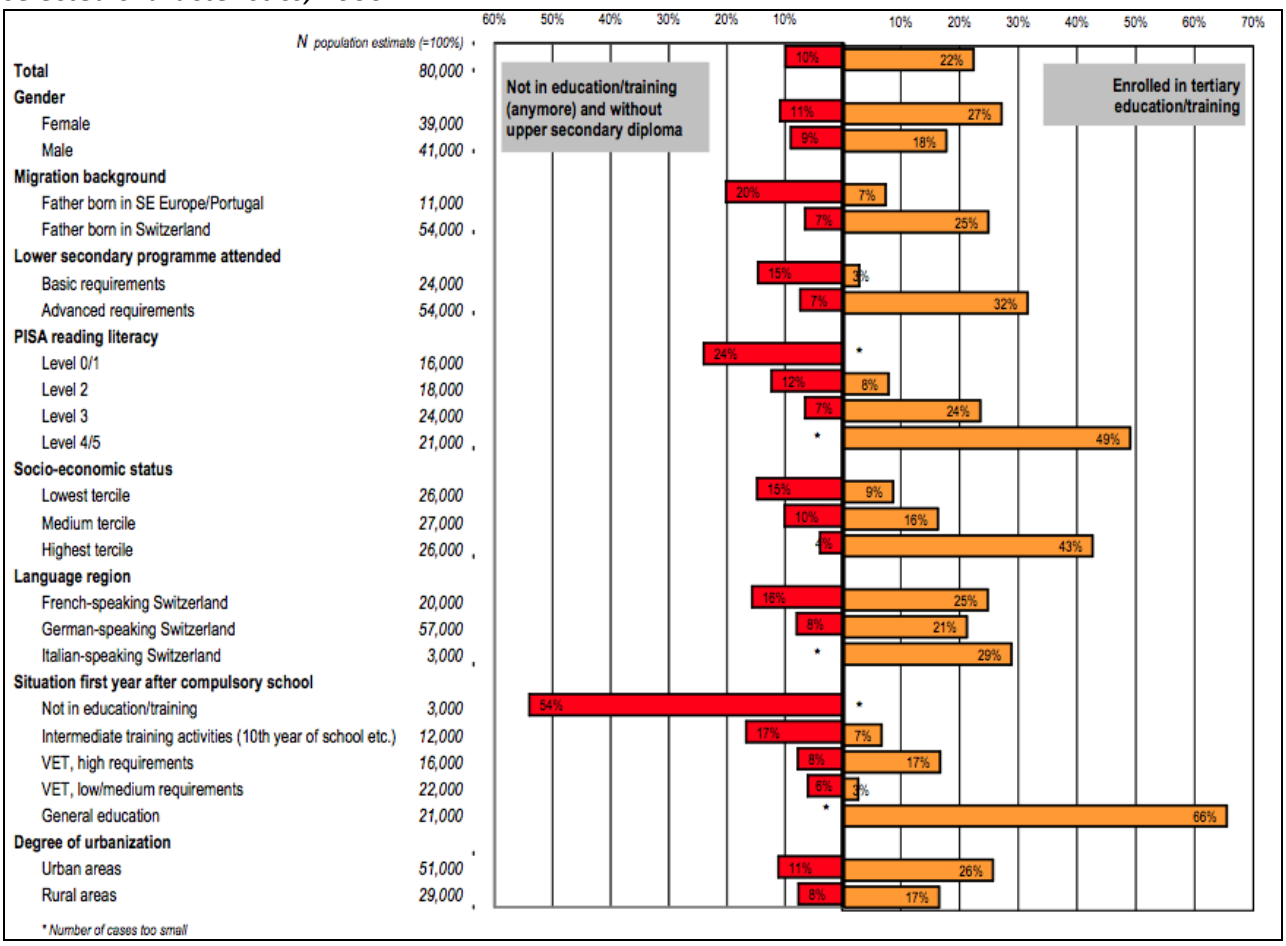
The risk of remaining without any post-compulsory certification is particularly high among youth with low socio-economic status, whose fathers were born in South-Eastern Europe or in Portugal, PISA low achievers and youth out of education and training during the first year following the end of compulsory school. The TREE results also show that the percentage of "uncertified" youth in the French-speaking part of Switzerland is twice as high as in the German-speaking part.

Conversely, tertiary education enrolment is positively correlated to high socio-economic status and high PISA achievement. Living in urban areas rather than in the countryside, and living in the Italian-speaking part of Switzerland is also positively associated with tertiary enrolment rates.

Approximately 10% of the economically active population in the cohort were unemployed in 2006. This feature is in line with the unemployment rate of nearly 8% within the age group 15-24 (twice the rate of the total workforce) observed by the Swiss labour force survey in 2006. Moreover, youth with a VET certificate have almost five times more chances to be employed than those without any post-compulsory certification. Employment prospects for youth from German-speaking Switzerland are significantly higher than in Latin cantons. Conversely, the risk of unemployment is significantly increased in the French and Italian-speaking regions of Switzerland.

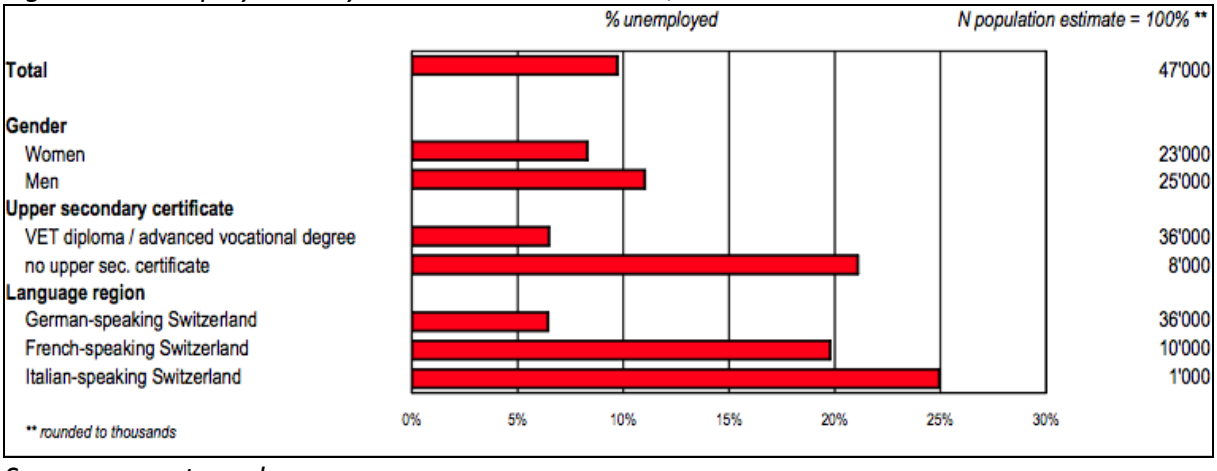
[26] This score is much closer to the already mentioned 2009 average score in OECD countries of 82% of young adults in possession of an upper secondary qualification at the age of 18 or 19. In the TREE Survey, youngsters still under training in 2006 are excluded from the statistics and do not appear in the category of those who have not obtained any post-compulsory certificate or diploma up to 2006.

Figure 6. Upper secondary non-completion/dropout and enrolment in tertiary education by selected characteristics, 2006



Source: www.tree.ch

Figure 7. Unemployment by selected characteristics, 2006



Source: www.tree.ch

Compared to the Swiss working population as a whole, the newcomers to the Swiss labour market surveyed in the TREE project obtain significantly lower salaries. Half of the employed young adults in the surveyed cohort earn less than CHF 4,200 per month (approx. € 3,000), while the average (fulltime) gross monthly income among the Swiss labour force as a whole is at CHF 5,700 (approx. € 4,070). Six years after the end of compulsory school, uncertified

youth earn significantly less than those having obtained a VET certificate: the monthly average wage differential between upper secondary level graduates and non-graduates lies at approximately 800 CHF, which amounts to roughly 20%. Besides, there is also a substantial wage gap between the regions: on average, jobholders from French and Italian-speaking Switzerland earn 10% less than their German-speaking counterparts. The TREE results also show substantial income disparities by gender: under comparable conditions and qualifications, young women earn about CHF 500, i.e. more than 10%, less than men.

However, these income differences between age categories and gender in Switzerland are quite close to OECD averages (e.g. when considering the growth of relative earnings of the tertiary level of education over the last decade), and in line with international features among OECD countries: in 2009 and in most OECD countries (17 out of 28), the earnings premium for tertiary education exceeds 50% when entering the labour market and increases with age; conversely, for those with below upper secondary education, the earnings disadvantage increases with age (OECD, 2009).

Beyond education and employment, the surveyed cohort does not seem to be in a hurry to leave the parental home. Only about 40% of the cohort has moved out of the parental residence by 2006. This percentage varies substantially according to the linguistic region, gender and educational status. Women in particular tend to leave the parental home at a substantially higher rate (49%) than men (28%).

III. Young adults relying on social assistance: a growing concern

In Switzerland, social assistance is considered as the last net of welfare programmes. Aiming at ensuring the preservation of one's livelihood, social assistance intervenes only when one is no more able to support himself or members of his household. According to the principle of subsidiarity, social assistance intervenes after social insurances and only in the case of failure of parents' and/or family support. It is organized and delivered on a cantonal basis, and in some cases on a municipal basis. On a national scale, the Swiss conference of social assistance institutions (Conférence suisse des institutions d'action sociale (CSIAS)) produces directives that are considered as binding in some cantons.

The economic situation and the situation on the labour market have had a significant impact on social assistance figures in the last years. Nevertheless, given the cantonal diversity of social assistance organization, it is quite difficult to grasp a national picture of the situation. All the more so that statistics about social assistance are available at a national scale only from 2004.

Table 2. Social assistance beneficiaries in Switzerland (2005-2009)

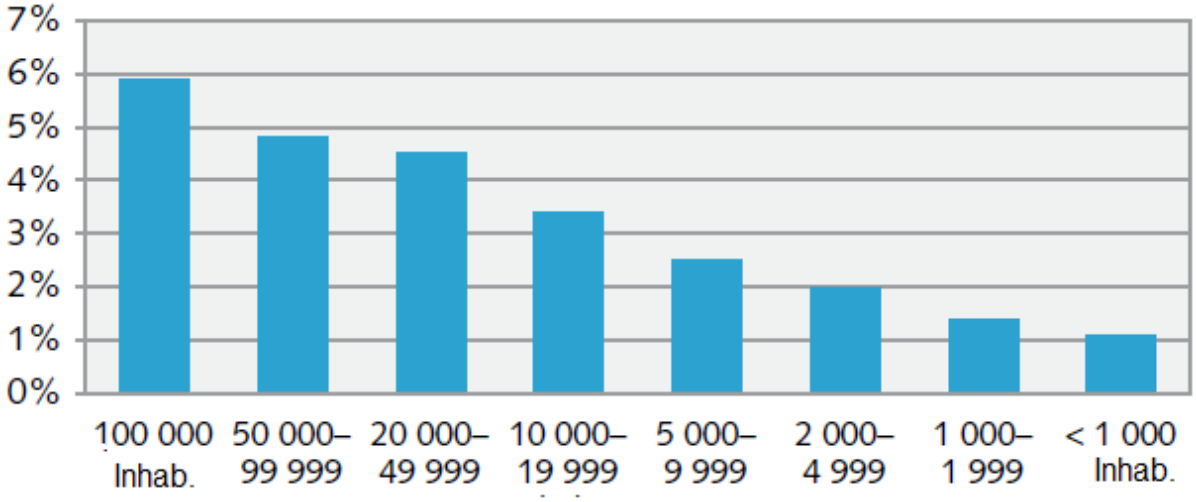
	2005	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**
Social assistance files	136'078	141'818	136'421	129'954	136'593
Number of social assistance beneficiaries	237'495	245'156	233'484	221'262	230'019
Rate of social assistance (%)	3.2	3.3	3.1	2.9	3.0

Source: OFS (2010) http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/13/03/03/dos/03.html

As shown in Table 2 above, the social assistance rate in Switzerland remained stable around 3% over the last five years. A more detailed picture shows the relative importance of the following factors.

First, the rate of social assistance depends on the size of the municipalities. As Figure 8 below shows it, benefiting from social assistance is first and foremost an urban phenomenon as a quarter of Swiss welfare beneficiaries live in one of the five biggest cities of the country.

Figure 8. Social assistance rate by size of municipalities (number of inhabitants) (2009)



Source: OFS (2010)

Secondly, benefiting from social assistance depends on the professional situation: 28.6% of beneficiaries aged over 15 are workers (but most of them on a part-time basis), 34.2% are jobless and 37.1% are categorized as “non active”.

Thirdly, the level of training achieved is a useful indicator since the more one is educated, the lower his chances are to benefit from social assistance. As shown in Table 3 below, significant differences exist between social assistance beneficiaries and the rest of the Swiss population with regard to the educational level achieved.

Table 3. Highest training achieved by social assistance beneficiaries compared to the overall population (2005-2009)

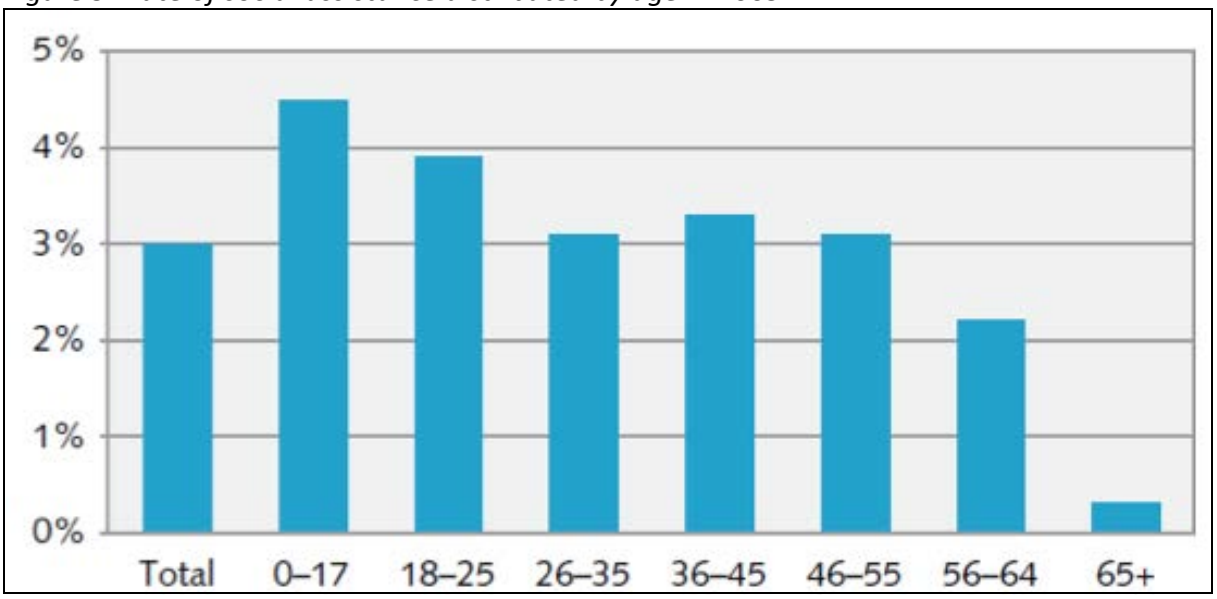
	2005		2006		2007		2008		2009	
	AS (%)	Pop. (%)	AS (%)	Pop. (%)	AS (%)	Pop. (%)	AS (%)	Pop. (%)	AS (%)	Pop. (%)
Tertiary level	5.8	20.5	4.7	20.5	5.5	19.1	5.7	19.1	5.7	19.1
University, University of applied sciences							3.0	8.7	3.1	8.7
Higher vocational education							2.7	10.4	2.7	10.4
Upper secondary level	41.9	53.2	41.0	53.2	39.1	50.9	37.2	50.9	36.0	50.9
Matura School							4.2	9.0	4.2	9.0
Vocational education or specialized middle							32.9	41.9	32.7	41.9
No professional education	52.3	26.3	54.4	26.3	55.4	30.0	57.1	30.0	57.4	30.0
Elementary professional education							6.5	3.1	6.5	3.1
Compulsory school							45.8	23.7	45.9	23.7
Schooling during 7 years at least							4.9	3.2	5.0	3.2

Source: OFS (2010) http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/13/03/03/dos/03.html

In 2009, for instance, 57.4% of social assistance beneficiaries had not completed a vocational training whereas only 30% of the overall Swiss population were in the same situation.

Fourth, age is an essential criterion regarding social assistance benefits. Indeed, the highest rates concern youth under the age of 25, in other words at a time of life when transitions, such as transition from school to work, take place. Failing in such risky turning points increases the chances of having to claim for social assistance benefits.

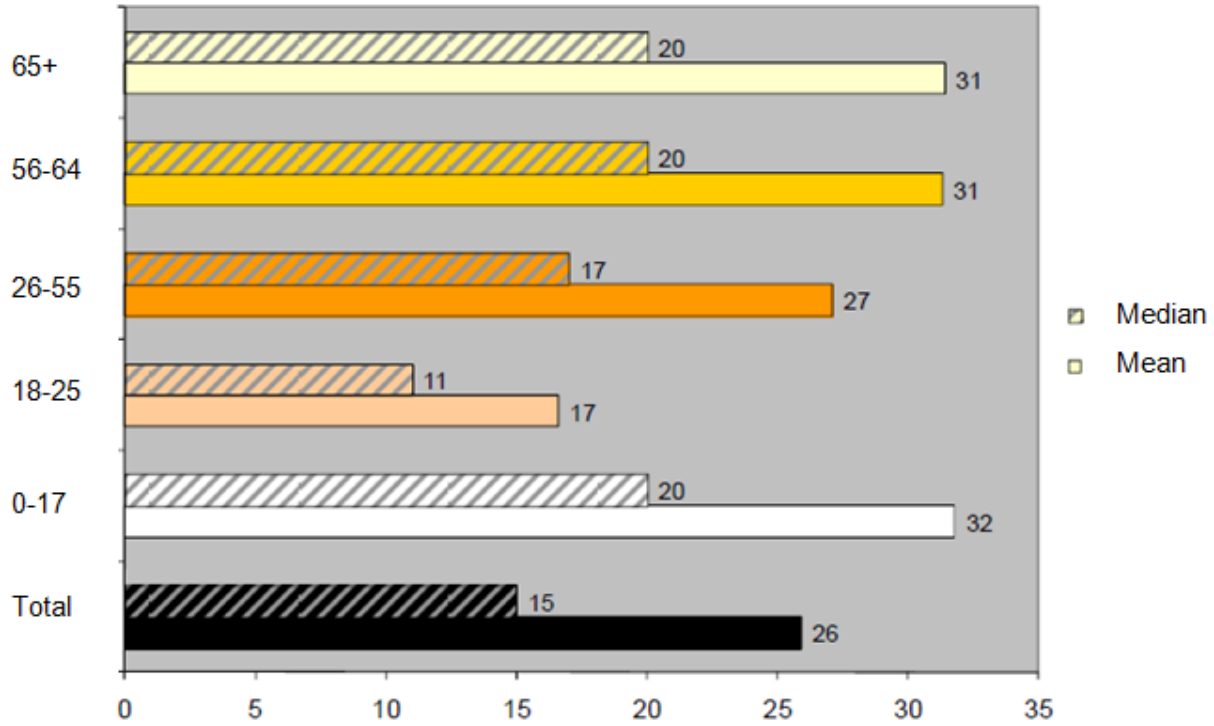
Figure 9. Rate of social assistance distributed by age in 2009



Source: OFS (2010)

Furthermore, it is worth noting that age negatively correlates with the duration of social assistance benefits. Young adults aged between 18 and 25 year-old benefit in average from the shortest duration of social assistance benefits.

Figure 10. Duration of benefits expressed in months, mean and median and depending on the age of the recipient (2006)



Source: Pellegrini (2010)

In 2009, the Swiss federal office for statistics (Office fédéral de la statistique, (OFS)) published the first report on the national situation of youth. This document highlighted that in 2006, 4.5% of young adults aged 18 to 25 year-old were social assistance recipients. The rate for the 18-25 year-old was much higher than for the overall population as Table 4 below shows.

Table 4. Young adults aged 18 to 25 year-old benefiting from social assistance (2005-2009)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Rate of social assistance (%)	4.4	4.5	4.1	3.8	3.9
Proportion of 18-25 year-old among all social assistance recipients (%)	13.2	12.9	12.6	12.3	12.6

Source: OFS (2010) http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/13/03/03/dos/03.html

Let's remind that in urban areas too, this rate is generally higher. For example, in 2004, it reached 6.9% against an average of 3.9% over the entire territory (OFS, 2006).

It is within this context that the canton of Vaud has designed the FORJAD programme that will be investigated in depth during our case study. Before presenting the content and the aim of this project, we will briefly describe the canton of Vaud, its socio-economic characteristics, in particular with regard to the integration of struggling young adults.

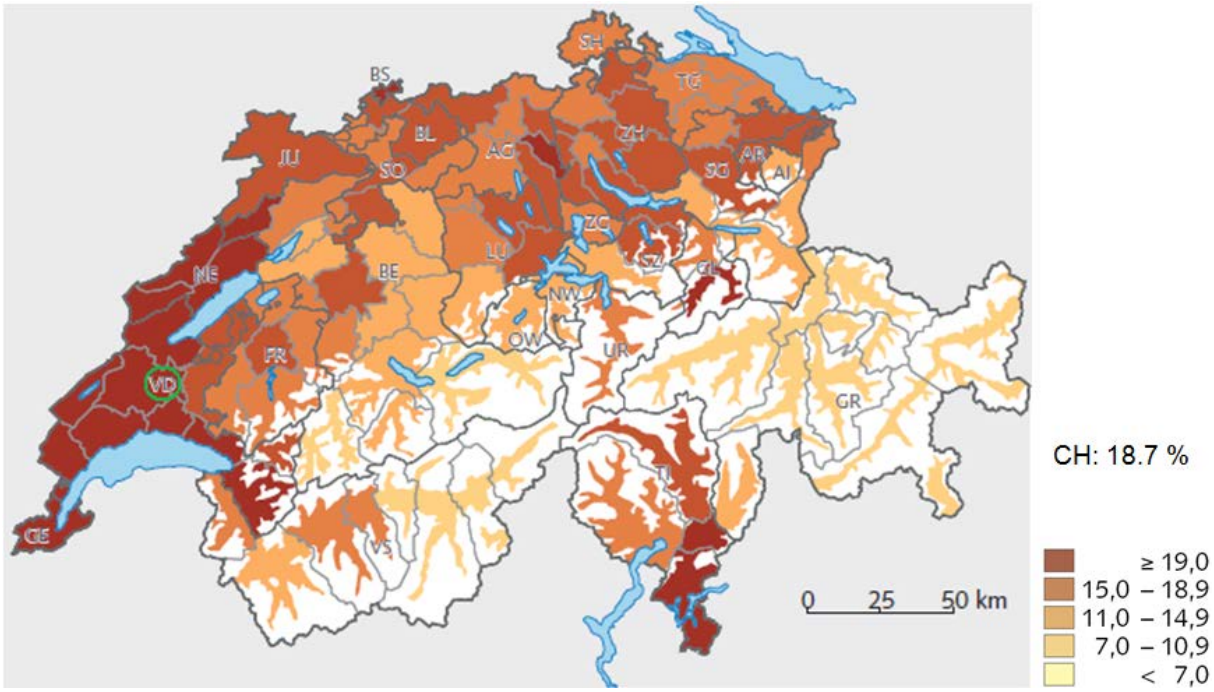
IV. The canton of Vaud: some contextual factors

This subsection provides some data about employment, education and the situation of social assistance in the canton of Vaud. Only the data that shed light on the context of our investigation are provided.

Employment and education in the canton of Vaud

In terms of population, Vaud is one of the most important cantons of Switzerland, with a population of about 700'000 people in 2010. Vaud is also one of the cantons most affected by unemployment. With 18'718 unemployed people in 2010, Vaud counts 12.6% of the unemployed registered in Switzerland and faces an unemployment rate of 5.3%. In this context, long-term unemployment is a significant challenge for the canton of Vaud, as shown in Figure 8 below.

Figure 11. Percentage of long-term unemployment (more than 12 months) among the unemployed population in Switzerland (2007)



Source: OFS (2009)

The features of the cantonal labour market partly account for this. In 2005,there were 312'205 jobs in Vaud. Table 5 represents the cantonal distribution of jobs according to the economic sector.

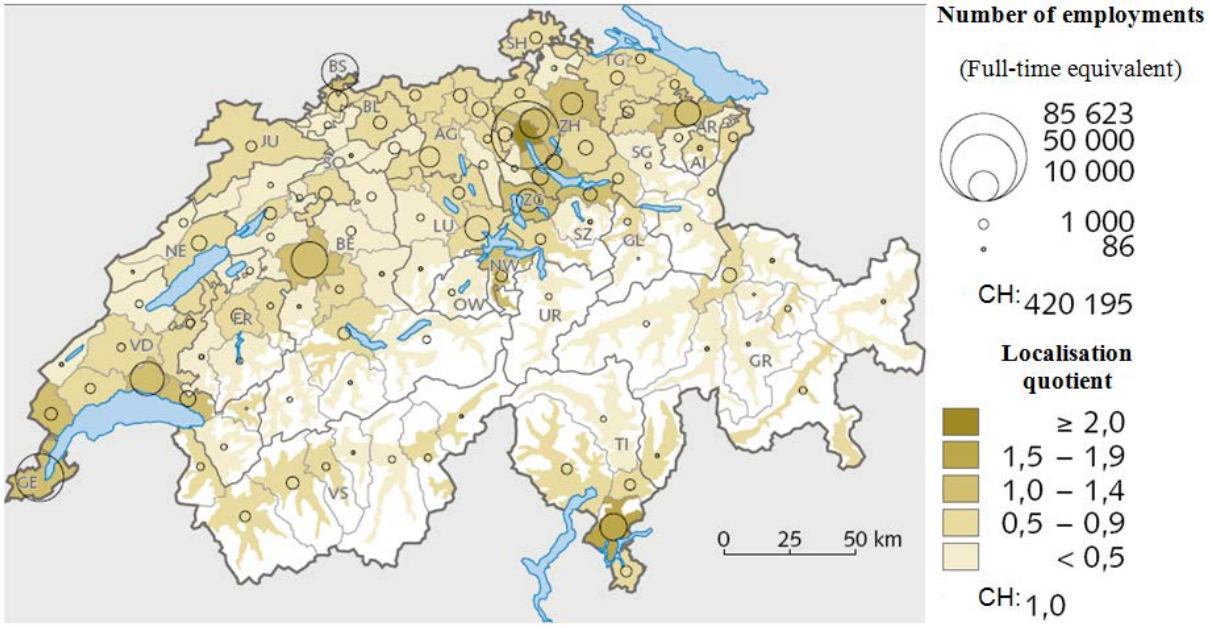
Table 5. Employment distribution between the economic sectors (2005)

	Primary sector	Secondary sector	Tertiary sector
Vaud	5.6%	19.7%	74.7%
Switzerland	5.3%	25.5%	69.2%

Source: OFS (2007)

Vaud is characterised by a higher level of employment in the tertiary sector (especially in the following domains: health and social action, retailing, business services and education). One of the consequences thereof is the unequal distribution of jobs requiring a high level of education, as evidenced by Figure 12:

Figure 12. Degree of concentration of highly qualified jobs (2005)



Source: OFS (2008)

The following table illustrates how this disparity translates in terms of education levels.

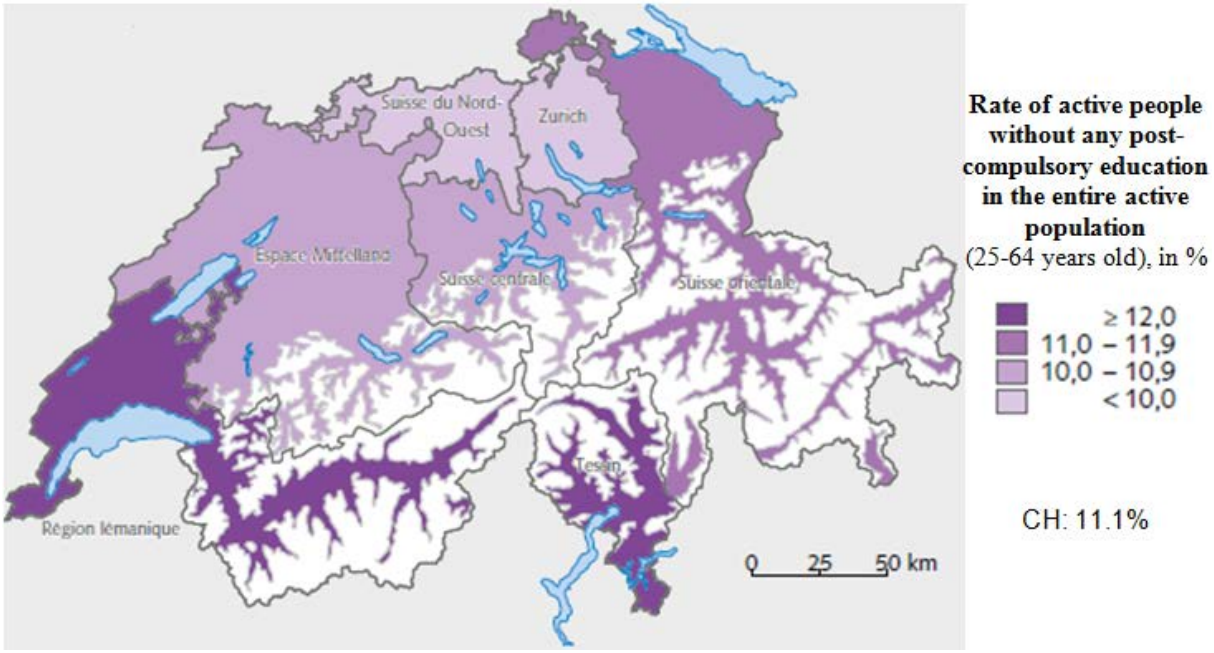
Table 6. Education level in 2000 (25 to 64 years)

	VD	CH
Compulsory level	22,7%	22,9%
Secondary level	45,1%	49,2%
Higher education level	24,7%	21,5%

Source: OFS (2004)

It is worth noting that the canton of Vaud (together with the canton of Geneva) is the part of Latin Switzerland where working people without any post-compulsory education are the most numerous (as shown in Figure 13 below):

Figure 13. Working people without any post-compulsory education (2008)

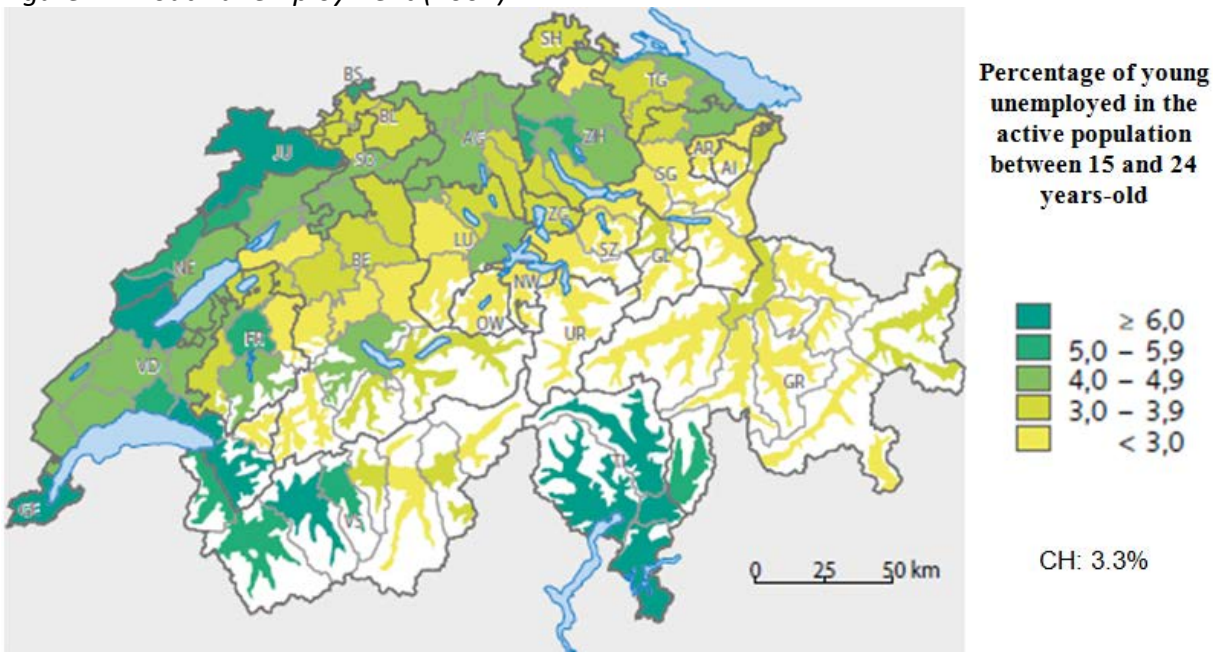


Source: OFS (2009)

However, having a post-compulsory education does not prevent from benefiting from social assistance. Indeed, there has been a continuous rise of social assistance recipients between 1999 and 2004 in the canton of Vaud, despite an elevation of the level of education of these beneficiaries (Keller, 2007).

Besides, unemployed young adults are relatively over-represented in the Vaud region, as they are in the Latin part of Switzerland and in urban areas.

Figure 14. Youth unemployment (2007)

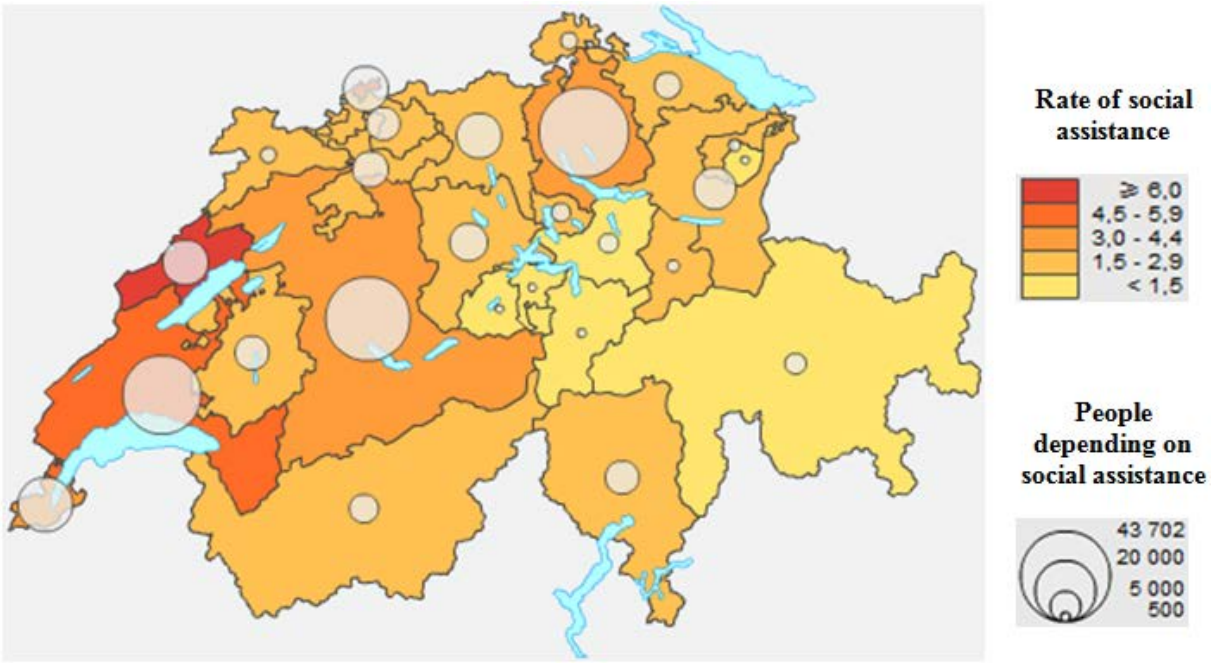


Source: OFS (2009)

Social assistance in the canton of Vaud

The next figure shows that in 2009 the canton of Vaud was the third canton with the highest rate of social assistance (in 2009, the canton of Vaud had a 4.9% rate of social assistance).

Figure 15. Geographical distribution of welfare beneficiaries in Switzerland (2009)



Source: http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/13/03/03/key/02.html

Moreover, the rate of social assistance beneficiaries has slowly but continuously increased in the Canton of Vaud in recent years.

Table 7. Number of social assistance beneficiaries in the canton of Vaud (2005-2009)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Social assistance files	15'807	17'175	17'867	18'174	19'188
Social assistance overall beneficiaries	29'382	30'770	31'441	32'132	33'732
Rate of social assistance (%)	4.5	4.7	4.7	4.8	4.9

Source: OFS (2010) http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/13/03/03/dos/03.html

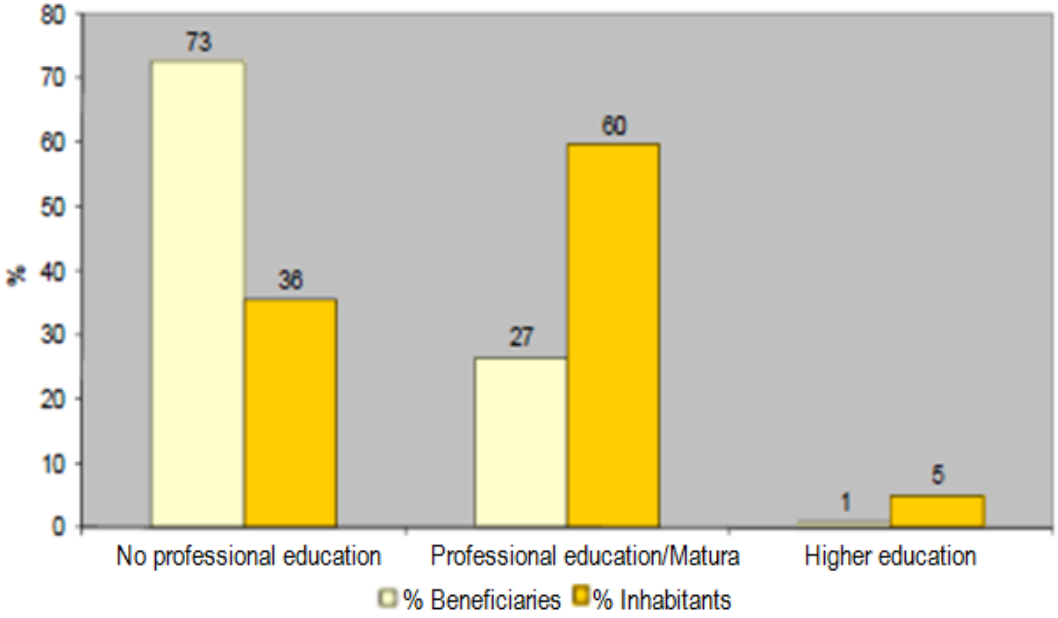
In the canton of Vaud, social assistance is managed by the cantonal welfare and social assistance service. Three main tools are used: social prevention, social support and the so-called Integration Income (revenu d'intégration or RI in French). It is addressed to all individuals aiming at social and/or professional (re-)insertion and whose income is lower than a threshold defined by the cantonal authorities. At local level, beneficiaries are followed by social assistants from regional or intercommunal social centres (which stands for the French centres sociaux régionaux ou intercommunaux (CSR/CSI)).

In 2009, almost 2.500 young adults aged 18 to 25 year-old benefited from social assistance. They were only 1.500 in 2004 (Müller et *al.*, 2009). The growing proportion of young adults among the recipients of social assistance has raised serious concern from the late '90s. As Regamey stated, "in 1997, field actors started sounding the alarm in the canton of Vaud" (in Artias, 2002: 56). At national level, various bodies (e.g. the CSIAS, the ARTIAS - Romand and Ticino Association of Social Action Institutions, etc.) thematised this new challenge, through conferences devoted to youth issues and by elaborating new recommendations concerning

this specific target group. In the canton of Vaud, several studies were initiated in order to quantify and better understand the problem of struggling young adults.

It appeared from these studies that the profile of these young people was very heterogeneous. However, they all highlighted the fact that young adults on social assistance suffered from a lack of education, as Figure 16 shows at the national level:

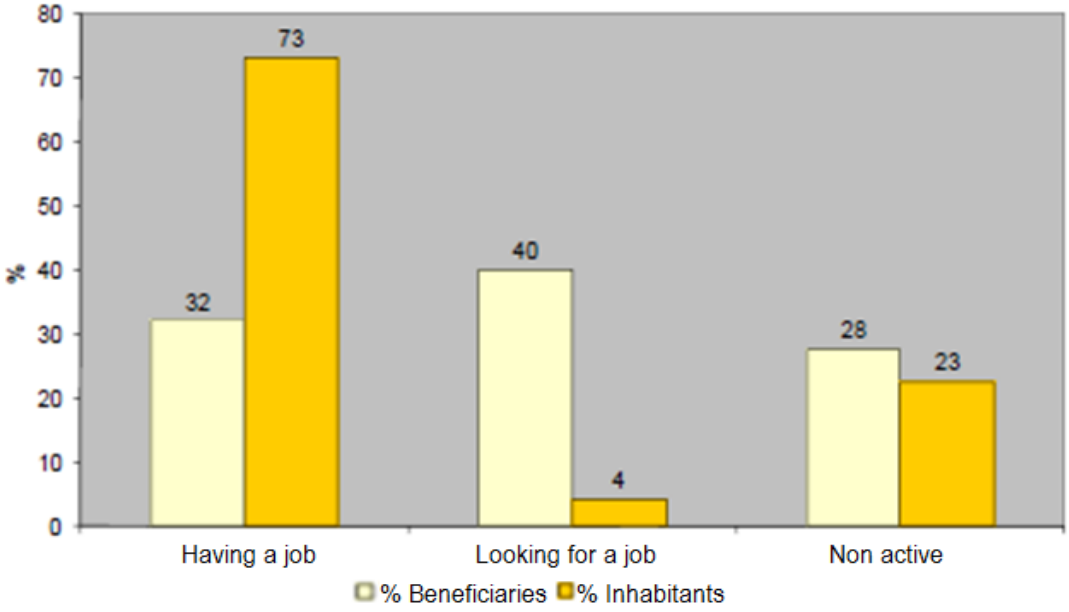
Figure 16. 18-25 year-old education level, in the entire population and among social assistance recipients (2009)



Source: Pellegrini (2010)

The lack of education is considered as a major cause of the young adults' incapacity to find a job, which largely accounts for their reliance on social services. As Figure 17 shows, the proportion of young adults seeking employment is 10 times higher for the ones relying on social assistance.

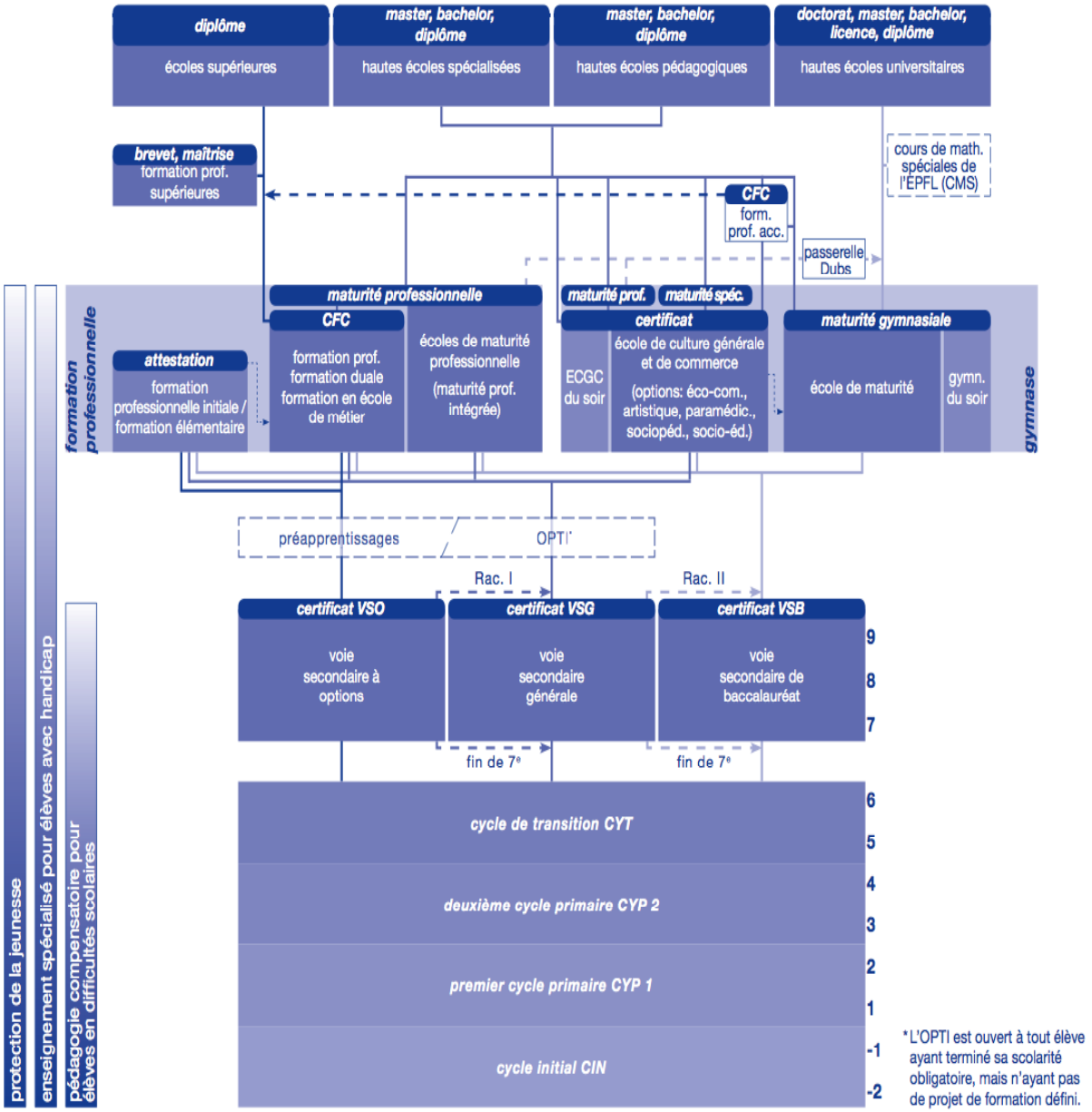
Figure 17. 18-25 year-old professional situation, in the entire population and among social assistance recipients (2009)



- *Source: Pellegrini (2010)*

The canton of Vaud is particularly exposed to this problem, first because of a labour market characterised by a high unemployment rate and second, because of an educational system that operates in a very selective and compartmentalised fashion (Perriard, 2005).

Figure 18. Education system in the canton of Vaud



Source: www.vd.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/...pdf/formVD.pdf

This complex scheme shows that at the age of 12, pupils are directed toward three types of pathways: the bachelor secondary way (VSB), the general secondary way (VSG) and the secondary way with options (VSO). Each of these pathways leads to a different entry in the upper secondary level. In principle, VSB students enter matura schools, but they are free to choose another programme. The VSG can integrate specialized middle schools, professional matura schools or vocational schools. Finally, the VSO have no other choice than vocational schools. This orientation of pupils as early as the 6th year of compulsory schooling is critical, especially because the three existing pathways are strongly segmented. Indeed, once they have entered one of these ways, pupils are supposed to follow it for three years. Neverthe-

less, at the end of each year it is possible to move from one category to another (from VSG to VSB or VSO to VSG), but it implies one additional year of study. This results in the fact that at the end of compulsory schooling, the transition to the upper secondary level is sometimes difficult, especially for students with a limited number of available options.

For these students, various transitional measures are provided, the most important of which is delivered by the Agency for educational development, transition and professional insertion (OPTI). The OPTI is addressed to young people between 15 and 18 year-old who have not entered a school for professional education, but show a clear motivation to undertake training. Admission requires applications (there are no school fees), and successful applicants have one year of follow-up presented as the 10th schooling year. This year is aimed at updating knowledge bases and transmitting information about careers in different sectors (via vocational training and councelling). Another specificity of the canton of Vaud is the Councelling and professional education centre (COFOP). This centre provides one-year pre-apprenticeship contracts for young people seeking an apprenticeship. The COFOP also includes a centre named CHARTEM which is aimed specifically at young people with psychosocial problems and provides them with one year of so-called "pre-training". In addition, the COFOP also has a temporary employment unit (UTT) devoted to the professional integration of struggling young people. This unit offers measures from 4 to 12 months, aimed at helping them (re)enter a professional or a training circuit through an assessment of competences, an improvement of their self-esteem, information about different careers, vocational training in enterprises, etc. Finally, there are also bodies such as the Cantonal office for training and professional orientation (OCOSP) which proposes individual interviews and organizes vocational training, or the Assessment, information, orientation (BIO) centres, delivering a two-month follow-up in order to help young people develop a career plan, and planning vocational training and visits into companies.

Two issues appear as major priorities for the canton of Vaud. On the one hand, the strengthening of transitions, concerning both the first threshold (transition between compulsory and post-compulsory schooling) and the second one (transitions to the labour market). In this regard, Priester emphasizes the need to strengthen particularly the effectiveness of the dual system of apprenticeship and to involve more deeply employers in the field of education (2009). In this regard, various initiatives have been developed locally over the past ten years, but as Schaub, Pittet and Dubois emphasized, this multiplication of measures for struggling young adults was made without any real coordination between services (Schaub, Pittet and Dubois, 2004).

On the other hand, collaborations need to be developed between the different actors and institutions in charge of struggling young adults in the field of social protection and education. In this sense, the CSIAS emphasizes the necessity to adopt an integrated approach. "Social assistance has to design a global strategy focused on the long-term fight against youth poverty, a strategy that must be born by all social actors and state levels." (CSIAS, 2007:6)

In the canton of Vaud, in order to tackle these issues, a working group was formed in 2003 and was constituted by representatives of the departments of Education and Youth (DFJ), Economics (DEC), Safety and Environment (DES), Health and Social Action (DSAS), Institutions and External Relations (SAY), and the judiciary order. Its aim was to find ways to fight more effectively against the increasing risk of youth marginalization, and therefore the dependency trap that was threatening youth. The FORJAD programme is in line with the work developed by this working group and illustrates this twofold political commitment: 1) strengthening training opportunities for young people in order to improve their chances of social and

professional reinsertion; 2) developing collaboration between welfare and education services.

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Part 2: The FORJAD programme

Introduction

In the field of socio-professional (re-)integration of youth, three main features over the last two decades are of particular importance: first, the effects of the economic crisis, i.e. the effects of the transformation of the Western economies due to the globalisation, and the emergence of unemployment and long-term unemployment; second, the reform of social assistance and welfare policies (emergence of integration policies, resulting from operations of categorisations, e.g. age categorisations such as in the case of youth); third, integration policies have become a specific scientific field of investigation (concern about combining social and professional dimensions, focus on school-to-work transition, statistics…).

As part of the Western and developed economies, Switzerland has been concerned by these evolutions, although with a delay when compared to other countries such as France, for instance, where young adults have been targeted for specific programs from the late 1970s and the early 1980s. Switzerland's traditional low rate of unemployment, despite geographical differences, in a very flexible organization of the labour market, surely contributed to the late construction of youth and more specifically of marginalized youth as a public action category in this country. Nevertheless, specific programmes targeted at these populations were developed by the early 2000s. Such is the case of the FORJAD programme, launched in 2006 in the Canton of Vaud and addressed to "struggling young adults" (which stands for the French "jeunes adultes en difficulté" – henceforward JADs), aged 18 to 25 year-old, benefiting from the "integration income" (which stands for the French "revenu d'intégration" - henceforward RI) and without a vocational training/degree completed.

Aimed at providing vocational training to marginalized youth, this ambitious programme in terms of available resources will here be presented in detail. We will then consider and analyse its recent developments in a second step, and finally assess some of its more important features against the yardstick of the capability approach (henceforward CA).

Origins and institutional context

In the early 2000s, social workers and institutions dealing with social and professional (re)insertion faced a rapid and important increase of a new type of public: marginalized young adults and young adults at risk of marginalization. On their own will, field stakeholders in the particular field of social assistance decided to investigate this new phenomenon in order to better understand and characterize this new public. In the canton of Vaud, the pioneering study was conducted by C. Régamey and the protestant social centre (CSP) in Lausanne within the so-called "JAD collective[27]" and published in 2001[28]. In particular, this study created the nickname "JAD" to label this category (JAD stands for the initials of "jeunes adultes en difficulté", which means struggling young adults - Regamey et al. 2001).

[27] The different members of the JAD-collective were the following: the ASEMO-Relais (socio-educational action in an open environment), Jet Service (youth and labor service) within the protestant social centre of Vaud, the cantonal social centre (canton of Vaud), the Saint-Martin Centre (drug dependence unit, canton of Vaud), and the head of the social security and environment offices of the city of Lausanne.

[28] Regamey, C. and collectif JAD (2001), *Papa, Maman, l'Etat et Moi. Jeunes adultes, accès aux dispositifs sociaux et travail social : un état des lieux*, Lausanne, CSP (http://www.csp.ch/files/documents/VD/Recherchesociale/JAD243p.pdf).

The Head of the social services in the city of Lausanne reminds the emergence of the JADs' issue as follows:
"*- In the canton of Vaud, the issue of JADs arrives in the early 2000s. It was already an issue that was addressed in other European countries and even in other cantons in Switzerland. Already, they had put the alarm on the issue of youth. And in the canton of Vaud, it was the report prepared by Mrs. Régamey. It was done with the participation of many specialists, a variety of professionals and Mrs. Régamey made a little synthesis of all these elements. It was a little structure that had raised the issue, a little structure in charge of socio-educational assistance. And being a somewhat permanent structure independent of the State, it received a great number of youth and young adults with a variety of difficulties: training, health problems, and so on. They were young and remained outside the social security system. And the report released in 2001 launched the debate on the JADs. Even more, it created the nickname JAD.*
- Interviewer: So it comes from the bottom and it's more a formulation of the associative environment?
- Exactly. It's that particular environment which conducted the investigation, looked at the issues facing these young adults and wrote the report. Hence, there was a request to the State and to the welfare and social assistance services to intervene and provide solutions. At first, there were an enormous amount of things that were considered and later, there was not much that was done over the period 2002-2006".

As this interviewee reminds, no solutions or programmes targeting JADs were launched in the Canton of Vaud until 2006, the year in which it reformed its law on social assistance in order to better tackle the difficulties faced by its beneficiaries. A stronger emphasis was put on social and professional reintegration measures organised by external providers in the framework of the so-called RI. However, the budget available for these measures was much too small to guarantee that every beneficiary could effectively access such programs (Piotet 2004). After a great deal of consultations and analyses, the cantonal department in charge of Social Affairs decided to identify the young adults between 18 and 25 year-old as a priority target group. Indeed, among the nearly 1,800 social assistance beneficiaries aged between 18 and 25 in 2006 when the FORJAD program was launched – today, in 2010, this figure has almost doubled, as 3,000 young adults are social recipients –, only 30% had completed vocational training or had earned a professional degree (Von Muralt and Spagnolo 2007). In other words, around three quarters of young RI beneficiaries had not completed a vocational training. This result was also assessed against the federal objective of 95% of graduates of upper Secondary level (i.e. academic and professional baccalaureate) by 2015 formulated in the 2004 new Law on vocational training. Furthermore, some previous studies had emphasised the obstacles faced by these young adults when trying to get study grants (Regamey 2002; Schaub et al. 2004).

Their situation was further aggravated insofar as the status of student or apprentice was incompatible with the payment of welfare benefits according to the Law on social assistance. A disincentive trap existed since young adults benefiting from social assistance who entered training were often compelled to abandon it because they could not compensate the loss of welfare benefits and were not assured of getting a scholarship. The Head of the social services in the city of Lausanne explains the contradictory situation these young adults were facing: "*The big problem we had to face was that trainees or students could not be on welfare. (...) We were very often faced with situations where young people had to leave training*

because they could no longer live and they requested social assistance. And they were asked to leave social assistance! What was ultimately ridiculous! And I remember there was a great fight for the Office of Scholarships to open the doors a little more, especially for young people who had relational difficulties with their parents, and even if the parents were financially at ease. Because the State was asking young people to turn against their parents and to sue them!" But "*none of them did that. They stopped their studies and their training and found themselves on welfare."* as the Head of the "insertion workshops" area at Caritas Vaud adds. As a result, these young adults had no choice but to return to social assistance and "*the FORJAD programme has its origins in the will to overcome this contradiction*", as the Head of the welfare and social assistance service reminds. In addition, other authors observed a high rate of drop-outs, which often coincided with an unfinished compulsory schooling (Fragnière et al. 2002; Valli 2005).

All these studies popularised the nickname "JAD", created in 2001 by C. Régamey (2001), to label this category. As national studies identified the lack of training as one of the major factors accounting for poverty among young people (e.g. Drilling 2004), the cantonal department of Social Affairs, together with the departments of Education and Employment decided to set up a new programme in order to promote vocational training[29] among the JADs. This programme was labelled FORJAD, which stands for "formation pour les jeunes adultes en difficulté" (Training for struggling young adults), it started during the summer 2006. Thereby, the issue of marginalized youth was identified mainly as a problem of training or educational deficit, and the selected informational basis was tightly related to this specific dimension.

As an "integration advisor" sums it up: "*The finding was that there were some 1,700 or 1,800 young adults benefiting from social assistance in the canton. Almost 80% of them had not completed or even started training. And the first basic observation was: what will we do with all these young, most of them benefiting from the RI and its 1,810 francs per month plus the rent? Are we going to let them settle down in the social assistance system for life, and their children too? So there is an economic concern, because 1,700 youngsters over 40 years, it does represent millions and millions! And the political will was to reduce that number. But how? And what has been decided, what was very intelligent, is that vocational training is the way out of welfare benefits*". In others words, those of the cantonal Head of the specialized education and training support service, the FORJAD programme aims at "*rehabilitating vocational integration capabilities through training*". The aim is to adequately equip JADs for the labour market and to develop their individual capital by providing training programmes, i.e. socio-professional (re-)integration is first and foremost envisaged as a matter of supply-side interventions.

The FORJAD programme aimed at responding to the growing number of young marginalized and to the corresponding growing financial weight of the social assistance programmes dedicated to them. However, some interviewees wonder if it is the population of JADs that has suddenly raised in such dramatic proportions or if this increase results from the political will to measure and identify that phenomenon. Nonetheless, all interviewees underline the crucial role played by a State councillor (i.e. a member of the executive body) freshly elected in 2005 and insist on his decisive political will to take up the issue of marginalized youth. As the Head of the social services in the city of Lausanne puts it: "*in 2005, there is also the election*

[29] In Switzerland, vocational training plays a major role in the transition processes from school to the labour market, insofar as about two thirds of young people take part in the dual system of apprenticeship.

to the State Council, following the resignation of a State councillor, and X is elected. He entered the Government in the course of the legislature, about two years before the next election. And he needs to show strong topics. (…) And then, he took over the youth issue. And he said it's a good topic and I want some concrete achievements".

Moreover, the FORJAD programme designers feared the growing financial weight of poverty traps persisting over generations and refused the constitution of so-called "assisted families". That is why, as the cantonal Head of the specialized education and training support service reminds it, the aim was to "*normalize the situation, which means separating the young adult from its native environment whenever possible and ensuring him or her a status of apprentice. (…) The idea, perfectly legitimate, was also not to soak these young adults in the tincture of iodine of poverty as it wasn't necessary to give to an entire family and family context the colour of social assistance, while giving a small boost in one of the places where there were difficulties was sufficient to solve that difficulty"*. More explicitly, the Head of the "insertion workshops" area at Caritas Vaud argues: "*in Switzerland, we're lagging behind France and Germany where it's already common for a long time that some youngsters have never seen anyone work in their family and where they are all social assistance beneficiaries. In Switzerland, it's more recent. And when X arrived, he decided it was better to invest heavily during the first two years rather than keeping people for 50 years!*"

Although the FORJAD programme was launched under the leadership of a socialist State councillor, the choice to use vocational training as the mean to (re-)integrate marginalized youth received the political support of both the right wing and the left wing. Voluntarism and pragmatism were the key words that launched the FORJAD programme and shaped its content. As a field social worker puts it: "*We needed these young adults in measures! But gradually, we found out that it met a real need*".

Design and Implementation: a step- by-step logic combined with an individual follow-up

The FORJAD programme is based on progressive stages supposed to lead to the achievement of a vocational degree. This step-by-step logic is furthermore completed by an individual follow-up once the JAD entered the programme. Five steps can be broadly distinguished, both in a chronological perspective and for analytical purposes.

1. At first, each JAD meets a social worker from the social assistance services (usually from the nearest "regional social centre" (CSR in French), as the canton of Vaud is divided into smaller territories, each of them placed under the responsibility of a CSR) that has to perform his/her social assessment. This first step is also based on the fulfilment of more formal criteria such as benefiting from the RI, age (being between 18 and 25 year-old when entering the pre-admission stage of the programme), the absence of vocational training achieved and the fact of living outside the parental household.

2. At the second stage, the ones that are deemed ready to undertake some kind of vocational training will meet a so-called "integration adviser" who will help them to formulate an integration project specifying their professional goals and the most appropriate ways to reach them. The so-called "integration adviser" is a social worker placed under the double responsibility of both the Head of the welfare and social assistance service and the director of the local social services.

3. Some of these young people will be able to immediately look for a vocational training, and according to the selected profession, they either find an employer who agrees to be their apprenticeship master, or they apply to a vocational school. For all others, they will follow a social integration measure (so-called MIS for "mesure d'intégration sociale") aimed at assessing and validating their professional project but also at testing their motivation and job readiness. All MIS are provided by private bodies such as foundations or associations which get funded for these since the cantonal welfare and social assistance services decided to outsource their execution. At the same time, the MIS will also help young people in their search for an apprenticeship, while offering basic language and maths lessons in order to prepare them for the entry tests organised by the larger firms recruiting apprentices[30]. These two activities (help in the search for apprenticeships and basic training) are often complemented by a professional activity in a labour market programme (usually for 6 months).

4. It is only once the MIS is over and the apprenticeship contract signed that JADs become FORJADs. The MIS are envisaged as part of a selective process, i.e. not all JADs integrated in such measures succeed in undertaking a vocational training. Indeed, according to a previous study (Bonvin, Hugentobler, Moachon, 2007), only one out of five JADs integrated in a MIS goes on beginning an apprenticeship, i.e. most of them fail at this preparatory stage of the FORJAD programme.

5. The JADs who pass successfully all stages and are allowed to begin an apprenticeship, therefore those who become FORJADs, are then individually followed by a coach in four different areas – academic, vocational, social and personal - and can benefit from school support courses. All coaches are social workers belonging to the same association (TEM-Accent, which stands for the French "Transition école métier – accompagnement en entreprise) that first initiated this particular type of individual follow-up for each JAD in the Canton of Vaud and further developed an original approach of this kind of intervention. It is worth noting that regarding JADs' coaching during their apprenticeship, the cantonal administration relies exclusively on this association.

These young adults are helped to become able to manage all spheres of their life in order to become autonomous and active individuals. Although the preparatory phases of the FORJAD programme are very selective (20% of all JADs finally succeed in becoming FORJADs), once the JAD entered the programme, the rate of success is comparable to the one of non FORJAD apprentices, i.e. around 70% succeed in completing their vocational training and degree.

The aim of the FORJAD programme is to equip young adults for the labour market and to develop their individual capital in order to enhance their chances of professional (re)integration. The FORJAD programme thus combines supply-side interventions directed towards labour market integration with a special attention to the contextual dimensions that determine every beneficiary's life. From 100 beneficiaries in 2006, the year of its launching, the FORJAD programme concerns more than 600 young adults in 2010 (out of 3,000 RI recipients between 18 and 25 year-old).

[30] Such tests, called basic and multi-check, are not a legal requirement for entering an apprenticeship. They allow employers to strengthen the selection among apprentices.

The difficulties faced by the FORJADs

During the first year of the programme, training providers and welfare agents observed that the professional integration of the JADs involved in the measures was made more difficult for the following reasons:

- There was a significant gap between the young adults' actual school knowledge and their vocational training project.
- The JADs frequently faced physical and mental health problems.
- The psycho-emotional issues related to chaotic life courses, marked by immigration, school drop-out, or problems within the family, often generated dependent behaviours or mental health troubles.
- In certain cases, extended periods of inactivity affected negatively the learning capabilities and the endurance of young people in the workplace.

The financial situation of these young people also appeared to be a crucial issue. Many participants had debts amounting to more than 15,000 Euros. This often acted as a disincentive to return to paid employment, because wage garnishments would cut their income to much the same level as the Integration Income (Von Muralt and Spagnolo 2007). According to one social field-worker, about four out of five JADs have debts and this situation can often be prohibitive for obtaining an apprenticeship, especially in the fields of sales or logistics where employers regularly impose a clear debt record as a condition for getting an apprenticeship.

From the RI to the scholarship grants funding

The Integration Income (RI) entitles jobless people (without any right to social insurance benefits, or waiting for such benefits) and workers whose income does not reach the subsistence minimum (the so-called "working poor") to receive a public financial assistance, as well as social or professional integration measures. In 2005, the year before the FORJAD programme was launched, social assistance covered more than 20,000 people in the canton of Vaud (3% of its population) for a budget of around 126 million Euros (or 3% of the cantonal budget). Moreover, 3,000 young adults between 18 and 25 year-old benefited from social assistance at that time, i.e. 5% of all the 18-25 living in the canton of Vaud, including 1,700 RI beneficiaries. More generally, among all RI beneficiaries, one-third were under 18 and 14% were between 18 and 25 year-old (Von Muralt and Spagnolo 2007).

In order to eliminate possible disincentive effects resulting from benefit loss or substantial reduction due to starting vocational training, the departments of Social Affairs, of Economy and of Education designed a directive to coordinate the welfare and the scholarship systems. As the FORJAD programme was launched in 2006 under time pressure, this coordination allowed young people participating in FORJAD to get funded for both their training costs and the coverage of their basic needs by a joint contribution of cantonal welfare policies (i.e. the RI) and economic policies (i.e. a special cantonal fund fighting unemployment). Another financial incentive was planned insofar as the JADs were allowed to keep up to 126 Euros per month out of their apprentice wages.

Until 2009, the RI mainly funded the FORJAD programme although most of its beneficiaries were apprentices. This situation was a legal exception under the Law on social assistance for which the status of student or apprentice is incompatible with the payment of welfare bene-

fits. For those two reasons, i.e. the political will not to use social assistance tools to reintegrate JADs in the primary labour market through training and the exceptional legal grounds of the programme financing structure which were necessarily temporary, the funding of the FORJAD programme was transferred to the cantonal office of scholarship grants at the beginning of the 2009 school year. Since then, the RI still funds the preparatory socio-professional insertion measures dedicated to JADs while, for those who are accepted into apprenticeship, they become FORJADs and are then supported by the scholarship grants. This transfer of funding is summarized by the Head of the welfare and social assistance service as follows: "*In order to sustain the FORJAD programme, decision was made to align the standards of the scholarships distributed with those of the RI and then, to transfer the young from the welfare assistance system to the grants funding system. This was also to comply with the legal bases as we had twisted them when implementing the pilot programme. Indeed, social assistance is not normally compatible with training. That's why scholarship grants must intervene in this case. Moreover, for political reasons, we could not imagine designing a programme with a lot of privileges for a minority of the population who were marginalized, while at the same time, all other grantees were remaining with CHF 520 per month*".

Beside the effects of this transfer on the JADs' living conditions, which will be discussed later, this operation pursued clear political goals in a context of limitation of public expenditure. It allowed politicians (and a right wing – left wing consensus was reached here) to "*make people disappear from the welfare programmes to show results to the electorate body*", as the Head of the insertion unit of the social affairs department of the city of Lausanne states, but it also responded to managerial concerns in terms of creating opportunities for further potential increases in funding: "*There is a strategy behind that is evident for economists. When there is only one pot in which you have all social benefits, these represent hundreds of millions. And when you divide the pot, you reduce it because you have a little less each time, but then it's easier to negotiate for the little extras than with the big thing*" (Cantonal Head of the specialized education and training support service).

The transformation of the funding bases of the FORJAD programme contributed to lower the overall budget dedicated to social assistance, insofar as it was split into specific but slightly reduced independent budgets. However, this situation seems to have created greater margins for budgetary negotiation. Moreover, the alignment of the scholarships standards (i.e. a "package" logic based on an annual payment) with those determining the granting of social benefits (i.e. a real costs logic, monthly reassessed) in the case of FORJAD apprentices has resulted in pulling up the amount of non FORJAD scholarships. But these gains did not concern everyone as the will pursued by those who promoted the reform was to "*give more to those who really need it*", as the Director of the scholarships office puts it. "*We cannot say that everyone won with this system because there was a desire to regulate and those who were most in need had to be given what they really needed and not simply a supplement that was not sufficient for their training. Therefore the access to the provision has been made more difficult. So those who designed the reform knew from the beginning that there would be about 30% of losers, but with a limited loss of money. On the other side, among the winners, there were people who had much larger gains in terms of scholarship.*"
Hence, the changing funding bases of the FORJAD programme, from the social assistance to the scholarship funding logic, resulted in a twofold move: higher amounts of scholarships for a few marginalized youth have coincided with tighter eligibility criteria, resulting in the ex-

clusion of almost a third of scholarship applicants. Furthermore, the transfer had direct and negative effects on the living conditions of FORJADs as one field social worker argues: "*FORJADs are now facing financial difficulties. And I think it's quite a common situation among them since the transfer from the RI to the scholarship grants office and the end of the support in several fields: health insurance, care, for example dentists, housing, and other costs. And then, CHF 100 or 200 per month is quite a lot for them*".

While the overall budget dedicated to social integration measures (MIS) has notably increased, from 3.5 million Euros in 2006 to almost 14 million Euros in 2010 - and an estimated budget of 17.5 million Euros for 2011 -, the proportion allocated to JADs has continued to increase (from less than 40% of the whole budget allocated to social integration measures to more than 50%, that is now the official minimum). Although they represent only one out of six RI beneficiaries, young adults between 18 and 25 year-old have been confirmed as the cantonal main target of socio-professional integration measures over the recent years. Such a choice that coincides with the discrimination or even the exclusion of many other types of disadvantages, had however to be justified, and particularly among field social professionals. The Head of the welfare and social assistance service evokes the work of persuasion he had to conduct with his own staff in the following terms: "*So it was a political choice to allocate more than 50% of the available funds for socio-professional integration measures to the particular category of JADs, a population that represents only 15 to 17% of all RI beneficiaries. And I had meetings with social workers to explain the programme and I remember they were disturbed by the fact that we were creating unequal treatment. But I told them that it would be very promising for the overall budget of socio-professional integration measures. Indeed, it was 3.5 million Euros in 2006 and climbed up to 14 million Euros in 2010, and we're expecting 3.5 more millions for next year."*

The selectivity issue

The entire FORJAD system is built on a step-by-step logic. It is supposed to help the JADs progressively climb all the stairs up to the achievement of a vocational degree. However, given the problems encountered by the participants, especially their personal history in terms of failures and dropouts, such logic implies creaming practices. Indeed, one interviewed integration adviser, in charge of the initial social assessment, distributes the JADs population as follows: nearly a quarter of them are young mothers who are not necessarily ready to start a measure, because they have nobody to look after their children (most nurseries or kindergartens requiring a work certificate); another quarter have addiction or severe psychological trouble; among the remaining half, some are not motivated or do not have a sufficient level of school knowledge. All in all, according to him, only about one quarter of the JADs are capable to start a measure and motivated by a vocational training perspective: "*These young adults have a wide spectrum of difficulties: debt, housing, addictions, being without family support ... A picture often rather dark. Therefore, with a lot of things to solve out before having a career plan. In 2006, the cantonal objective was to bring 100 young adults in this programme. In comparison with the 1,800 young benefiting from social assistance, they were the cream of the crop! But that left 1,700 cases unresolved. And it still is that way! If only about 200 or 300 young enter the programme every year, they are necessarily the best: those who have already solved their financial problems, their addictions, their waking up in the morning to go to work… They were able to re-train to arrive on time in the morning. It's like sports. They train and train again through internships, socio-professional*

integration measures."

Moreover, the policy-makers who designed the programme, all members of the socialist party, assumed that a distinction had to be made among young adults recipients of social assistance between people in deep social need who would not succeed in returning to the primary labour market (for whom social assistance was indicated as "*the last net*", as the cantonal Head of the specialized education and training support service puts it) and those who could return to the labour market through specific training. The cantonal Head of the specialized education and training support service summarizes this as follows: "*Working on FORJADs, bringing them into vocational training is also a way to tell them: "no dude, you're not going there! You've got two arms and two legs and you're coming with us to do something. What you see out there is just for those who have real difficulties, and it's the last net. But you, you're not in that last net, so you're asked to return into the circuit". This is a message a little preachy but it's socially acceptable because there are no reasons to go out and cry with them and extort money from the State to keep them in a legal, social and economic precariousness, while all those that will be rehabilitated will pay taxes, and generate economic activity. And we're working on it, and that's why the FORJADs are symbolic*".

As mentioned above, the social integration measures are envisioned as a further selection tool. At the FORJAD preparatory level, providers are expected to validate the young adults' professional project. During this stage of the selection process, high levels of drop-outs have been observed. Indeed, an empirical investigation about 3 such measures showed that more than half of the young adults did not attend the measure until its end and only 20 to 40% of them succeed at this FORJAD preparatory stage (Bonvin, Hugentobler, Moachon, 2007). Furthermore, the fact that a JAD completes a measure does not imply that he/she will be selected by an employer or by a school in order to start vocational training. Hence, the JADs integrated in the FORJAD programme have to successfully pass four tests:

- a) to fulfil the formal criteria and be recognised as competent by the provider of a social integration measure at the pre-FORJAD stage,
- b) to be recognised as competent at the FORJAD preparatory level,
- c) to be selected by an employer or a school,
- d) to complete the vocational training like all other apprentices (FORJADs, as other apprentices, complete successfully their vocational training in more than 70% of cases).

In 2010, about 600 young adults were FORJADs among the 3.000 RI recipients between 18 and 25 year-old. And the objective is to raise this level up to 1.000 JADs rehabilitated through vocational training in the next years, as the cantonal Head of the specialized education and training support service states. As in many other activation programmes, the integration efforts mainly benefit to those with the highest skills and job-readiness.
Furthermore, the role of the integration advisers appears crucial as they guide young adults during the FORJAD preparatory stage towards a career plan that has to be "*as realistic and achievable as possible",* as defined by the Head of the welfare and social assistance service. As they strive to match labour supply and demand in the territory where the young adult lives, the integration advisers appear as traffic officers according to the metaphor used by the cantonal Head of the specialized education and training support service: "*they show the roads, the flux, the red and green lights, they provide the necessary information to enable young adults to decide*". Reflexivity in the definition and implementation of the young

adult's career plan may here be constrained by a possible top-down imposition of institutional views and/or goals through the intervention of the integration adviser.

Some efforts to enhance JADs' capability for work at the time of the construction of their career plan and their capability for voice during its design and implementation are however made by the integration advisors: "*We try to make them (the FORJADs) all actors in the process. First of all, we don't call them "beneficiaries" but "participants", what changes the whole set. Because sometimes words lead to deeds! And we try to get them to be partners in the process. Here, it is neither the SEMO (*"motivation semester"*) nor the OPTI (*Agency for educational development, transition and professional insertion*). We are dealing with adults and try to enter a partnership approach. What does work with some of them and not so well with others. (…) Of course we influence but the ultimate decision must lie with the participant. All assessments are done with them. Participants sign a contract and they agree on what they do here*". However, such a (potentially) capability-friendly approach of socio-professional integration of marginalized youth comes up against differences in conceptions of professional know-how and culture (as this profession is "*at the crossroads of multiple skills*") among the various local agents intervening in the programme. Nonetheless, the way in which providers of social integration measures are funded by the canton of Vaud at the preparatory stage of the FORJAD programme (i.e. for the whole measure, regardless of the number of participants), clearly allows a better-individualized follow-up of each JAD, and therefore potentially limits the rate of creaming practices. As this social worker puts it: "*We receive money for each measure in the catalogue. And the fact of not having that pressure allows us to focus on the educational aspects. Otherwise, if we were paid according to the number of participants, as it is the case with the disability insurance (AI) where funding depends on the presence within the measures, we would take only the best. (…) It allows us to open the door to all young people, to activate them, to follow them. And it allows us to work over time with confidence. But this requires rigor in the information requested and given. We must develop tools that legitimize our action. There are 2 things, 2 figures: the "filling" rate of the measure. And the other thing, in terms of efficiency, is that we must get at least 20% of JADs in vocational training. Which is a pretty realistic goal*".

However, the new opportunities opened by this programme coincide with new duties for the beneficiaries and their families. As a matter of fact, their parents' financial situation is thoroughly examined, and those with sufficient means are asked to contribute to the cost of their children's vocational training. This duty for parents to financially support their children is even stronger today with the transfer of the funding grounds of the FORJAD programme, which resulted in reducing the number of beneficiaries. Yet, all social workers and providers of social measures interviewed insist on the fact that most JADs have serious difficulties with their parents or do not have any contacts with their family. Given that situation, it may be doubtful that taking into account JADs parents' financial situation will reduce conflicts within the family or contribute to the JAD's personal development as an autonomous individual.

There is also a focus on financial sanctions, insofar as the young adults refusing to undertake training or those leaving a social integration measure without medical reasons can lose up to 25% of their Integration Income. Hence, access to resources is made precarious and more generally, young adults' rights are made conditional upon compliance with the programme requirements. As the FORJAD programme evolves, there is no development of such a thing as an unconditional guarantee of social rights, i.e. "passive empowerment" in Sen's terms.

This point is important to emphasize since these sanctions do not appear to be effective. As one field social worker states: "*Normally, a JAD who refuses a measure can be punished, and should be punished, with a deduction of 25% of his/her income, so that he/she does not fall below the minimum subsistence level. And for the JADs here, I always repeat that there are rules, but that we can nevertheless find an arrangement. And we realize that this type of financial sanction is relatively inefficient. That's for sure! Anyway, they know they cannot be punished more than 25%, so they do not care! So we have limited means and the goal is to make them adhere to this type of measure*".

The availability of training opportunities

Financial incentives and the mobilisation of the personal networks of both the social workers and the JADs themselves are the main tools used to create training opportunities for JADs. Indeed, the interviewed providers of social integration measures state that the canton expects them to mobilise their personal network, including relatives or acquaintances, in order to find employers agreeing to open an apprenticeship in their firm for FORJAD beneficiaries.

Moreover, the canton decided to financially support public administrations (which hosted the great majority of the first FORJADs when the programme was launched in 2006) and firms that accept to train a FORJAD apprentice by assigning them 3.750 Euros for every new apprenticeship they create and by exempting them from social contributions on the wage they pay to their FORJAD apprentice. The MIS providers themselves get favourable conditions if they hire the participants as trainees. The canton also pays extra money to some vocational schools that accept to receive more trainees. All in all, according to a social worker, FORJADs are hosted by public or public-like structures in two thirds of cases.

All providers of social integration measures underline the crucial importance of raising the employers' awareness and creating a constant dialogue with them (or maintaining it in case it already exists). As a social worker argues: "*it's true that it's difficult to find a regular training or working place for these young adults*". Indeed, some employers are said to have a negative image of JADs. One responsible of a socio-professional integration structure evokes his advocacy activity towards employers and the strategies used to create training and working opportunities: "*To solicit firms and create training opportunities, we have the integration advisor and the socio-professional masters who are former employers for some of them, so they have quite a large network and are part of the cantonal association of businessmen. We ourselves have been part of this association and of the chamber of trade and industry. That can be used to increase our network and contacts with them and make them aware that we are a relay and not an unfair competitor*".

The enhancement of the JADs' professional experience is another way to increase their probabilities to get an apprenticeship. To this purpose, providers of social integration measures offer opportunities to get (unpaid) working experience within firms belonging to the primary labour market. Usually, participants have to approach the firms themselves, but the providers can give them a list of employers who formerly accepted to receive other JADs during a few days (mainly in order to assess them, along the selective logic detailed above). Sometimes, especially in SMEs, these working experiences can convince the employer to open a trainee job, but this is rather exceptional.

Moreover, and this constitutes a structural constraint for FORJADs, the Swiss vocational training market shows a mismatch between supply and demand. In August 2006, the official data listed 74,000 signed apprenticeship contracts, 3,500 vacant places and 22,000 young people looking for a trainee job (Kaspar 2006). However, this situation has improved in the recent years since the Confederation, the cantons and the labour organizations have established a number of measures in order to improve the situation: information and guidance, diffusion of lists of apprenticeships, constitution of training company networks, creation of transitory work experiences, recruitment of promoters of apprenticeships in the companies, and a system of coaching and mentoring to help young adults in their search for an apprenticeship (case management). In 2009, the official data reported that Swiss firms had offered 78,500 apprenticeships while 79,000 young people were looking for an apprentice position. Furthermore, some sectors like construction and catering remain invariably unable to fill all the apprenticeships they offer. Nevertheless, one shall keep in mind that a balance between supply and demand at macro level (here in the market of apprenticeship) may well be compatible with a low degree of capabilities at individual level, namely capability for work and capability for life in general. Indeed, at the FORJAD preparatory stage, JADs can be pushed to fill apprenticeship vacancies and/or be guided toward sectors neglected by the non FORJAD apprentices like catering or construction. As one social worker argues: "*It is impossible to place certain groups of youth in a certain category of jobs like book clerks. So we try to sell their skills that are other than school courses, school grades, but it's difficult, and it requires going into the field to meet the employers*". Further investigations are needed to address this particular issue.

Because of the persistent, albeit declining, mismatch between supply and demand, requirements on new apprenticeship candidates have increased. Indeed, this situation has led employers to set up entry tests (the "basic- and multi-checks" mentioned above) during which the applicants' literacy and numeracy levels are assessed. As a result, vocational training standards have been raised during the last years and this also includes increased requirements to abide by the school and corporate disciplinary expectations. JADs are reputed to be less reliable against such normative standards, which is a further obstacle in their way to get a trainee job. And that is the reason why, according to the Director of an institutional provider of socio-professional measures, the individual follow-up of FORJADs, both outside and inside the workplace, is a decisive argument towards employers, and consequently, one of the key issues for the success of the programme.

Provisional conclusions and issues to be further investigated

Since its launching, the FORJAD programme has never stopped growing thanks to its success unanimously celebrated by all stakeholders in the field of socio-professional integration of marginalized youth. In five years' time, the FORJAD programme even became the cantonal department of social affairs major achievement. As one field social worker argues, "FORJAD becomes increasingly the spearheading project conducted by the department and then finally FORJAD becomes a little everything. So we no longer talk so much of MIS, because it is less buoyant even if it costs as much, but it's not very politically attractive". Furthermore, when assessed against the analytical grid provided by the CA, the FORJAD programme calls for the further and in-depth investigation of three main dimensions: the available resources, the individual conversion factors and the social conversion factors.

With regard to resources, the increased means devoted to the integration of marginalized youth coincide with lesser resources attributed to other categories of beneficiaries. Indeed, at least half of the available social integration measures are booked for JADs and integration advisers spend most of their working time with beneficiaries belonging to this age group. At the individual level, FORJAD resources are mostly used in support of the young adults with the highest training-readiness. Hence, the undeniable increase of available resources seem to be paralleled by a twofold inequality resulting from the implementation of FORJAD: between JADs and other age groups on the one side, between "training-ready" JADs and their counterparts of the same age group on the other side. This issue will be further investigated in our field work.

Concerning individual conversion factors, there seems to be a very strong focus on vocational training, which denotes the strong human capital component of the FORJAD model. This encompasses both marketability and higher quality training objectives. The first stages of the FORJAD programme tend to emphasize marketability insofar as the participants are taught how to apply for a trainee job or for a professional school. The second part, however, is more oriented towards higher quality training. But the goal does not seem to have a reflexive effect on the labour market (i.e. equip the labour market for the people) and to enhance JADs' capability for voice, but mainly to diminish the risk that the JADs claim welfare benefits later on during their life and to reduce long-term public expenditure in welfare policies. This issue of reflexivity between supply and demand, as well as the key question of marginalized youth's capability for voice, will be at the centre of our future work.

Social conversion factors are notoriously absent from most Swiss activation programmes. In the FORJAD case, we should however point out the various efforts deployed by the canton to open new training opportunities for the participants. On the one hand, providers are called to support the JADs in their search for an apprenticeship, esp. by mobilising their network; on the other hand, financial incentives are provided to firms and institutions that accept to receive FORJAD beneficiaries as trainees. All the same, there seems to be a discrepancy between supply-side and demand-side interventions: while the enhancement of human capital mobilises a vast range of tools (including constraints and sanctions if necessary), the intervention on the demand-side mainly relies on incentives (and not obligations, e.g. compelling employers to hire a quota of apprentices) supposed to generate the corporate actors' goodwill with the risk that it will disappear as soon as financial incentives and/or active communication campaign stop. The impact of these measures on the demand side will have to be investigated thoroughly in the next stages of the project.

Brief synthesis

The FORJAD programme has been launched in 2006 by the cantonal administration on the basis of two findings that were widely shared among both the field workers dealing with social and professional (re-)insertion and the policy-makers from both the left and the right wing. The first finding was that since the late 1990s, there was a (very) rapidly growing number of young people aged between 18 and 25 benefiting from social assistance programmes with a great risk of becoming dependent on welfare subsidies on the long-term and falling into (quasi-) irreversible poverty traps. Once this figure had been attested by statistics and reports and constructed as a collective problem in the early 2000s (young adults between 18 and 25 year-old benefiting from welfare were since then identified as a priority target group and labelled as the category "JADs"), the second finding was related to the construction of the best way to tackle this problem. At this point, the special figure that only 30% of these young social assistance beneficiaries had completed vocational training or had earned a professional degree was the principal feature commonly highlighted by all stakeholders. Therefore, the issue of marginalized youth was identified mainly as a problem of training or educational deficit.

The FORJAD programme aims at getting marginalized youth out of welfare and giving them more chances to lead an autonomous life (better chances to lead the kind of life they value in the terms of the CA) by offering them the possibility to achieve a vocational training as this is considered as the best protection against unemployment and therefore the best way to return to paid employment. As a consequence, the objective of the programme is to reintroduce these young into the vocational and education system (VET) as it is, and not to adapt and change the VET by taking into account the reasons (both individual and collective) of the JADs' premature exit of VET and educational failure. Therefore the functioning of the whole VET system (operating as a selective tool among pupils) is not questioned by the implementation of the FORJAD programme. It is even possible to argue that the FORJAD programme strengthens the function of the Swiss VET system (in which about two thirds of young people take part in the dual system of apprenticeship), which is to provide job-ready young people according to employers' needs.

However, it is worth reminding that by the early 2000s, field stakeholders, i.e. social workers and institutions dealing with social and professional (re-)insertion, were the first to investigate the phenomenon of youth marginalization (marginalized young adults and/or young at risk of marginalization) and to characterize this new public. They labelled them as "struggling young adults"– JADs – which stands for the French "jeunes adultes en difficulté", what decisively contributed to construct a social problem calling for a political response. Indeed, field stakeholders framed the contours of the problem and oriented the way in which it had to be solved, but policy-makers chose to make out of the issue of marginalized youth an urgent political issue and to give it an answer by launching the innovative FORJAD programme in the Canton of Vaud. The design and the setting up of this new programme aiming at promoting vocational training among JADs was accomplished through cooperation between three departments of the cantonal administration: the department of Social Affairs, the department of Education and the department of Employment. Although the programme was designed by policy-makers and by the top administrative staff, once the implementation phase started, feedbacks from field workers were nevertheless called for by the cantonal administration that even took some of the field actors' propositions into account. However, this

bottom-up functioning did not apply for the design and implementation of the recent transfer of the FORJADs' funding from the RI (integration income) to the scholarships grants office in 2009.

When it comes to the results of the FORJAD programme, despite its recent implementation and the limited time perspective for analysis, our preliminary investigations show the risk of a two-fold inequality: between JADs and other age groups on the one hand, between "training-ready" JADs and their counterparts of the same age group on the other hand. With regard to resources, the increased means devoted to the integration of marginalized youth (more than half of the overall cantonal budget dedicated to socio-professional integration measures are today dedicated to JADs) coincide with lesser resources attributed to other categories of beneficiaries. Moreover, as in many other activation programmes, the integration efforts mainly benefit to those with the highest skills and job-readiness. Indeed, although the perspective of success of FORJADs is as high as for non-FORJADs once they enter an apprenticeship, not all JADs become FORJADs. Only one fifth of all JADs integrated in a MIS succeeds in undertaking a vocational training and goes on beginning an apprenticeship.

Furthermore, JADs' freedom of choice can be constrained at the preparatory stage of the FORJAD programme when it comes to choose, with the help of the "integration adviser", a professional orientation. At this point, the role of the integration advisers appears crucial as they guide young adults towards a career plan that has to be both "realistic" and "achievable". A possible top-down imposition of institutional views and/or goals (like orientation towards positions and jobs deserted from other – non JADs – young people) through the intervention of the integration adviser cannot be excluded, especially since there is a structural (albeit declining) mismatch in Switzerland between available apprenticeship positions (demand) and young people looking for a trainee job (supply).

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The “Vocational Placement Guarantee”: Institutional setting and implementation of a measure at the crossroads of labour-market and educational policy

1. Introduction

This mapping report summarising the main pillars of the "Vocational Placement Guarantee" (*Ausbildungsgarantie*) scheme in Austria and the modes of its implementation relies on two main sources. On the one hand it makes use of statistical data, existing reports and literature on Austria's educational system in general and the organisation of the country's "dual system" in particular. In addition, six interviews were carried out with relevant stakeholders active at the intersection of educational and labour-market policy. The interviews were conducted with representatives of the social partners – the Austrian Chamber of Labour, the Austrian Economic Chamber and the Austrian Federation of Trade Unions – and with officials active in the field of labour-market policy in Vienna, including the Public Employment Service Vienna for Youth (AMS Jugendliche), the Vienna Employment Promotion Fund (WAFF) and the coordination centre, "Youth – Education – Employment".

First, we will provide an overview of the relevant key data, key stakeholders and key principles of Austria's educational regime. In the following, particular emphasis will be placed on recent developments and reform efforts within the Austrian "dual system". Finally we will analyse the relevance of the "Vocational Placement Guarantee" against this institutional background as well as the political and educational challenges following from this reform step, looking particularly at its implementation in Vienna. Furthermore, we will critically discuss which consequences the implementation of the Vocational Placement Guarantee has for the formation of young people's capabilities and voicing.

2. General presentation of the national educational regime and general overview of the key statistical data on education at national level

Taking as a reference point the three main types of educational regimes – the liberal-market based system, the universalistic system and the systems of alternance – Austria's national educational regime has traditionally been oriented towards the last: the system of alternance or "dual system", which puts special emphasis on young people's vocational education: Thus, in 2008 only one fifth (22.9%) of students in upper secondary education were enrolled in schools providing a general academic education while almost three quarters (70.8%) received a vocational education and 6.3% a pre-vocational education.[31] Austria therefore belongs to those countries where the percentage of pupils choosing general academic educational pathways is traditionally very low. After completion of compulsory school, 79.0% of 15-to-19-year-olds are still participating in the educational system, a figure that has gone down from 82% in 2006 – a relatively low participation rate by EU standards. Therefore, 21% of the 15-19 cohorts are located outside the schooling system.

Table 1: Trends in enrolment rates (1995-2008) of full-time and part-time students in public and private institutions in Austria and the EU-19, 15-to-19-year-olds, as a percentage of the population aged 15 to 19

	1995	2000	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Austria	75	77	77	79	80	82	79	79
EU-19	77	81	83	84	85	85	84	85

Source: (OECD 2010, 303)

The establishment of an educational regime relying on the dual system is closely linked to the existence of so-called occupational labour markets, a controlled transition from education to employment via apprenticeships providing intermediate skills, stable employment patterns and identities. The educational system is highly controlled and influenced by corpo-

[31] (OECD 2010, 305)

ratist organisations and their particular interests. In the German speaking countries, the early selection of educational pathways in the school system is another main feature, leading to polarised and segmented outcomes according to class, gender and migrant background. The transition to other educational pathways than the one initially chosen within the system is not easy and rather rare even though the permeability of the different branches of the system has been improved over the last years.[32]

In Austria, responsibilities concerning legislative matters of school life are scattered among federal and provincial competencies. School legislation at the federal level may only be amended by a two-thirds majority in Parliament, which has led to a rather detrimental lock-in of the main features of the educational system. Most legislative matters of school administration are in the responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Education and Culture but certain regulations and the implementation of laws may be delegated to the provincial governments ("Bundesländer"). These tasks are taken over by the federal school authorities within the individual provinces, i.e. the Regional Education Boards at provincial level and the District Education Boards at the level of the political districts. The Regional Education Boards, for instance, have a say concerning appointments and are the official employer of all teachers at public compulsory schools. They also issue decrees and general regulations on the structure, organisation, setting up, maintenance and closing down of schools providing general education.

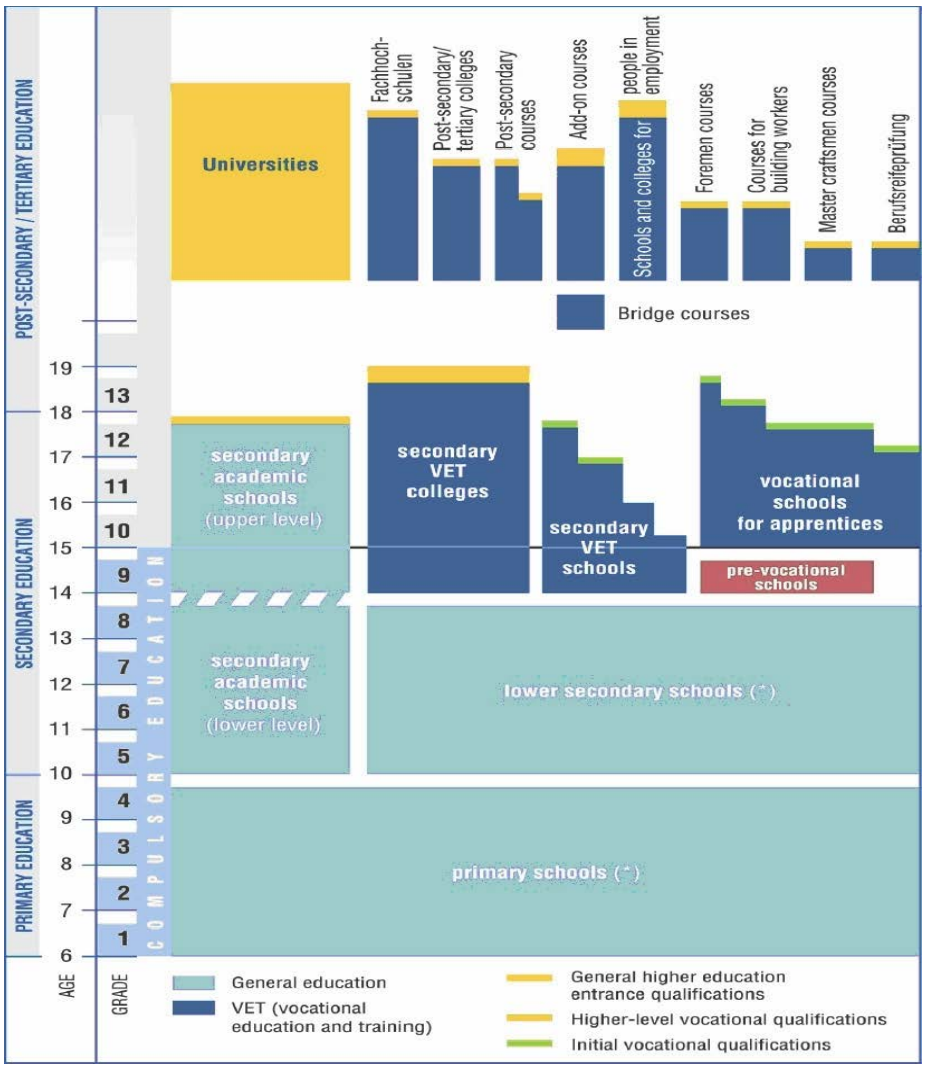
Furthermore, laws and decrees regulating school life and school education are drawn up in cooperation with the social partners. The Austrian system of economic and social partnership is based on a voluntary cooperation of legal interest groups, such as the employers' (Economic Chamber), the employees' (Chamber of Labour) and agricultural (Presidential Conference of the Chamber of Agriculture) chambers, voluntary interest groups, such as the Federation of Austrian Industrialists and the Austrian Federation of Trade Unions, and members of the government.[33]

2.1 School and vocational careers in the educational system in Austria

The main routes of educational pathways are presented in this chapter; an overview is given in Figure 1, which visualises the various educational career options from primary to tertiary education.[34]

[32] (Zeilinger 2006, 19); (Gruber 2004)
[33] http://www.bmukk.gv.at/enfr/school/educ/brief.htm4589.xml, (Archan/Mayr 2006)
[34] (Archan/Mayr 2006)

Figure 1:



Source: (ReferNet Austria 2008, 21)

In Austria, compulsory schooling begins at age six. Up to this age (0-6 years), education is provided in various child-care facilities where attendance is voluntary. Only in 2009, the city council of Vienna introduced compulsory kindergarten attendance (of at least 20 hours per week) during the final year before school entry, with the aim to bring children from all social strata into the educational system at an early stage. Furthermore, fees for kindergarten attendance were abolished. This means that kindergarten places for ALL five-year-olds have to be provided. Following pre-school education most children attend primary school (*Volksschule*) from age 6 to 10, with a small proportion of school-age children attending schools for children with special educational needs (*Sonderschule*). At the transition from the four-year primary level to the lower secondary level (ISCED 2), the general education system is divided into four types of schools: academic secondary schools (*Gymnasium Unterstufe*), lower secondary schools (*Hauptschule*), "new middle school" (*Neue Mittelschule*) and schools for children with special educational needs (*Sonderschule*)..

The lower secondary level ends after eight years of schooling and is followed by the upper secondary level (ISCED 3), which offers four different options: academic secondary schools (*Gymnasium Oberstufe*), higher technical and vocational colleges (*Höhere Technische und*

Berufsbildende Schulen)[35], intermediate technical and vocational schools (which do not lead to a secondary school leaving certificate, or *Matura*) and the pre-vocational year (*Polytechnikum*). The pre-vocational year, which is of special importance for this study, acts as a kind of bridge between the four-year lower secondary level and entry into working life (in order to comply with the requirement of nine years of compulsory schooling) or entry into the dual system of vocational education (attendance of a vocational school and apprenticeship with a company). For the majority of children, compulsory schooling is completed at the end of the ninth grade. However, if a child had to repeat a particular year he or she is able to leave school earlier.

A total of 1,202,033 students were enrolled in Austria's schools during the 2007/08 school year. The number of pupils attending primary schools has been falling consistently for some years due to the decrease in the birth rate over previous years[36]. Secondary academic schools and secondary technical and vocational colleges have been reporting record student numbers at the expense of enrolments in lower secondary schools[37], a trend which is expected to be continued. In post-compulsory education the number of pupils in secondary technical and vocational colleges has risen by a fifth compared to ten years ago; at upper secondary academic schools a 8.0% rise has been recorded.[38] However, it must be noted that the permeability from lower secondary schools to higher secondary schools is low: only 1/3 of pupils from lower secondary but 90% of pupils from academic secondary schools go on to attend higher secondary schools. [39]

The inclination of pupils to attend a higher secondary school is strongly influenced by their parents' educational attainment level; similarly, in tertiary education the socio-economic background of enrolled students has been continuously unequal for years.[40] Table 2 shows the educational attainment level and the school type 17-year-olds have attended or are attending according to the educational attainment level of their parents. We see that especially male youngsters – one fifth – whose parents only completed compulsory school are not enrolled in post-compulsory education. This group also has the lowest numbers of students enrolled in higher academic or vocational schools and is strongest represented in apprenticeship training. Girls on the other hand are – even if their parents attained a lower level of education – are more inclined than boys to attend schools than choosing apprenticeship training or to completely dropping out of school.

[35] These include crafts, technical and arts colleges, colleges of business administration, colleges of management and the service industries and colleges of agriculture and forestry.

[36] This is an important point because sometimes the current crisis of the dual system, which leads to a lack of available apprenticeship places for school leavers, is expected to be solved through this demographic change.

[37] Secondary lower schools are still the school type absorbing 65% of pupils having completed primary school (Wintersteller 2009, 56).

[38] http://www.statistik.at/web_en/statistics/education_culture/formal_education/school_attendance/index.html, (Statistik Austria 2010c, 159)

[39] (Wintersteller 2009, 56)

[40] (Lassnig/Vogtenhuber 2009a, 112)

Table 2: Educational attainment of 17-year-olds according to their parents' educational attainment, 2005-2007, on average

Educational Attainment/Type of School						
Educational attainment level of parents	Without further education after compulsory school	Apprenticeship	Intermediate schools	Higher vocational schools	Higher academic schools	All 17-year olds
All						
Low (compulsory school)	20	52	11	6	10	100
Medium (apprenticeship, intermediate vocational schools)	7	43	11	12	25	100
High (higher vocational/academic schools)	5	16	9	37	32	100
Highest (university)	1	5	5	61	26	100
All parents	8	37	10	20	23	100
Male						
low	22	59	6	5	6	100
medium	7	56	6	8	22	100
higher	6	24	6	28	36	100
highest	1	9	5	60	23	100
All parents	9	47	6	15	21	100
Female						
low	17	44	16	6	14	100
medium	7	30	16	17	28	100
higher	4	8	12	46	28	100
highest	1	2	5	61	30	100
All parents	8	26	14	24	26	100

Source: (Lassnig/Vogtenhuber 2009b, 157)

At tertiary level (ISCED 5), universities of applied sciences (*Fachhochschulen*) or post-secondary colleges are available. The secondary school leaving certificate (*Matura*) or other certificates gained through special examinations (i.e. the *Berufsreifeprüfung*) allow students to gain access to tertiary education. The tertiary level has been significantly expanded in recent years, partly as a result of the introduction of universities of applied sciences and also due to newly introduced degree programmes following the Bologna process being divided into bachelor programmes (6-8 semesters) and subsequent master programmes (2-4 semesters). Furthermore, in the 2007/08 academic year, the teacher training academies for primary and lower secondary education (*Pädagogische Akademien*) were upgraded to universities of education (*Pädagogische Hochschulen*). The highest formal academic qualification, the doctorate, can be attained at ISCED level 6.[41] According to Statistics Austria, the growing number of students going to university continued over the past few years and in the 2008/09 academic year reached a figure of 223,562 students at public universities. The number of students at universities of applied sciences during the 2009/10 academic year was 36,085 and of students enrolled in courses for the teaching qualification 7,928 students.[42]

[41] http://www.statistik.at/web_en/statistics/education_culture/formal_education/index.html

42 http://www.statistik.at/web_en/statistics/education_culture/formal_education/education_at_a_glance/index.html

2.2 Selective pathways: gender, class and migrant background

One main characteristic of Austria's school system is the early selection of pupils being allotted either to lower secondary schools (*Hauptschule*) or academic secondary schools (*Gymnasium*) as early as the age of 10. The former have traditionally led to a vocational route to education (dual system), the latter to different forms of higher and university education. Which type of school is chosen depends on various factors: besides the regional accessibility of the school, in particular the social and ethnic background of the pupil is decisive. Children with German colloquial language more often go on to academic secondary schools than those using other colloquial languages (34.8%/26.8%)[43]. Therefore, the percentage of students using other than German colloquial languages, in particular Turkish and Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian is much higher in lower secondary schools (20%) than in academic secondary schools (14.2%).[44]

The ninth school grade (usually at the age of 14-15) again marks an educational watershed – considering socio-demographic characteristics, different outcomes based on ethnic background and gender can be observed in educational careers: On the one hand, 6 out of 10 girls but only 5 out of 10 boys decide to attend an academic secondary school, higher technical or vocational college ending with an exam that allows them to enrol in university. On the other hand, the dual system is still dominated by male apprentices: two thirds of students are boys. Male youths are also overrepresented in apprenticeships which still lead to well-paid and stable jobs. In contrast, young women are concentrated in a small number of not very promising apprenticeships in the service sector: In 2006, 50% of all female apprentices chose to train as retail saleswoman, hairdresser or office clerk while eight out of ten young men chose occupations in the production sector, which have very small percentages of female apprentices.[45]

Young people with other than German as colloquial language (54.8%) choose intermediate technical and vocational schools or the pre-vocational year over other educational pathways more often or even quit the formal educational system entirely.[46] Overall – as is shown in Table 3 – the highest percentages of pupils with other than German as colloquial languages are to be found in primary schools (22.3%), in lower secondary schools (20.5%), in schools for children with special educational needs (27.8%), in the pre-vocational year (21.7%), in "new middle schools" (24.2%) as well as in intermediate technical and vocational schools (17.0%). These school types offer little perspectives to continue with higher education and a higher chance of discontinuing working biographies.

Even though more than 20% of pupils in lower secondary schools and in the pre-vocational year have migrant background, in the dual system of vocational education their share is only 8.2%.

43 (Statistik Austria 2010b, 26)

44 (Statistik Austria 2010b: 2010, 24, 24)

45 Gender segregation also persists in vocational schools and universities: men dominate in technical, women in vocational schools and universities with social or commercial focus (Mairhuber/Papouschek 2010, 443).

46 (Wintersteller 2009, 59)

Table 3: Percentage of pupils with other than German as mother tongue, with non-Austrian citizenship, in different school types, in Austria and the Austrian provinces, 2008/2009

	Percentage of pupils with other than German as mother tongue									
	Austria	Burgen-land	Kärnten	Lower Austria	Upper Austria	Salzburg	Styria	Tirol	Vorarl-berg	Vienna
All School types	16.9	11	8.7	10.3	13	14.6	9.1	10.2	17.3	40.7
Primary School	22.3	13.2	10.9	13.6	18.7	20.2	12.9	15.1	24.5	50.6
Lower Secondary School	20.5	13.3	10.7	12.5	17.6	18.9	10	13	22.3	60.9
Special School	27.8	11.4	10.4	18.5	25.3	23.9	12.6	20.9	34.4	51.8
Prevocational Year	21.7	11.1	11.8	13.1	18.9	18.5	10.9	10	23	60.8
New Middle School	24.2	10.4	5.5	-	21.8	-	30	-	23.8	-
Academic Secondary School	13.3	10	7.9	5.8	7.7	8.8	8.3	5.9	7.9	27.9
Lower Academic Sec-ondary School	14.2	9.7	8.7	6.1	8.9	10.2	8.9	5.8	8.7	29.1
Others	26	1.1	-	0.5	1.4	17.2	4	0.5	-	53.2
Vocational School/Apprenticeship	8.2	6.1	2.4	4	4.1	7.5	2.3	2.9	3.6	30.2
Intermediary Vocational School	17	12.3	8.7	12.8	13.1	14.3	9.9	9.6	19.3	46.5
Others	11.6	0.9	6.7	12.5	4.1	12.7	6	3.7	3.7	23.2
Higher Vocational Schools	11	8.5	7.6	7.7	6.9	8.7	6.7	6.8	9.7	28.7
Academy for Social Work	4.3	-	-	-	4.3	-	-	-	-	-
Intermediate Vocational Schools for Education	0.9	-	-	-	-	-	6.5	0.3	-	0.6
University of Education	2.8	0.8	2.4	1	0.7	1.2	0.7	1.6	1	8.7
	Percentage of pupils with non-Austrian citizenship									
	Austria	Burgen-land	Kärnten	Lower Austria	Upper Austria	Salzburg	Styria	Tirol	Vorarl-berg	Vienna
All School types	9.4	5.9	6.8	6.3	8	11.9	6.4	8.1	10.4	16.9
Primary School	11.2	6.4	8.5	7.7	9.9	13.1	8.4	9.3	11.4	20
Lower Secondary School	12.7	8.1	9.8	8.3	11.8	15	7.9	9.9	13	29.2
Special School	18.6	7	9.1	13.5	17.4	21.5	10.1	17	24.3	28.8
Prevocational Year	14	6.1	12.2	9.7	13.6	16.6	7.8	9.2	13.5	29.5
New Middle School	16.3	7.3	4.7	-	9	-	23.5	-	13.3	-
Academic Secondary School	6.4	4.9	4.9	3.6	4.3	8.9	5	5.5	6.5	10.1
Lower Academic Sec-ondary School	6.5	4.5	5.2	3.6	4.5	8.4	5.1	5.5	5.8	10.3
Others	27.2	-	-	1.9	1.8	41.4	4.4	6.5	-	52
Vocational School/Apprenticeship	6.4	3.9	3.9	4.4	4.7	10.2	2.9	8.1	8.3	11.8
Intermediary Vocational School	8.7	6.3	6.7	6.7	8.5	11.8	6.7	5.8	10.7	15.3
Others	7.8	0.4	5.8	7.6	3.3	14.1	5.9	4.1	6.1	11.7
Higher Vocational Schools	5.5	4.9	4.8	3.8	4.3	7.6	4.2	4.7	6.2	9.6
Academy for Social Work	8.7	-	-	-	8.7	-	-	-	-	-
Intermediate Vocational Schools for Education	3	-	-	-	0.4	-	6.5	6.9	-	1.1
University of Education	1.8	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.8	2	0.7	1.7	4.8	4.1
Health Schools	4.6	3.5	2.1	2.2	1.2	5.1	5.1	6	5.3	8.5
Health Academies	2.3	-	0.7	-	0.2	3.3	0.7	9.8	-	1.9

Source: (Statistik Austria 2010c, 150; 154)

In Vienna, which is the place in Austria with the highest percentage of non-Austrian citizens and citizens with migrant background, this situation is even more pronounced. 40.7% of all pupils in Vienna do not have German as their mother tongue. In some school types thus more than 60% of pupils use other than German as colloquial language. Taking a look at the number of apprentices with migrant background in Vienna, we see that they are more inclined (30.2%) to choose this educational pathway than in other Austrian regions.[47]

A panel study carried out by researchers of the University of Vienna[48] accompanying students with predominantly migrant background during their transition from lower secondary school to other higher school types, into the apprenticeship system or into the labour market in Vienna found out that the eighth school grade – which is the most decisive before deciding which educational or vocational pathway to choose – does not sufficiently prepare the students for their future career steps. More than half of the 90 accompanied pupils failed to achieve their ideal educational or vocational pathway but had to downgrade their expectations. The study also emphasised the importance of familial and friends' networks as well as teachers' support for the success of the pupils' future plans.

2.3 Recent developments concerning educational attainment levels in Austria

Given the development of educational attainment among young people in Austria, we can see a continuous development towards higher educational levels, with more people obtaining further education qualifications than 40 years ago. This, however, raises the question about the situation at the lower end of the educational system.

The youth education attainment level in Austria was 86.0% in 2009 (annual average). This indicator is used to measure the proportion of 20-to-24-year-olds who have at least an upper secondary qualification.[49] Overall, around 434,000 young people had a further education qualification, 214,000 of whom were young men compared to 220,000 young women. In particular, the educational attainment of young women has improved significantly since the 1970s. By 2006 the number of young people aged 20-24 who had only completed compulsory school had fallen to 17%, compared to 40% in 1971, whereas 34% had completed secondary school compared to 13% in 1971. Especially the gender gap in educational attainment has been reduced since then because the educational level of women increased faster than that of men. At the same time the female percentage of persons with university degrees increased from 24% in 1971 to 42% in 2007. Regarding the level of overall educational attainment, women have long been disadvantaged regarding their access to higher education. However, for some years, women with a university degree are slightly overrepresented. The proportion of women among all secondary school leavers with *Matura* is now 60%. Among the apprentices, their proportion is only 34.5%.[50]

[47] (Statistik Austria 2010b, 150)
[48] (Rosenberger et al. 2009)
[49] The indicator, "Youth education attainment level", is defined as the percentage of young people aged 20-24 having attained at least upper secondary education, i.e. with an education level ISCED 3a, 3b or 3c long minimum (numerator).
[50] (Papouschek/Mairhuber 2010)

Table 4 : Youth educational attainment, 1995 to 2008			
Year	Total	Female	Male
	in %		
1995	79.2	74.5	84.1
1996	80.5	77.8	83.3
1997	81.8	80.1	83.6
1998	84.4	82.4	86.5
1999	84.7	82.9	86.6
2000	85.1	84.9	85.3
2001	85.1	85.3	84.9
2002	85.3	84.6	86.1
2003	84.2	83.4	85.1
2004	85.8	86.5	85.1
2005	85.9	87.3	84.6
2006	85.8	86.7	84.9
2007	84.1	85.4	82.7
2008	84.5	84.8	84.2
Source: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Labour Force Survey (Microcensus). Yearly average. Compiled on 09 April 2009, http://www.statistik.at/web_en/static/results_overview_youth_educational_attainment_029837.xls			

Table 5: Educational attainment of the Austrian population, ages 25 to 64, in %

Year	Compulsory school	Apprentice-ship training	Intermedi-ate technical and voca-tional school	Academic secondary school, higher tech-nical and vocational college	Post-secondary college	University
Total						
1971	57.8	25.9	7.5	6	0	2.8
1981	46	31	11.2	7.3	0.7	3.9
1991	34.2	37	12.5	9.4	1.6	5.3
2001	26.2	39.4	13.1	11.5	2.3	7.5
2008	17.4	40.8	13.8	14.6	2.7	10.7
Male						
1971	43.4	39.7	5	7.4	0	4.4
1981	34.3	43.7	7.3	8.5	0.4	5.7
1991	25.3	48.6	8.1	10.3	0.9	6.9
2001	19.3	51.1	7.5	12.1	1.1	8.8
2008	12.5	51.4	8.9	14.4	1.3	11.5
Fe-male						
1971	70.4	13.7	9.8	4.8	0.1	1.3
1981	56.8	19.2	14.7	6.2	0.8	2.2
1991	43.1	25.4	17	8.5	2.3	3.7
2001	33.1	27.7	18.6	10.9	3.5	6.2
2008	22.3	30.3	18.7	14.9	4	9.8

Source: (Statistik Austria 2010b, 85)

Although women have drawn level with men in terms of education they have more difficulties to turn their level of education into adequate jobs. With the same level of education men still can attain higher job positions than women.[51] With respect to income, a major gender wage gap exists and has even widened since 1995. The gender wage gap stands at 27.6% depending on the qualification and sector among male and female job starters with the same educational attainment. Mairhuber and Papouschek (2010) explain this difference on the one hand with gender-specific choices of education and on the other with the unequal distribution of starting positions within the job hierarchy of companies.

In Austria in 2009 8.9% of female and 8.5% of male persons aged 18-24 had not attained a level of education or training higher than ISCED 0, 1, 2 or 3c short (i.e. this means they had just or not even completed lower secondary school) and had not received any education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey ("early school leavers"). This ratio saw a remarkable decrease of female early school leavers in the mid-1990s in particular and has seen a near stagnation of the ratio since the end of the 1990s.[52]

Table 6: Early school leavers, 1995 to 2008

Year	Total	Female	Male
	in %		
1995	13.6	17.3	9.9
1996	12.1	14.9	9.2
1997	10.8	12.5	9.0
1999	10.7	11.9	9.6
2000	10.2	10.7	9.6
2001	10.2	10.7	9.7
2002	9.5	10.2	8.7
2003	9.3	9.9	8.6
2004*	8.7	7.9	9.5
2005	9.0	8.8	9.4
2006*	9.6	10.2	9.3
2007	10.7	10.1	11.4
2008	10.1	9.8	10.4
2009	8.7	8.9	8.5

Source: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Labour Force Survey (Microcensus). Up till 2002 1stquarter, since 2003 2ndquarter. Compiled on 04 April 2010 *) Break in time series, http://www.statistik.at/web_en/static/results_overview_early_school_leavers_029838.xls

A study[53] on social inequalities concerning the risk of dropping out of the school system early shows that young people living in urban areas are two times more likely to drop out early (drop-out rate: 11.8%) than young people living in rural areas (drop-out rate: 5.4%).[54]

51 (Mairhuber/Papouschek 2010)

52 (Papouschek/Mairhuber 2010)

53 (Steiner 2009)

54 Compared to the equal educational opportunities debate of the 1960s and 1970s in Austria, these figures show that the situation seems to have changed completely. While 30 years ago, youths from rural areas were regarded as educationally disadvantaged, nowadays it is urban youths who face higher risks of leaving the educational system without sufficient qualifications.

Furthermore, young people with migrant background as well as pupils whose parents only attained a low formal educational level are much more likely to drop out of the school system than other (Austrian) pupils. The rate of drop-outs among immigrants without EU citizenship is four times higher (nearly 30%) than the rate among young Austrians of the same age (drop-out rate: 7.2%). The risk of second- and third-generation pupils of former immigrants still is twice that of native Austrians. Herzog-Punzenberger[55] concludes that a "citizenship bonus" must explain this difference between young people with migrant background without and with Austrian citizenship.

Concerning the risk of dropping out of school early due to social origin (the parents' occupational status and the parents' education) young people whose parents are unemployed face a drop-out risk that is three times higher (drop-out rate: 21.1%) compared to young people whose parents are employed (drop-out rate: 6.4%). The social inequalities concerning school drop-outs are highest if differentiated according to the parents' education. Young people whose parents have a very low educational level (e.g. parents are drop-outs themselves) are 5.5 times more likely to leave the educational system without sufficient qualifications (drop-out rate: 16.8%) than young people whose parents are highly educated (drop-out rate: 3.1%).

Taking these developments together it is possible to conclude that the very selective Austrian school system, combined with the short duration of compulsory schooling, add to young people's disadvantages instead of reducing them. Moreover, the competitive situation on the apprenticeship market leads to a further stratification of young people, into those succeeding in obtaining vocational training, those being supported by measures of the Austrian Employment Service, those beginning to work immediately in low-qualified jobs and those dropping out completely.

The policy approach to combat early school leaving in Austria can be classified as employment-centred. The most common form of intervention to decrease the proportion of early school leavers is to integrate early school leavers into pre-vocational measures, active labour market training, apprenticeship-training or to make attempts for direct integration into the labour market.

The next section will provide an institutional mapping of the case (the "Vocational Placement Guarantee") to be studied, explaining the regime of the "dual system" and identifying the main strengths and weaknesses of the programme from the perspective of the main stakeholders.

3. Apprenticeship training in Austria – the "dual system" : key stakeholders, recent reforms, principles[56]

In Austria apprenticeship training takes place at two different sites, thus, apprenticeship training is also referred to as a "dual system of vocational training", or "dual system": company-based training of apprentices is complemented by compulsory attendance of a part-time vocational school for apprentices (*Berufsschule*) providing apprentices with the theoretical basics of the respective occupation and deepening their general knowledge of subjects such as German and Communication Skills, Career-related Foreign Language, Civics or Business Education/Administration. The official educational objectives of these courses include the improvement of students' communication, cooperative and social skills; the broadening

[55] (Herzog-Punzenberger 2007, 244)
[56] (Tritscher-Archan et al. 2008)

of their vocabulary in order to provide them with the skills necessary to adequately voice and defend personal and business interests; the provision of qualifications necessary to play an active, critical and responsible part in society; the improvement of students' understanding of the real world and of the gap between legitimate claims and reality as well as the representation of Austria's political system, and cultural, economic and humanitarian achievements. [57]

The focus is on the practical application of skills. Apprentices thus spend most of the time of their apprenticeship training in the "real environment" of a manufacturing plant or service provider, where training on the job takes place. Company-based training is regulated by the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour, which issues a list of currently approx. 240 apprenticeship occupations, while pedagogical matters fall into the responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Education and Culture. Companies which train apprentices are obliged to provide apprentices with the skills and know-how stipulated in the occupational profile ensuring a uniform minimum standard of training.[58]

Apprenticeship training is based on an agreement between the company and the apprentice, stating the conditions of training within the framework of a contract of employment. It is subject to the regulations of industrial and social law as well as to protective labour legislation for teenage employees. The training lasts between two and four years but, in most cases, takes three years. In case of accreditation of other educational pathways (e.g. vocational schools, vocational training abroad as well as holders of the *Matura* school-leaving exam), the period of apprenticeship may be reduced. Apprentices are entitled to a remuneration which is fixed in collective labour agreements and varies according to the different apprenticeship trades. After completion of the apprenticeship training period and the attendance of the part-time vocational school, the apprentice may finalise his/her education by taking the Apprenticeship Leave Exam. The Apprenticeship Leave Certificate provides the apprentice with the admission to the Master Craftsman Exam and for qualification tests, and it offers access to higher education via the Higher Education Entrance Exam (*Berufsreifeprüfung*), which is a prerequisite for those without *Matura* exam to take up studies at colleges, universities, post-secondary courses and post-secondary colleges.[59] The introduction of the latter is part of a strategy to improve the permeability of the educational system in Austria. However, the number of former apprentices entering university has remained very low.

Of all Austrian teenagers born in 1993, about 42.5% entered apprenticeship training upon completion of compulsory education. The percentage of female apprentices has been constantly decreasing since 1990, falling to a mere 34% in 2008. The most popular apprenticeship occupations girls opt for are retail saleswoman, hairdresser and office clerk. Among male apprentices the most popular occupations are motor-vehicle mechanic, followed by electrician. 47% of all apprentices are trained in Crafts, Trade and Services, other important sectors are commerce (15%), the industry (13%) and tourism and the leisure industry (11%). [60]

All in all about 40,000 companies train approximately 130,000 apprentices. Upon completion of apprenticeship training about 30% of all apprentices continue to work for the company

[57] http://www.bmukk.gv.at/enfr/school/secon/app.xml
[58] Companies that are not able to provide training which covers the whole occupational profile may avail of the possibility of complementary training within a training network. Thus, even small companies may contribute their share to apprenticeship training.
[59] http://www.bmukk.gv.at/enfr/school/secon/app.xml
[60] (Schneeberger/Nowak 2009a, 1)

where they trained; in companies of the production sector the rate of continuance is higher (61%) than in other sectors. In the catering and hotel industry, for instance, the percentage of apprentices staying on beyond their apprenticeship is very low, at 15%.[61] Interestingly, the probability to stay with the same employer is even lower, at only 14-16%, for apprenticeship places receiving special subsidies for taking on girls, disadvantaged persons and apprentices over the age of 19. 52% of apprentices are still working in the same occupation two years after completing their apprenticeship training. Above-average quotas can not only be found in the production sector but also in retail and the hotels and restaurants industry[62]. With respect to labour-market participation, around 40% of the Austrian labour force report an apprenticeship as their highest educational level. At 4.1%, unemployment rates among apprenticeship graduates are below the national average (4.8%) and significantly below persons who have only completed compulsory schooling (10.2%). The youth unemployment rate, among 15-to-24-year-olds is higher than the unemployment rate for the total workforce. In 2008 it was at 8.0%: again persons who only completed compulsory schooling were the most affected. They have a higher unemployment rate at 12.1% than youngsters with post-compulsory education. Interestingly, the unemployment rate among the younger workforce is lowest for apprenticeship graduates.

Table 7: Unemployment rates of the total workforce and among 15-to-24-year-olds, by educational attainment level, 2009, in %

	All	Compulsory School	Apprenticeship	Intermediate vocational schools	Higher academic and vocational schools	University
Total	4.8	10.2	4.1	3.5	4.0	2.5
15-24	8.0	12.1	5.1	6.4	6.3	-

Source: (Statistik Austria 2010a, 53) (Statistik Austria 2010b, 93)

A recent study[63] on entrance conditions for young persons (ages 15-34) into the labour market showed that those with only compulsory education have more difficulties in finding a job after finishing school, i.e. at the point of the survey had a delayed transition (over 3 months: 48.6%) from the educational system into the labour market or even had not yet found a job (26.6%). Young persons who have completed apprenticeship training show the "smoothest" transition from the educational system to the labour market: 76% of them instantly (with a search period of up to 3 months) found a job, compared to 66% who completed a higher vocational or academic school and 64.6% who attained an academic degree.

3.1 Strengths, weaknesses and challenges of the dual system

According to Steiner and Lassnig (2009), the Austrian apprenticeship system is a key reason for the relatively low rate of early school leavers and low youth unemployment rate compared to other EU members (see Tables 6 and 7): First, entrance requirements for this educational form are set on a low level (at least from a formal perspective): a positive compulsory school leaving certificate is no prerequisite to begin apprenticeship training. In practice, however, and due to the competitive apprenticeship market those without a positive certificate have smaller chances to enter the system. Second, the "dual system" offers a kind of safety net for those young people who have opted for secondary full-time vocational school

[61] (Schneeberger/Nowak 2009b, 21)

[62] (Gregoritsch et al. 2008, 43)

[63] (Statistik Austria 2010d, 54)

after 9th grade (end of compulsory schooling) but realise that this kind of vocational education and training does not suit them or is not what they expected. Instead of dropping out of the educational system, an apprenticeship offers them an alternative vocational training.[64] Third, the apprenticeship system is focused on "learning by doing": 80% of the educational time is spent on practical tasks and only a fifth in the context of the formal school system. Therefore for a considerable part of young people this form of education is an attractive alternative to full-time vocational schools. In addition, it offers them the opportunity of earning their own income at an early age.[65]

However, there are also critical points associated with the "dual system": For instance the number of apprenticeship places within the dual system depends heavily on the economic situation. During economic downturns, companies offer fewer apprenticeship places, thereby increasing competition among candidates. Thus, only the best candidates will be offered a place while chances for the integration of disadvantaged youths decline.

The lack of apprenticeship places is certainly also linked to the processes of economic restructuring. As the general number of employees in manufacturing has decreased, the number of apprenticeship places has fallen as well. In 1980, the number of apprentices peaked at more than 190,000 apprentices, until 1996 it had fallen by 60%. After this period, slight increases and slumps can be recorded – however never reaching the rocketing numbers of the 1980s.

Table 8: Numbers of Apprentices in Austria

1970	137,445
1980	194,089
1990	145,516
1992	136,027
1994	127,754
1996	119,932
1999	127,351
2003	119,040
2008	131,880

Source: (Schneeberger/Nowak 2009b, 25)

This development of economic restructuring has hit Vienna hardest, as the shift to the service sector was most pronounced here. Additionally, according to the Chamber of Labour representative interviewed for the project, knowledge-based industries, which have particularly grown in Vienna, tend to not to take on apprentices.[66] Even though many service-sector industries offer growing numbers of apprenticeships, these cannot compensate for the loss in other sectors. As is shown in Table 9, industrial sectors and crafts absorbed fewer apprentices in 2009 than in 2003. The number of apprentices in other sectors rose, with the sharpest – more than threefold – increase between 2003 and 2009 recorded in "training institutions", now forming the "sector" with the third-largest number of apprentices in Vienna.

Table 9: Structure of training enterprises 2003 and 2009 in Vienna

Sectors	Training companies		Apprentices		Training companies		Apprentices	
	total	%	total	%	total	%	total	%

[64] (Lassnig/Steiner 2009)
[65] (Wächter 2009)
[66] (Schneeberger 2009b)

Crafts	2,428	54.7	6,410	40.0	2,260	49,60	6,000	31,9
Industry	136	3.1	1,403	8.7	120	2,7	1,269	6,8
Trade	666	15.0	2,680	16.7	634	13,9	2,756	14,6
Banking Insurance	24	0.5	271	1.7	28	0,6	365	1,9
Transport	57	1.3	697	4.3	56	1,2	1,011	5,4
Tourism	357	8.0	1,572	9.8	434	9,5	1,814	9,6
Information consulting	329	7.4	573	3.6	415	9,1	905	4,8
Commercial Trades	3,850	90.0	13,605	84.8	3,815	86,6	14,120	75,0
Others	424	9.6	1,627	10.1	586	12,9	2,036	10,8
Training institutions	**16**	**0.4**	**811**	**5.1**	**23**	**0,5**	**2,673**	**14,2**
All	4,437	100	16,043	100	4,556	100	18,829	100

Source: (Wirtschaftskammer Wien 2010)

The regional availability or non-availability of apprenticeship places is closely related to sector-specific needs for apprenticeships. In Western Austria (Salzburg and Tyrol) the hotel and restaurant industry due to the strong economic dependence of these regions on tourism do have a high demand for apprentices (see Table10). The Chamber of Labour interviewee, however, was critical of the reasons he made out for the high demand for apprentices in the hotel and restaurant industry and other service industries (such as hairdressers), which he sees in the quick generation of contributions to costs due to their early productive commitment in the company. He even interpreted this development as the emergence of a low-wage sector for young employees under the label of service-sector apprenticeships. Thus, it comes as no surprise that many of the apprentices in these sectors are forced to leave the company after completion of their apprenticeship because their contracts are not continued. The strenuous working conditions in these industries also cause many employees to move on to other sectors.

From this, another structural problem of the apprenticeship system is derived: It has become evident that the dual system has a limited ability to steer the vocational education and training of young people according to (expected) labour-market demands as companies may also have other interests (cheap labour) when hiring apprentices. This means, too many apprentices are trained in sectors where too few jobs are available.

In contrast to the problems for the service sector, the situation in technical sectors is slightly different. In these sectors, where numbers of apprenticeship places have gone down considerably, apprentices can normally only be deployed as “productive employees” at a later stage of their apprenticeship, which means that companies do not offer apprenticeship places because they are looking for cheap labour but because they want to train skilled workers. Thus, a higher number of apprentices continue their employment contracts after completion of their apprenticeship.

Besides the overall economic development relevant for the total number of apprenticeship places available, the ongoing specialisation of companies is said to be an obstacle for the provision of apprenticeship places. If companies specialise in a small segment they often are not able to cover the entire range of skills pertaining to a certain occupation and therefore are not allowed to train apprentices. Rather than a mismatch in training occupations available and required, there is evidence of a structural mismatch between the broader educational requirements of an apprenticeship education and the fact that an increasing number

of companies can only cover parts of the curriculum.[67] However, especially interviewees from employee representative groups stressed that this should not necessarily lead to a diminished significance of apprenticeship training. Rather, it calls for its further development. Thus, a representative of the Austrian Federation of Trade Unions emphasised that because apprenticeship training often no longer matches in-firm reality, a range of steps should be taken:

"There are few occupations offered that reach beyond individual sectors. We have to promote 'hybrid occupations', e.g. technical occupations with commercial knowledge, or commercial jobs with technical skills. We have to offer training providing an understanding for different aspects of business reality."

At the same time he pleaded for an extension of the time spent in vocational schools accompanying apprenticeship training to deepen theoretical knowledge.

Despite the high subsidies for companies taking on apprentices, the number of apprenticeship places provided by companies remained the same – there is a "structural" lack of apprenticeship places of at least 2,000 places in Austria per year. This is the difference between the registered number of available apprenticeship places on offer from companies and the number of apprenticeship-seekers registered with the Public Employment Service.

Table 10: Lack of apprenticeship places, 2001-2009

	Apprenticeship-seekers registered with the PES	Available apprenticeship places	Lack of apprenticeship places
September 2001	5,483	3,482	-2,001
September 2002	6,101	2,887	-3,214
September 2003	7,434	2,823	-4,611
September 2004	7,334	2,750	-4,584
September 2005	7,898	4,224	-3,674
September 2006	7,511	4,648	-2,863
September 2007	6,923	4,759	-2,164
September 2008	7,470	4,951	-2,519
September 2009	7,407	4,234	-3,173

(Schneeberger/Nowak 2009b, 43)

[67] (Lassnig/Steiner 2009)

Table 11: Lack of apprenticeship places, September 2010, by provinces

	Applicants	Available apprenticeship places	Lack of apprenticeship places
Burgenland	264	92	-172
Carinthia	527	501	-26
Lower Austria	1,259	531	-728
Upper Austria	1,046	866	-180
Salzburg	385	778	393
Styria	1,015	532	-483
Tyrol	540	821	281
Vorarlberg	428	252	-176
Vienna	1,859	561	-1,298
Austria	7,323	4,934	-2,389

Source: AMS, ls_freie-abfrage / Würfel: amb\amb_pst_07-lfd, 26th Nov 2010

Uneven business cycles, economic restructuring processes (in particular in cities such as Vienna) towards a "service economy", the concentration of apprentices in a small number of occupations, the decreasing willingness of Austrian enterprises to provide training facilities as well as the poor permeability of educational pathways have led to a range of reform measures aimed at tackling these problems of the dual system. These reforms include the creation of new apprenticeship trades in "future-oriented" fields, easier access to further education and an easier transfer from the dual system to the system of full-time technical and vocational education, financial support for companies which train apprentices, more comprehensive basic training and later specialisation.[68] Notwithstanding the social-partnership tradition in Austria, it is evident that the emerging reform strategies are much contested. Thus, the interviews conducted with various stakeholders involved in the governance of the apprenticeship system revealed rather different views on the relevance of the dual system within the Austrian educational regime and on the urgency and necessary profoundness of reforms. However, all interviewees confirmed the lack of apprenticeship places in particular sectors and especially in Vienna.

3.2 Contested "qualities": debates regarding supply-side problems of the apprenticeship system

But not only demand-side problems – i.e. a lack of apprenticeships – must be mentioned in this context. Many actors within the system also refer to a range of supply-side problems with respect to young people's competencies and abilities to take up an apprenticeship and meet the expectations of companies. A growing mismatch is becoming obvious here as companies – who can choose from a number of applicants, some of whom have even obtained higher educational degrees than those provided by lower secondary education – bemoan a range of deficits in young school leavers. Therefore, the lack of apprenticeship places in the dual system has led to growing competition among young people. More and more high-school graduates and university drop-outs are opting for apprenticeships to obtain vocational training – which also functions as a last resort for drop-outs from higher secondary schools. As they are seen as good learners, they are offered more attractive apprenticeships

[68] http://www.bmukk.gv.at/enfr/school/secon/app.xml

than those who only have (or not even have) completed lower secondary education, in particular in knowledge-based service and material-goods industries.

Thus, apart from the economic developments mentioned above, which have led to a decreasing number of apprenticeship places, some interviewees – in particular on the part of employers and labour-market institutions – pointed towards problems with the "quality" of the young people looking for apprenticeships. For them, another reason for the diminishing willingness of companies to take on apprentices can be seen in the poor results in reading, arithmetic and German language skills that potential apprentices bring with them from school. This has resulted in some very interesting proposals concerning a general overhaul of the educational system in Austria. Thus some of the experts interviewed suggested that the early selection of pupils for different types of school at the age of 10 should be abolished, which is not only the position of progressive educationalists but also the view taken by the Confederation of Austrian Industrials (*Industriellenvereinigung*). Some experts even called for an expansion of (compulsory) schooling in order to give students more time and better basic preparation for choosing their vocational pathways. The most recent local elections in Vienna have led to a coalition government formed by the Vienna Social democrats and Green Party, which has announced the introduction of a type of comprehensive school for all pupils until the end of compulsory schooling. Without reform efforts at federal level, however, innovative schemes like these have little chance of success as Austria's provinces only have limited power to alter the school system.

Besides these problems with educational standards as expected by enterprises, some experts pointed out that many employers perceive an increasing unwillingness among applicants for apprenticeship places to present themselves "properly". Many young applicants are rejected as they are seen to be unable to meet a potential employer's politeness and appearance standards. Companies expect their employees, and thus their apprentices as well, to bring along basic work ethics, such as punctuality, being prepared to get up early, a willingness to carry out instructions, etc., which – according to the executive director of the Public Employment Service for Young Persons in Vienna – are often missing in 15-year-olds looking for an apprenticeship.[69] At the same time, though, companies often fail to appreciate the fact that many young people bring along above-average IT skills.

And another interviewee concedes that companies' performance requirements for taking on an apprentice are quite high as – due to the lack of available places – employers are free to cherry pick "the best" among candidates.

Those who have not done well at school or do not meet the companies' requirements drop out and have to be supported by labour-market policy oriented measures provided by the Public Employment Service. A growing number of young people with low educational attainment are transferred to the Active Labour Market policy system, where a wide range of initiatives and programmes is available offering incentives to companies who train apprentices themselves. In the following we will discuss recent policies implemented to tackle the problems emerging from the "crisis of the dual system", which has found its provisional ending in the adoption of the so called "Vocational Placement Guarantee".

[69] "Und dann gibt es natürlich ... dann, ja, es soll Betriebe geben, die sagen: „Ich möchte mir das nicht antun, ich möchte mir den nicht aussuchen, ich möchte lieber einen, der schon auf der Schiene ist. Und wenn ich den nehme von einer überbetrieblichen Ausbildung nach einem halben Jahr, dann ist der Knabe auf der Schiene, der geht schon in die Berufsschule, der hat schon gelernt, was Pünktlichkeit heißt und, und." Dann soll er. Also alles, was im ersten Jahr weggeht von den Überbetrieblichen, wunderbar. Das ist noch immer für die öffentliche Hand ein Gewinn."

4. *The "Vocational Placement Guarantee": a package of labour-market related policy measures for young people*

Most recent developments in labour-market policy measures for young people bundled various initiatives under one objective: the *Ausbildungsgarantie*, or "Vocational Placement Guarantee". Based on an Austrian social-partner initiative called "Aktion Zukunft Jugend"[70] of 2009, the Austrian government now pledges to find a job offer, training placement or subsidised employment for every young unemployed person within six months. A budget of € 500 million was made available for these employment measures in 2009.[71]

The *Ausbildungsgarantie* was introduced within the framework of the 2008 Youth Employment Package (*Jugendbeschäftigungspaket*)[72], accompanied by major changes in the funding system for apprenticeship training and the creation of opportunities for youngsters to switch apprenticeship places during their apprenticeship training if special reasons apply. A fundamental innovation in the funding system for company- and supra-company-level apprenticeship training was to bundle the handling of all apprenticeship applications within the apprenticeship offices of the Austrian Economic Chamber's (WKO) while involving employee representative bodies.[73] Previously regulated within the Youth Training and Education Provision Act *(Jugendausbildungssicherungsgesetz, JASG)*, apprencticeship provisions are now part of the Vocational Education and Training Act *(Berufsbildungsgesetz)*.

To understand the significance of this reform, it is necessary to take a brief look at previous programmes in support of young people unable to find an apprenticeship place and their shortcomings. JASG was implemented in 1998 to regulate the creation of additional apprenticeship and training places in the form of a "safety net", including "work foundations"[74] for youngsters who fail to find an apprenticeship placement after completing compulsory school. Prerequisites for participation in JASG measures included the successful completion of 8th or 9th grade at school (for participation in the training courses) or proof of completion of compulsory schooling (for work foundations) as well as registration with the PES and/or evidence of at least 5 unsuccessful applications for apprenticeship placements. The aim of the programme, which will be available until 2011 and will then be replaced by measures of the Vocational Placement Guarantee, is to train the youngsters in one of the occupations on offer through JASG and help them to find an apprenticeship in the regular economy within the 10-month duration of individually tailored training courses. These courses are credited towards the duration of regular apprenticeship training.

A problem repeatedly criticised by Chamber of Labour representatives, however, is the transitory character of all JASG measures. Indeed, they are all aimed at a transition towards a

[70] For detailed information on the programme, see: http://www.bmsk.gv.at/cms/site/attachments/8/6/6/CH0023/CMS1238575260831/090401_presseunterlage_aktion_zukunft_jugend2.pdf

[71] http://www.bmsk.gv.at/cms/site/attachments/8/6/6/CH0023/CMS1238575260831/090401_presseunterlage_aktion_zukunft_jugend2.pdf

[72] For detailed information on *Jugendbeschäftigungspaket 2008*, see: http://www.biwi.at/newsletter/nr_18/jugendbeschaeftigung_infodokument.pdf

[73] (BMASK 2009, 123)

[74] Young workers aged 19 to 24 who were previously employed in a small or medium-sized enterprise or a work agency can make use of the so-called *Jugendstiftung*, or "work foundation" for young workers, based on the established model of work foundations. It is both publicly funded and financed by the employers involved (€ 500/participant). Training within the foundation takes up to four years. During this period, young people can complete an education or vocational training (from apprenticeship to a technical college, or *Fachhochschule*). An introductory phase offers five weeks of career orientation, during which an education and career plan is drawn up. For the duration of participation in the foundation, participants can continue to draw unemployment benefit in order to avoid forcing them to claim unemployment assistance (*Notstandshilfe*). In addition, the youngsters receive a "foundation grant" of € 100/month.

regular apprenticeship, which means that the training courses on offer do not allow participants to undergo complete apprenticeship training. "The rejection of a reasonable apprenticeship leads to the loss of the right to participate in the measure". (BMASK, 2009: 117) An evaluation of JASG measures in Vienna showed that this permanently temporary measure implied a high level of insecurity for trainers as well as for participants in the courses.[75] On average – depending on the occupation – placement rates are 27% in the first year of courses and 34% in the second year, with 40% of participants remaining in the courses. 33% (1st year) and 23% (2nd year) of participants drop out due to a lack of interest in the occupation they train for, for financial considerations, for disciplinary reasons or due to poor results at vocational school. This means that at least 50% of those who started the courses do not complete the measure successfully.

The reform of this system in the form of the Vocational Placement Guarantee resulted in the incorporation of supra-company apprenticeships into the Vocational Education and Training Act, which allows young people to complete their entire apprenticeship in supra-company training centres – even though their integration into regular apprenticeship places remains a primary aim.

The introduction of the guaranteed placement was combined with an expansion of support measures for company- and supra-company level apprenticeship training as well as improvements in the promotion of apprenticeship training. According to the Ministry of Social Affairs, there is no apprenticeship placement nowadays which does not receive public funding (basic apprenticeship subsidy for all companies, plus quality and labour-market related funding). Within the framework of the Vocational Placement Guarantee, 10,213 apprenticeship placements were offered at supra-company level during the training year 2008/2009. For 2009/2010, these will be extended to 12,300.[76] € 187 million (€ 160 million paid by the PES and 27 Mio from the regional offices of PES) are provided for supra-company apprenticeship training for the year 2009/2010. In Vienna, between 2008 and 2009, the number of apprentices in supra-company training centres doubled, making up 14% of all provided apprenticeship places.[77]

The main aim of the Placement Guarantee is to ensure that young people can complete their entire apprenticeship at supra-company level training facilities. The Vocational Placement Guarantee means that "all young people are granted access to vocational training in a school, company or training facility, with the aim of allowing them to successfully complete their apprenticeship." In addition to "apprenticeship placement at company-level, which is still given priority", supra-company training has been expanded and set up within the framework of a placement guarantee for youngsters up to age 18 as "a regular component of the dual system of vocational training on a par with company-level apprenticeship placement".[78]

This means a better institutionalisation of apprenticeships outside firms which makes sure that a training course can be continued for the entire period of an apprenticeship. This, in turn, has had a positive impact on the predictability of the accomplishment of the course both for the provider and for the trainees. Furthermore, trainees now have "proper" apprentice status.

[75] (Dörflinger et al. 2007, 18)
[76] http://www.bmsk.gv.at/cms/site/dokument.html?channel=CH0690&doc=CMS1249976411510
[77] (Wirtschaftskammer Wien 2010)
[78] http://www.biwi.at/newsletter/nr_18/jugendbeschaeftigung_infodokument.pdf

Some interviewees point to the significance of the implementation of the Vocational Placement Guarantee from the perspective of the traditional structure of the dual system. Thus, the outlined changes amount to no less than a fundamental conceptual change, as a third pillar of VET has been implemented to complement schools and company-based apprenticeships. To do so, it was necessary for policy makers and the social partners to acknowledge the structural problems of the dual system and the need for alternative providers of vocational training.

Still, this third pillar shall mainly work as a buffer that gains importance when companies are becoming reluctant to take on apprentices; therefore it remains between the conflicting poles of support of the dual system as an approved educational pathway and the necessity to provide training opportunities for all youngsters who want to start and/or complete vocational training. Thus, the programmes offered under the Vocational Placement Guarantee are often regarded as complementary to the dual system; sometimes they are even seen as stigmatising as the failure to find an apprenticeship is seen as the result of individual deficits, such as a lack of the ability to learn, non-conformist lifestyles, etc.

Education expert Arthur Schneeberger[79] regards the Vocational Placement Guarantee as a stopgap arrangement to buy time for necessary structural reforms in Austria's vocational training system: "What today is named "safety net" will in the long run become an educational pathway of its own."

Some interviewees conceded that the third pillar may gain momentum once apprentices realise that it can be a "real" alternative to company-based apprenticeship training, a system traditionally criticised by the trade unions and the Chamber of Labour for several reasons: First, companies training apprentices are not evaluated in any way if they do a good job in instructing their apprentices – or not; second, in many cases apprentices are not only not instructed properly but also misused as cheap workers. And third, what is more of a structural problem, small and medium enterprises (of fewer than 50 employees), which train 70% of Austrian apprentices[80], do not have the capacities to teach apprentices a broad range of skills since most of them are rather specialised. Supra-company training centres – especially ones specialising in high-level technical, etc. jobs and occupations – may thus have advantages over regular apprenticeship places since a training institution can provide a broad range of skills more easily.

The Vocational Placement Guarantee is accompanied by a range of additional measures for young people who face particular problems in finding an apprenticeship placement. Training opportunities for apprentices with special needs ("Neue Lehre", "Vorlehre", and, since 2003 "Integrative Berufsausbildung") were already introduced in the 1990s and remain an essential part of the vocational training guarantee. The primary intention of the programme of integrative vocational training (*Integrative Berufsausbildung*, IBA) initiated in 2003 is the support of disadvantaged groups who face major obstacles in being placed in vocational training. The target group are people who went through special-needs education and have or have not completed compulsory schooling as well as people with disabilities. Key features of IBA include the option to extend the apprenticeship by one, or in individual cases, two additional years as well as the opportunity to obtain part-qualifications.[81] Longer apprenticeship periods are granted to persons who are regarded as suitable for integrative voca-

[79] (Schneeberger 2009a, 57; 72)
[80] (Schneeberger/Nowak 2009b; Schneeberger/Nowak 2009a)
[81] (BMASK, 2009, 118)

tional training by the PES and who are thought to stand a good chance to fully complete their apprenticeship. Part-qualifications are designed for youngsters assigned to integrative vocational training who cannot be expected to be able to complete an apprenticeship.[82]

To complement the Vocational Placement Guarantee, a new "differentiated, needs-based" basic subsidy system for apprentices and additional quality-, labour-market- and person-related funding was introduced in 2008, which also replaced the former uniformly regulated apprenticeship premium (*Lehrlingsprämie*). Labour-market and quality-related subsidies are designed to offer additional incentives for the creation of new apprenticeship places and the improvement of human capital. Examples of quality and labour-market related funding include a quality premium for companies whose apprentices receive an intermediary training certificate for completing half of their apprenticeship, for companies which offer preparation courses for the final apprenticeship and vocational exams during the course of the apprenticeship and premiums for outstanding or excellent apprenticeship exams.[83] Person-related subsidies include any support measures dedicated to further developing supra-company training into a form of training enabling an apprentice to complete an entire apprenticeship there as well as the creation of opportunities to terminate an apprenticeship contract, under certain conditions, after the end of the first and the second apprenticeship year.[84]

In 2008, 29,233 persons were involved in apprenticeship subsidy measures, including integrative apprenticeship training, the promotion of apprenticeships for girls in occupations with a low share of women, disadvantaged youngsters seeking an apprenticeship placement, persons aged above 19 and additional apprenticeship placements (Blum Bonus[85]), apprenticeship preparation courses (*Vorlehre)* and inter-company additional training (*zwischenbetriebliche Zusatzausbildung*)[86]. This accounts for an increase of 3,980 persons since 2007 and a tenfold increase since 2002. In particular, subsidies for the creation of additional apprenticeship places in companies went up significantly, while support for disadvantaged apprenticeship seekers remained at the same level, at approximately 3,800 places.[87] In 2007, the average duration of participation in subsidised apprenticeship measures amounted to 308 days, a figure which, by 2008, had risen to 320 days. Compared to previous years, average spending on apprenticeship subsidy rose significantly from 2007: Thus, in 2007 costs per participant were € 3,840, compared to € 2,780 in 2006. In 2008 expenditure levels further increased due to the longer duration and higher participant rate of 29,233 persons, amounting to almost € 104 million, or € 4,178/participant.[88] The effectiveness of apprenticeship subsidies is considered relatively high[89] – even if representatives from employee organisations criticised the high free-rider effects of the subsidies and the enormous amounts spent.

In addition, the WAFF in cooperation with the Vienna Economic Chamber is financing promoters to reach and motivate companies to hire apprentices and to support them with the bureaucratic procedures of becoming a training company. In Vienna, this initiative is placing

[82] http://portal.wko.at/wk/format_detail.wk?AngID=1&StID=367967&DstID=1691
[83] (BMASK 2009, 125)
[84] (BMASK 2009, 125)
[85] The BLUM BONUS was introduced within the framework of the federal government's Project 06 in September 2005, with the aim of offering additional PES funding for apprenticeship places. Compared to other forms of subsidy, youngsters do not need to be registered with the PES as seeking an apprenticeship placement, however youngsters need to contact the PES in advance to apply for the subsidy.
http://www.egon-blum.at/Service/Mehr_LEST.pdf
[86] (BMASK, 2009, 126)
[87] (Schneeberger 2009a, 68)
[88] (BMASK 2009, 126)
[89] (BMASK 2009)

special emphasis on approaching so-called ethnic businesses as not only the economic importance of such companies in Vienna is on the rise but potential apprentices with migrant background (in JASG measures two thirds of trainees did have migrant background)[90] also face major discrimination on the apprenticeship market, as our interviewees indicated. By specifically targeting ethnic businesses, the initiative hopes to increase the variety of instructing companies and offer additional opportunities for apprentices with migrant background.

4.1 Transition management

Before going into the details of the implementation of supra-company apprenticeship training, which forms a key part of the Placement Guarantee, we want to shed light on preceding and accompanying measures to integrate young persons into the educational or employment system.

In Vienna, the Coordination Centre for Transitional Management set up in 2009 counsels educational and training institutions, providers and commissioners in implementing and applying adequate measures supporting young persons in managing transitions between schooling, working life, private ambitions and inactive phases. Each of these transition phases involves the danger of dropping out of the system, "getting lost" and becoming inaccessible for institutional integration. Creating close links between the systems of basic education, further education and labour-market institutions is crucial to keep young persons within a system where they are accessible. Furthermore, transition management is designed to reduce drop-out rates by accompanying young persons during their early career within a new institutional setting of apprenticeship or school. The aim again is to provide a safety net for young persons in jeopardy of dropping out of the system.

According to many of the interviewees, the biggest concern of stakeholders in the education and labour-market system is losing access and control of young people, who may turn into a unpredictable and volatile group posing a threat to social peace. As one interviewee puts it, "If we fail to come up with [training and support] opportunities for 1,000 young people a year, we'll quickly end up with a group of youngsters in danger of exploding at some point. Just imagine this: 5,000 youngsters marching across Vienna, causing turmoil."[91]

For this reason, so called "maladjusted" young persons who are jeopardized by social exclusion form a special target group for PES measures. These youngsters need to be approached in different ways, through low-threshold institutions and projects. The Placement Guarantee thus not only encompasses the provision of supra-company apprenticeship training to ensure that every young person who wants to has the possibility to complete apprenticeship training but also short-term measures to approach young people in their immediate environment and living circumstances.

The ultimate aim of all – low- to high-threshold – measures for young persons at the intersection of education and employment is to reach the TOTALITY of them. Education and labour-market policies collaborate to develop "tailored" measures for ALL. No one may slip through the densely knit net (sometimes called "safety net") for young (in particular unemployed) persons.

[90] (Dörflinger et al. 2007, 23)

[91] "Also wenn da 1.000 Jugendliche, wenn ich denen nix anbieten kann, und diese 1.000 Jugendliche...und wenn ich jedes Jahr 1.000 Jugendlichen nichts anbieten kann, also da habe ich innerhalb kürzester Zeit eine Gruppe, die explodiert irgendwann einmal. Und wenn 5.000 Jugendliche in Wien durch Wien marschieren und Rapauz machen, na, das schaue ich mir an..."

The City of Vienna offers an almost bewildering variety of accompanying and short-term measures to reach young persons at a number of settings: School itself is an important site of career counselling. Not only the pupils themselves but also teachers and parents must be involved in the vocational orientation process of youngsters. Measures such as "C'm on 14" provide coaching and counselling for youngsters leaving school at 15 to help them find adequate training. The young clients are accompanied during the early steps of measures since in the beginning the danger of dropping-out is highest. The Coordination Centre is designed to shed light on the "rag rug" of measures aimed at various special needs of young persons, ranging from special counselling services and accompanying measures for young women to measures for young people with migrant background, learning difficulties or disabilities. Apart from that, low-threshold counselling services have been installed, such as the so called "Kümmernummer" telephone service, which youngsters and their relatives can call for help with al kinds of problems.

Of the € 100 million invested into the Vocational Placement Guarantee in Vienna approximately € 10 million are spent on the above mentioned "low-threshold" measures, with a further € 90 million spent on supra-company apprenticeship training.

5. Supra-company apprenticeship training as an essential part of the Vocational Placement Guarantee

The Public Employment Service offers young persons who fail to find a company-based apprenticeship a place in a supra-company training centre ("Überbetriebliche Lehrwerkstätte"). After two months of career orientation, they are placed in an adequate training course. Nevertheless, the problem of a disparity between the placements offered by supra-company training centres and the apprenticeships requested by applicants remains. To minimise such discrepancies, the youngsters undergo an obligatory phase of career orientation that introduces them to various occupational fields and career and training opportunities. At the same time, this phase is also used to adapt tenders for training institutions according to the needs of potential apprentices and company requirements.

The interviews showed that social-partner representatives, on the part of both employers and employees, regarded supra-company apprenticeship training as a hybrid between school- and company-based training as they feel that proper learning "on the job" can only be done within a company setting with "real customers" and the immediate pressure of market forces. Supra-company apprenticeship training offers a protected but artificial framework for learning by doing, making it sometimes more difficult to generate the necessary motivation for the apprentices to actively participate in the training activities than in a real client-provider setting. Still, the apprentices do get a chance to test their competences in the field during several placements in companies they are required to do. This practice of temporary placements – as was criticised by the representative of the Austrian Economic Chamber – absorbs companies' capacities for entirely company-based apprenticeships. In the long run, this system could thus undermine the dual system.

At the same time, the Chamber of Labour and trade union representatives stressed that one of the major advantages of supra-company apprenticeship training is the fact that the quality of training can be better controlled and influenced when carried out by providers who need to undergo a tendering procedure. This contrasts with regular apprenticeship places which are evaluated only once – when the company applies for the instructing licence.

5.1 Tendering procedure

The regional Public Employment Service offices commission organisations such as firms, training centres, educational providers or non-profit organisations with the implementation of supra-company apprenticeship training courses, including the 2-month coaching phase for vocational counselling ("BOCO") designed to familiarise participants with different occupations and help them finalise their occupational aspirations.

The conceptual design of supra-company apprenticeship training is worked out by Public Employment Service experts in cooperation with the social partners and government representatives. The results of this conceptual process are adapted to the needs of the individual provinces. Regional boards, which also consist of representatives of social partners and educational and labour market policy experts, decide on the number of places, the occupations for which training is to be available, the relevance of socio-pedagogic support, etc. In Vienna, for instance, supra-company apprenticeship training covers approx. 24-26 occupations ranging from commercial and technical occupations to IT and service-oriented jobs.

Following a tendering procedure among the oligopolistic structured bidders[92], the bid offering at the most favourable terms is selected. To be accepted, competitors must cover all requested areas but the price has a significance of 40%. One of the interviewees criticised that previous experience – good or bad – with training providers on the part of PES cannot be considered when choosing the best bid. Not only training institutions but also companies training apprentices on a regular basis can compete for the bid. In practice, this means that the company disposes of underutilised capacities for training apprentices which are then subsidised by a public contract.

5.2 Who and why?

As most measures proposed under the "Placement Guarantee" are still rather recent, we will rely on evaluations of earlier programmes under JASG for this question. These reveal the scope of the problem, the composition of the affected groups and tell us quite a lot about the dominant orientations of policy makers and experts in the field.

An evaluation of JASG measures showed that two thirds of participants had migrant background.[93] Some of the participants came from difficult social and familiar backgrounds and showed "personality problems". These youngsters are said to have deficits in their social competence, manifesting themselves in a lack of work discipline, low frustration tolerance, etc. They are seen as not being able to adapt to everyday work and to have difficulties with punctuality, reliability and responsibility. With respect to their educational performance, in particular "a lack of German language skills and mathematical skills were evident".

One of the aims of JASG courses is to help young adopt these "social competencies and rules" in order to give them "the chance to catch up and adapt, as courses like these are places to acquire good social manners and get used to working structures." To enforce this behaviour, strict rules have to be followed. The evaluation report quotes a participant: "If we are late three times, we get a deduction of € 5. In the beginning many of us had deductions. But now we're all punctual. That's one thing we have learnt."[94]

[92] Only very few institutions have the operative capacities to fulfil all requirements of the bid.
[93] (Dörflinger et al. 2007, 23)
[94] (Dörflinger et al. 2007, 23)

According to the executive director of the public Employment Service for Young Persons in Vienna, approximately 13,000 youngsters aged 15 to 21 residing in Vienna are currently (November 2010) registered as unemployed. 65% of those have migrant background, 3,000 are not Austrian citizens. On the one hand, the fact that two thirds of young PES clients come from families with migrant background points to the socio-economic situation of this group and the relatively low educational attainment of their parents, who pass on their social status to the next generation. On the other hand, there is discrimination against applicants for apprenticeship places with migrant background. Even if it is not openly admitted, companies still reject the applications of young men and women due to their ethnic origin– as was indicated by some of the experts interviewed. In studies examining the experiences of migrant youngsters in search of work as well discriminating practices of potential employers in the selection of applicants are mentioned.[95] What is more, young migrants who arrive in Austria at a later stage as part of family reunification sometimes do not even have formal access to PES measures because they are not admitted to the Austrian labour market. The expert of the Vienna Coordination Centre for Transitional Management also highlighted the importance of approaching and adequately addressing these youngsters and their parents at school, in order to encourage them to draw attention to their multicultural competencies.

55% of registered unemployed persons aged 15 to 21 in Vienna are male. 20-25% of the 13,000 have not completed compulsory schooling. And when it comes to the choice of apprenticeship occupations, there is a pronounced gender bias similar to company-based apprenticeship training – despite various measures provided by external institutions, such as "Sprungbrett", to encourage girls to opt for industrial or technical trades.

Since many participants in JASG measures come from low-income families, the low level of wages (€ 150) paid to participants – compared to that of company-based apprentices, who get paid twice this amount – was problematic. Following the reform of JASG and the introduction of the Vocational Placement Guarantee, youngsters placed in supra-company apprenticeships are now paid between € 240 and € 555.

The composition of participants in measures under the Vocational Placement Guarantee was a major issue in the interviews. As shown above, so far most measures have been seen to complement the dominant educational route in the dual system: Participants in public measures were those who had failed in the regular apprenticeship labour market, or even already at school. Thus, participation in JASG measures had stigmatising effects on the participants. As a consequence, all interviewees emphasised that supra-company apprenticeships not only function as a safety net for those who are too weak to succeed in a regular company-based apprenticeship but that the composition of the students is very heterogeneous, including drop-outs from upper secondary schools.

The interviewees critically remarked that stakeholders active in the field of labour market and educational policies for young persons should also keep in mind what it means for (potential) participants in supra-company training if they are referred to as being caught by a "safety net". Many feel stigmatised for attending "second-class" facilities rather than a coveted company-based apprenticeship and already lose confidence in themselves at the very start of their working life.

Besides this problematic public image participants in supra-company apprenticeship training are exposed to, there is also – as mentioned above – the problem that some of the participants come from families with severe social problems, including addiction issues or over-

[95] (Hofer 2006, 13, 51ff.)

indebtedness. These youngsters need additional forms of support not normally provided in apprenticeships. For this reason, providers of supra-company apprenticeship training also offer socio-pedagogical supervision. Currently this amounts to 25 hours per year and training course but is set to be reduced due to budget cuts. One interviewee pointed out that socio-pedagogical supervision would be better placed with external (additional) providers outside the supra-company training centres to ensure an independent and open-minded approach to participants.

What is more, providers of supra-company apprenticeship training also have to offer tutoring lessons to students with learning difficulties or those who have to catch up on basic reading, writing and maths skills. This integrative, supportive and also more protective approach to vocational training is very different from company-based apprenticeship training, which provides no additional "services" and support measures.[96] At best, the company itself forms a quasi-family environment offering a social structure where apprentices' personal problems can be discussed; but usually the tight work schedule in regular companies does leave little room for individual support. What is more, companies tend to be rather authoritarian and patriarchal systems that cannot provide democratic and self-determined structures for the socialisation of young persons.

Supra-company apprenticeship training targets young persons who are already prepared and willing to participate in proper apprenticeship training, with strict rules and requirements very close to labour-market needs. Other measures, such as "space lab" or "Jugendwerkstatt – workshop for young people"[97], aim to prepare youngsters in terms of discipline, punctuality, etc., for the demands of "proper" (vocational) training and for the "pressure exerted" by conventional measures such as supra-company apprenticeship training.

For the PES representatives interviewed, self development comes automatically with placing young people into supra-company apprenticeship training – at least according to the understanding of the PES:

"They have to learn – even if this was not an issue at school – to get to work on time. They have to learn to follow instructions and accept criticism. They must learn to do things they don't particularly like. They have to stick to agreements with their instructors. Sticking top rules and growing up are part of this educational pathway. Those who refuse to grow up, who remain babies, won't be able to go through with this type of training. It's the same thing when beginning as an apprentice in a company."[98]

Nevertheless, the setting of supra-company apprenticeship training still constitutes a more protected environment where teenagers are given the time to adjust to training requirements and get support if they have difficulties doing so. Company-based apprenticeships immediately test the apprentice's strengths and weaknesses in a competitive environment. Apprentices are assumed to already have acquired certain work ethics and soft skills. They

[96] Vocational school (*Berufsshule*), which is compulsory for all apprentices, also offers low-threshold supervision. Thus, the "Kultur- und Sportverein" available at all vocational schools not only provides cultural and sports events but also tutoring.
[97] http://www.koordinationsstelle.at/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Infoblatt_Jugendwerkstatt_final_20101001.pdf
[98] "Also die Persönlichkeitsentwicklung ist automatisch dabei. Die muss dabei sein. Weil wenn der dann... Eben, er muss lernen, auch wenn er es in der Schule vielleicht nicht so gelernt hat, aber er muss lernen, pünktlich in der Werkstätte zu sein. Er muss lernen, sich etwas sagen zu lassen. Er muss lernen, Dinge, die ihm vielleicht nicht so taugen, auszuhalten und doch zu machen. Also das heißt, diese... Er muss, wenn er sich was mit dem Ausbildner vereinbart, muss er wissen, das muss ich durchhalten. Also diese Verbindlichkeit...also dieses schön langsam erwachsen werden, das ist da mit dabei. Weil wenn er das nicht mit...also wenn er weiter ein Kleinkind bleibt, sage ich jetzt, dann haltet er auch die Ausbildung nicht durch, nicht. Also das ist automatisch dabei. Das ist genauso, wie es auch bei einem Betrieb dabei ist, nicht."

are also expected to automatically take on and internalise the employer's perspective and the logic of the business.

As the institution commissioning course providers, the Public Employment Service is also in charge of training institutions in the case of complaints by clients (the apprentices) or their relatives regarding the performance of providers. These complaints can include worries about the technical facilities provided by institutions, the contents of courses and teaching related matters or social relations among instructors and students. The regional PES offices have the responsibility and power to carry out unannounced controls and to assign staff to look into every complaint. Another controlling but also "voicing" instrument developed for participants in supra-company apprenticeship training measures was the following initiative:

5.3 Workers' councils at supra-company apprenticeship training

Provisions for the election of youth representatives at supra-company apprenticeship training have recently been introduced. Since the instalment of youth representatives is not yet in force – though some of the training institutions (those run/controlled by employees' organisations such as "Jugend am Werk") have already held elections – we can only deduct possible consequences of their introduction by referring to experiences at company level. In companies, youth representatives provide young workers with an important opportunity for participation. They represent the cultural, social and political interests of young staff within the company. They can convene youth assemblies to inform young employees about labour and social laws as well as company-related issues. They are trained in specific courses offered by trade unions, including seminars on the history of the workers' movement, children and youth employment law, vocational training law, labour constitutional law and collective agreements, methods of youth representatives' intervening, practical youth work, organisation and tasks of unions, dealing with extreme-right and fascist attitudes, group dynamics, as well as presentation techniques, rhetoric and organisation.

A youth representative very much acts as a mediator and coach, taking on the problems that young employees are confronted with in a company while also mediating between young people and the management: If problems with an apprentice arise, the youth representative has to be informed and consulted in the process of deciding what will happen with this person.

Parallel to the instalment of youth representatives in private and public companies, the union's youth organisation produced a draft proposal for the introduction of youth representatives at training centres, which has since been accepted. Since the Public Employment Service and training institutes are responsible for managing a programme which simultaneously trains between 100 and 3,000 apprentices in a wide range of different occupations the focus of participation and co-determination will be different from that of traditional company-based youth representatives. One main target will be quality control in the training centres, which have to carry out their programmes under the tight financial constraints imposed by the Public Employment Service. In response, the union's youth organisation is calling for regular meetings, at least once a year, of potential youth representatives in training centres, along with the social partners and the regional management bodies of the Public Employment Service to make sure that arising problems can be directly relayed to the responsible bodies. Another important reason for the provision of youth representatives in training centres is the overall positive impact of participative opportunities in young persons' workplace/place of education in terms of their perceptions and involvement in democratic processes.

6. Conclusions

The newly introduced Vocational Placement Guarantee, and in particular the institutionalisation of supra-company apprenticeship training, does indeed form a third pillar of vocational training after compulsory schooling within the Austrian educational system, next to school-based education and company-based apprenticeship training. However due to the deep-rooted persistence of the dual system, it is still regarded as a "buffer" when the former fails to provide sufficient placements. Problems for the dual system emerged due to uneven business cycles, economic restructuring processes (in particular in cities such as Vienna) towards a "service economy", the concentration of apprentices on a few occupations, the decreasing willingness of Austrian enterprises to provide apprenticeship training as well as the poor permeability of educational pathways.

The crisis of the dual system is also a sign of the gradual erosion of the formerly smooth transition from education to employment traditionally guaranteed by this particular educational pathway. Figures show that only a rather small share of apprentices keep working in the occupation for which they were trained. Therefore, it can be assumed that the capability set provided for by this kind of training, such as identity formation within a certain occupation, social status derived from this occupation, a stable working biography, etc., is becoming more and more precarious.

All interviewed stakeholders acknowledged the structural problems the dual system is facing in Austria, which is leading to a gap between available and required apprenticeship places. The Vocational Placement Guarantee is designed to fill this gap, offering a practicable temporary solution for this urgent problem. The Placement Guarantee is a federal law, implemented at regional level by the public employment institutions in charge. In addition, more radical reforms of the educational system are thought about, such as an extension of compulsory schooling or the abolishment of the early selection of pupils into different school types at the age of 10. On the one hand, this early selection process implies a loss of knowledge potential which never can be made up for later on; on the other hand, it results in a hierarchical selection of children and young people for different educational pathways at an early age, which is difficult to change later on. At the age of 10, children are selected into lower secondary schools and lower academic schools. The former have traditionally led to a vocational route to education (dual system), the latter to different forms of higher and university education. Which type of school a child attends depends on various factors: besides the regional accessibility of the school, the pupil's social and ethnic background is particularly important. The ninth school grade (usually at age 14 or 15) again marks a major educational watershed: Pupils are again asked to choose between, or allotted to, higher secondary (academic or vocational) education, company-based apprenticeship training – or an apprenticeship place offered by an institution.

Considering socio-demographic characteristics, different outcomes based on ethnic background and gender can be observed in educational careers: More girls than boys decide to continue education at school while the dual system is still dominated by male apprentices. Male youths are also overrepresented in apprenticeships that still lead to well paid and stable jobs in, for instance, the production sector. In contrast, young women are concentrated in a small number of not very promising service-sector apprenticeships. Even though more than 20% of pupils in lower secondary schools and in the pre-vocational year have migrant background, in the dual system of vocational education their share is only 8.2%.

As Austrian youngsters who have opted for an apprenticeship are automatically integrated into the labour market, they have to adapt to the realities of business and market forces at the relatively early age of 15 (after completion of the 9th school grade). Those who do not succeed in entering company-based apprenticeship training or do not continue school end up as clients of the Public Employment System. The continuance of segmented educational pathways is also mirrored in the fact that two thirds of young PES clients come from families with migrant background. On the one hand, this points to the socio-economic situation of this group and the relatively low educational attainment of their parents, who pass on their social status to the next generation. On the other hand, this is a sign of discrimination against applicants for apprenticeship places with migrant background. Even if it is not openly admitted, companies still reject the applications of young men and women due to their ethnic origin. What is more, young migrants who arrive in Austria at a later stage as part of family reunification sometimes do not even have formal access to PES measures because they are not admitted to the Austrian labour market.

Supra-company apprenticeship training is provided and financed by PES funds, and potential participants need to be registered as unemployed or job-seeking. As their wages (*Ausbildungs-/Lehrlingsentschädigung*) are paid for by PES, the measure is clearly part of labour-market policy. At the same time, however, it is run in a school-like mode, with the option – and expectation – to acquire work experience in companies and/or to be transferred to companies at a later stage of the training. Many interviewees were critical of the location of this early, "primary", phase of training (*Erstausbildung*) within the PES as they would rather see it located within the educational system. In this case, the question of apprenticeship wages, which are essential for the continuation of training for students from low-income families, could be tackled by providing scholarships or other kinds of social assistance when withdrawing the supra-company apprenticeship training agenda from PES. According to the Chamber of Labour representative, especially girls from low-income families are forced to withdraw from the educational system unless they have reasonable means of subsistence.

Being part of this system also means to submit to its principles, especially to "being willing to work". The aim of PES labour-market policies is to integrate those registered as unemployed into the regular labour market. Therefore, those who are guaranteed a vocational placement under the new regime are still PES clients – and not (just) young persons to be educated. The interviews showed that – apart, of course, from vocational training – a main emphasis of PES measures, including supra-company apprenticeship training, is placed on disciplinary instruments to "form" young workers according to business and labour-market needs.

In general, the continuance of a career within the educational system after compulsory school – be it in company- or school-based systems – is seen as vital for success in a knowledge-based society where labour-market requirements are closely connected with workers' ability and readiness to continue learning throughout their entire working life. Thus, to prepare people for the needs of a knowledge-based labour market at an early stage of their career, the principle of lifelong learning needs to already be strengthened within the educational system. Whether workers experience further education as an imposition or a chance to perform better is not the question. The only thing left – from an institutional perspective – for people who are unwilling to stick to or adapt to those requirements is a "lack of prospects", as one interviewed expert puts it.

The placement guarantee encompasses low as well as high threshold measures with the aim to reach the totality of young persons standing farer or closer to the intersectional pathways of education and employment. Some are more, some are less willing and ready to be incor-

porated into a system preparing them for an occupational career. Education and labour-market policies collaborate to develop “tailored” measures for ALL. The institutions responsible for the design and implementation of labour market and educational measures try to contrive the establishment of a densely knit net provided for young (in particular unemployed) persons. The success of this policy is measured by a drop-out rate as low as possible: no one shall slip through this kind of safety net. Therefore, it remains open at this stage of research how much space is left for those young persons to develop and voice ideas of living as well as social and political participation on their own – as long as they are supposed to be participating in one of these all-inclusive measures designed for them and not through/by them.

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Vulnerable Youth in process of transition from school to work.

Mapping the educational and transitional system in Germany

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Content

1. Introduction

Despite the ongoing demographic change, there is no prospect for improvement in the near future of the chances of young adults on the education and labour markets in view of the fact that there will continue to be a reduction in education and training places. Disadvantaged youths in particular are thus facing an increased risk of unemployment and poverty. There is, it is true, the "Qualifizierungs-initiative" (Qualification Initiative), conceived by the Federal Government in 2008 and meant both to halve the number of youths without a school leaving certificate as well as to ensure that all educational paths lead to some sort of qualification. This would, however, appear not to be very realistic given the deregulatory mechanisms in the education and labour markets. On the contrary, a further escalation of the situation is to be expected which will reduce even more the chances for development, particularly of disadvantaged people.

It was Mertens who, as early as the mid-1980s, pointed out the paradoxical function of education and training: education was an increasingly important prerequisite for a stable career; on the other hand, it was ever less able to guarantee such a stable occupational biography (cf. Mertens 1984). One piece of evidence for this claim is the devaluation (also in public discourse) of the *Hauptschule* leaving certificate, which used to be sufficient, both in formal and practical terms, for admission to vocational training, but these days is hardly enough to give access to a vocational training place (cf. Reißig/Gaupp 2007, 12). The growing, vulnerable social group to whom this applies sees itself therefore often forced to be on one or more vocational preparation schemes in order to obtain, at a later point in time, a practical training place or, in the worst case, follow a precarious employment permanently. While it used to be mostly pupils of the *Hauptschule* a short time ago, now it is increasingly pupils of the *Realschule* who attend such preparatory schemes, which often end in what has been called "preparation scheme careers".

To gain a comprehensive overview over the multi-layered and often problematic "transition realities" of youths, this paper (within the German case study) is especially devoted to the target group of those who have not gained a upper secondary school leavers' certificate, to the risk of their social exclusion as well as to their chances for realising their wishes in the transition from school to work.

For a first approach, it may be useful to give a description, in the form of an institutional mapping, of the framing conditions and characteristics of the German labour market (Chapter 2) and some specific details of the German school system, particularly the vocational education system (Chapter 3).

In the next chapter, the basic structures of the transition system are specified as well as the respective tools and political responsibilities of educational, social and labour market policies (Chapter 4).

A final chapter discusses and concretizes open research issues and perspectives – not least from the angle of the capabilities approach. (Chapter 5).

It should be noted, finally, that it has been thought helpful to adopt a biographical approach (to the respective thresholds and development tasks in the transition from school to work) from the point of view of the addressees. No less important, on the other hand, will be the consideration of the political and professional categorisation of the target group, above all in

terms of the 'diagnostic' categories of 'apprenticeship entry maturity'' (Ausbildungsreife) and 'placement obstacles' (Vermittlungshemmnisse).

2. Vocational training and labour markets

It is not only in Germany that the transition from schools into jobs is largely determined by its objective – namely by the job market and its access structures and cyclic capacity (cf. Walter/Walther 2007: 65ff.).

In the following we will highlight three essential structural problems of the German vocational training and labour markets:

- An increase and manifestation of the phenomenon of structural mass unemployment since the end of the 1990s;
- And a decrease of training and employment opportunities for school leavers;
- An extension of the transition period per se.

2.1 Growing permanence of youth unemployment

Youth unemployment (persons under 25 years of age) reached in August 2009 19.7% in the Euro area (16 member states) and 19.8% in the 27 EU-member states. Youth unemployment has increased compared with August 2008 (15.6 as against 15.5 %).[99] This places Germany with a total unemployment rate of 7.7 % in the lower half. Youth unemployment, however, is 10.8% in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Germany has therefore – compared with the rest of Europe – a relatively low youth unemployment rate, even though the rate has been coming closer to the European average over the past years and the total hides, moreover, a marked difference between east and west as well as in the migration status (cf. Tab. 1). Non-German youths make up the highest percentage of the unemployed with 23%.

Nationwide in Germany 909,972 young people between 15 and 25 years of age are receiving unemployment benefits II (benefits for the long-term unemployed) (Federal Employment Agency 2010). The monthly entitlement for job seekers (SGB II/Social Security Code) is to safe-guard "within unemployment benefits level II the socio-cultural subsistence minimum" to quote the German Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs (2006). The Social Security Code also makes provisions for sanctions in the form of financial reductions or even complete cuts. For those in need of assistance this means - at least for restricted periods - life below the socio-cultural subsistence level. This constitutes the explosive nature of sanctions in the basic social insurance rate and the underlying activating logic of the new German labour market policy.

[99] The Netherlands have the lowest youth unemployment rate at 6.3%, while Spain (39,2 %) and Lithuania (31,2%) have the highest. The overall unemployment rate has continuously risen. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the EU16 in August 2009 was 9.6% (up on 7.0% in 2008). According to the latest figures of September 2010, youth unemployment in Switzerland was 4.3%. Also noticeable are Swiss regional disparities: the rate for the German-language parts at 3.7% is lower than for the rest of Switzerland (while it stands at 6.3% in Western Switzerland/Ticino).

	Registrated Unemployed (in %)				Unemployed according to the ILO – classification (in %)		
	1991	1995	1999	2004	1995	1999	2004
Youth (17-25), total	5	8	7	10	8	10	12
Eastern Germany	3	6	6	9	6	7	11
Western Germany	12	8	9	11	8	10	14
Migrants (western)	4	17	15	17	17	21	23
Adults (26-60)	5	9	8	9	5	6	8

Tab. 1: Youth unemployment rates (data base SOEP 1991, 1995, 1999, 2004)

Between January and September 2009, the German Federal Employment Agency imposed every month, according to its own figures, at least one sanction on 71,300 registered unemployed persons that are able to work. This is equivalent to a sanctions quota of 3.8%. For those under 25 years of age, the quota is 10.1 % and thus considerably above that of those older than 25 (3.2%) (cf. BA 2009). It should be noted that 60% of all sanctions are levied due to failure to report which result in benefit reductions (Götz et al. 2010). 19% however, of those "rejected" due to major breaches of duty, belong to the group without any entitlements to state assistance, and so a life below the poverty line (and food vouchers) follows. The high number of sanctions imposed on younger people has several reasons. As an example, the counsellor–benefits receiver ratio is here much lower (1 : 91 compared with 1:173 for older persons). The fewer clients a social worker has, the higher is the number of sanctions applied (Kumpmann 2009). With more intensive surveillance, higher demands can be placed on the unemployed, and so these demands happen more often not to be satisfied. Better knowledge of cases gives the social worker more (legal) safeguards for sanctioning. And finally, a part of the young unemployed are still in the adolescence phase or at the beginning of their working life. The sanctions are also applied in line with lawmakers´ educational motives.

Independent of their own transfer incomes, young people are especially vulnerable to poverty. About 18% of all children and young people live in households with incomes below the poverty line (Federal Statistical Office 2008, p. 167). These young people are often excluded from education and participation in society. Unemployment and precarious life situations are frequently the consequence. In the context of the transitional system, their burden of poverty can be assumed to be heavier.

2.2 Lack of vocational training places

Since the late 1980s, we have been seeing a constant reduction of available trainee places. While there were still 720,000 available trainee places in 1992, the number had gone down to 560,000 in 2005.

Moreover, the simple ratio of trainee places offered per 100 applicants sank in the years 1992 to 2005 from 118 places to 95 (in western Germany: from 122 to 96; in eastern Germany: from 102 to 92; cf. BMBF/Federal Ministry of Education and Research 2006). This simplified ratio between supply and demand (ANR) was, in 2009, slightly more positive in both the old and the new federal German states (101.6 and 99.9).

Extended supply and demand ratio

It has been an uncontroversial fact for sometime that the traditional definition of supply and demand cannot result in a true picture of the market for vocational training. While in the past reports on vocational training used this simple equation – not least for reasons of legitimization – current reports include an "extended" definition of demand which include not only unplaced applicants but also young people who have started an alternative to an apprenticeship (e.g. vocational preparation measures, work experience etc.) but are still looking for placement in vocational training. Due to this broader definition, the 2009 figures look less positive in 2009 with 89.9 to 100 than the traditional "supply and demand ratio"[100] (cf. BBB 2010).

According to a ruling by the Federal Constitutional Court from the year 1980, the legal free choice of occupation is only guaranteed as of a ratio of 112.5 vocational training places per 100 applicants. (cf. BVerfGE 55, 274/Federal Constitutional Court)! Here one can see already a blatant injustice which lies in the structure of the transitional system despite all institutional and pedagogical efforts.[101]

Calculated placement quota

A second statistical value is the calculated placement quota based on the year of school leaving, at schools offering general education.[102] The placement quota for dual vocational training was 64.8% in the year 2009. This represents a definite, successive drop compare with 78.3% in the year 1992. Due to the stronger demographic slump, the calculated placement quota in 2009 was about 10% better in the new German federal states than in the old states. There, the quota was 74.0% which was a slight improvement to the previous year (72.4%). In the year 2009, in the old federal German states, the quota dropped, however, from 67.0 % in 2008 to 63.2% in 2009. According to the vocational training report, a sufficient supply of

[100] There are, however, signs of a more positive development of the situation in the vocational training market in the new federal states due to the reduction of unplaced applicants and because of additional supporting measures. The expanded ANR was here 94.2 (as against 89.0 in the old federal states).

[101] We find therefore in this (political) context bizarre arguments that name the structural deficits but in their consequences individualize the problems.

[102] The calculated placement quota of young adults in vocational placements tends to simplify market mechanisms as e.g. the demand for vocational training places is not exclusively defined by the number of current school leavers. There are, however, also some advantages to this indicator: it corresponds relatively well to the size of the age cohort and can therefore trace changes in job selection over time. Moreover, the figures do not depend on the degree of involvement of the Federal Agency for Employment.

training places is safeguarded if this quota reaches continually over several years at least two thirds (cf. BMBF 2010, 20).[103]

For young people below "apprenticeship entry maturity"[104] particular educational measures are offered within the framework of assistance for disadvantaged individuals which are meant to prepare for vocational training. Between the years 1992 and 2005 the proportion of young people in training programs for a vocational basic training has gone up from 32.8 to 55.0 %. Since 2006 their share has gone down again and reached 47.3% in 2008. The number of entries in vocational preparation schemes alone has more than doubled between 1992 and 2007 (1992: 70.400; 2007: 148.819). In the year 2008 the number of entries slightly decreased to 124,183. The increase up to the year 2005 can also be a attributed to the fact that these measures were also used by so-called "market disadvantaged" youths, i.e. by candidates who had not found a training job, in order to better their chances for an apprenticeship through further qualification or deferred entrance (BMBF 2010, 32).

Lengthening this transitional phase due to the limited capacity of the vocational training market also shows, however, that the (so called) unplaced applicants (especially those that received a vocational basic training but continued to search for a vocational training placement) represent a challenge for vocational education and labour market policies, and the school leaving years of the calculated placement quota mentioned only represent a snapshot of the true picture.

According to the BMBF (German Federal Ministry of Education and Research), the number of unplaced applicants for a trainee place in the dual system has risen so drastically since the end of the 1990s that there are nearly as many young people in the transitional system as in the regular school-based or in-company vocational training (cf. BMBF 2010, 97).

Between 1997 and 2007 the share of unplaced applicants rose from 37.6 to 52.4 %, according to figures supplied by the German Federal Employment Agency. In 2008 for the first time in many years, the number decreased slightly. 320.450 of the 620.037 applicants registered with the Federal Employment Agency were unplaced applicants. This equates to a 51.7 % share (for the figures of the local level cf. also 5.2).

In Germany, 17 per cent of young people up to the age of 29 remain, however, completely without a vocational qualification (BMBF 2010). The risk of poverty of this group has risen markedly in the past years since, if at all, they only have chances in the low-wage sector.

[103] It tas to be mentioned that there is a slight increase in school-based vocational training (1992: 13,3%; 2008: 19,4%) as well as the increase in the quota of university students (1993: 25,5%; 2009: 43,3%). A caveat for the interpretation of these data: it contrasts calculated magnitudes in order to give a temporal assessment of the relative quantitative importance of the various educational career paths. But it overlooks various factors: in each of the career paths there are also youths from earlier school leaving classes; and many youths go through several schemes and are therefore counted not once but several times. This is explained by the fact that entries into the various educational alternatives in each report year are considered as cases, not as persons. The underlying statistical data do not present individual or flow statistics so that it is not known how many of the educational schemes a youth has gone through. Finally, the unemployment rate has been 'sugarcoated' as it takes account of unemployed people not under the age of 25, as is usual, but only under 20.

[104] This is a bureaucratic and professional classification term which can be criticised (cf. Winkler 2008).

Finally, it is to be noted (a soft factor) that, for one thing, the requirements of skilled occupations as far as knowledge and formal education are concerned have gone up, especially due to IT and high-tech processes (cf. for example the mechatronic engineer) and, for another, more and more young adults with higher educational qualifications (A-levels, advanced technical college certificate) are moving into vocational training. This means that people with low educational qualifications have distinct competitive disadvantages (cf. the future of basic secondary school leavers in 3.3)

2.3 Extending the transition period

As indicated above, there is a considerably longer run-up time before taking up vocational training. According to the BIBB transition survey (cf. Beicht et al. 2007), the median of all young people starting jobs is, for those with intermediate school leaving certificate, three months, but for those with only a secondary school leaving certificate (*Hauptschulabschluss*) 11 (!) months. The most apparent discrepancies can be observed directly after leaving school: Three months later, at least 61 % of those with an intermediate school leaving certificate have started in-company training, but only 43 % of youths with at best a secondary school leaving certificate (the DJI transition survey assumes only 26%, see below).

About one year after leaving school, the disparity is at least somewhat smaller. Now, of those with intermediate certificates 73% have been placed, and of those youths with lower qualifications 62%.

This is also one of the reasons for the generally higher age of youths starting vocational training. In 1993 just under 53 % of all young people in Germany starting vocational training were still under-age. By 2006 their share had decreased by a good 18 percentage points to 34%. By contrast, the quota of those at least 20 years of age had gone up from 20 to 33%. The average age in 2006 of all first-year trainees was already 19.3.

To sum up, it can be said that the structural deficiencies of the training and labour markets have, in the first place, implications relating to the theory justice as far as the (lower) chances of realization of young people are concerned. Secondly, the late start in vocational training as well as the longer transitional period is as such of relevance for the theory of young people, as it leads to longer dependencies on families and/or the state support system as well as being an obstacle on the way to autonomy, which is of such high relevance in youth as well as in the transition phase into adult life.

3. The school and vocational education systems

3.1 Structures of the general education system

The basis of the German transitional system is the general educational three-tier school system, made up of *Hauptschule* (lower secondary school), *Förderschule* (school for special needs, not exceeding lower secondary school), *Realschule* (secondary school) and *Gymnasium* (grammar school).

The early selection after grade 4 of primary school for secondary schools has been repeatedly criticised – also based on the results of the PISA study – because of its selectivity and lack of equal opportunity (cf. for example Otto/Rauschenbach 2008) The respective types of school, and in particular the lower secondary school, shall be critically examined in this context for the chances of realization in the transitional phase into professions.

Table 2 gives a breakdown of students and the types of schools they graduate from. The figures show that 25% go through lower secondary school, about 40% through secondary school and 27% of youths achieve university entrance qualifications. Youths with a migration background clearly make up a higher proportion of those from lower secondary schools and schools for special needs.

In addition, about 7.5% of youths (64,918 in Germany) do not manage to get any lower secondary school certificate ("early school leavers"), 54.5.% (35,451) of those come from schools for special needs. This is also one of the reasons why Radtke and Gomolla talk about a four-tier system and highlight the "institutional discrimination of this type of school" (2007).

Even though young people without any kind of school leaving certificate have hardly any chances of a trainee placement, those successful school leavers from lower secondary, special needs and meanwhile also secondary schools also have definite structural disadvantages at job entry (cf. 3.3). Data of school leavers also show, however, that in the German school system school qualifications can also be acquired later, which happens mainly through in-school partial qualifications (cf. 4).

degree	2004		2006		2008	
	Number	In %	Number	In %	Number	In %
lower secondary school	246.237	25,3	237.247	24,7	210.311	24,4
Incl. vocational schools	*288.124*	*29,6*	*274.197*	*28,5*	*244.887*	*28,5*
secondary school	419.790	43,9	398.176	41,0	373.500	40,5
Incl. vocational schools	*499.140*	*52,2*	*481.850*	*49,6*	*468.528*	*50,8*
grammar school	226.395	24,3	244.018	25,5	266.550	27,2
Incl. vocational schools	*263.509*	*28,3*	*285.464*	*29,9*	*310.417*	*31,7*

Tab. 2: Graduates in general education from 2004 to 2008, according to BMBF 2010: 269)

3.2 Structures of the vocational education system

Germany owes its good ranking of "early school leavers", which is below the EU, to its system of vocational training that follows right on secondary school level I. The "dual system" of vocational training is in Germany still regarded as the silver bullet for the transition from school to jobs, with the exception of the growing number of school-based training courses, especially for occupations in the social, educational and health sectors.

Dual vocational training

The classical vocational training in Germany is the so-called dual training. The dual nature of the system is the division of mutual competences and responsibilities between the state and companies. Practical training in companies, and general and job specific teaching at vocational schools are offered at two learning venues.

In 2004 more than 60% of school leavers went through such job training. The legal framework for the differentiated vocational training is the respective training regulation (cf. BMBF 2004, 1). Those training contracts are considered "in-house vocational training" where the funding (of the in-company part of the dual system) comes completely or mainly from the training company (cf. Beicht/Gerd 2006).

Walter and Walther summarize five advantages of the dual system:

- By involving companies in the scheme, it is guaranteed that the training content has relevance for the labour market;
- the high contribution margin results in a relatively low youth unemployment by international standards;

- the youth involved receive a training allowance and are covered by social insurance;
- the high level of standardization of the training courses and curricula adds recognition and validity to the acquired skills beyond the training facility;
- the dual system is seen as prerequisite for the high productivity of German companies (cf. Walter/Walther 2007: 69).

Nevertheless, the high contribution margin of this dual training system has gone down markedly in the last decades. While in the past dual training could absorb 80% of the total demand, this has now gone down to 65% (cf. also 2.2).

In-school training

In-school training is carried out at vocational schools and colleges. In contrast to the dual training system, trainees do not earn any money while in training, with the exception of jobs in health care. It is important to note in this context that not all school-based vocational training is regulated by the state, that not all training is subject to clear training regulations, and that this form of training does not always offer a certified qualification.

External vocational training (BAE)

Training contracts are considered “external“ if they are (almost) completely financed by state programs or, by statutory mandate, by public funds. Decisive for the classification as “external“ or “in-company“ is the type of funding, and not the place of training. Thus external trainees may spend long periods in companies or workshops, and young adults also receive a certified job qualification (Beicht/Gerd 2006).

According to a survey by Beicht and Gerd, the numbers ratio between external and in-company training has shifted slightly. Of the total of 1,570,615 trainees nationwide, 89.9% (1,412,578) were in in-company and 10.1% (158,037) were in external training. In the new German states including Berlin, the share of external trainees was at 28.4% (96,060 vs. 338,447) substantially higher than in the old German states, where the respective share of all trainees (1,232,168) was a mere 5.0% (61,977) (Beicht/Gerd 2006).

Even though there is a need for external training in economically underdeveloped regions, there is still need for the informal recognition of this type of training and for the integration of these young people into the labour market.

3.3 Career of lower secondary school leavers

Vulnerable youth under pressure

The German Youth Institute (DJI) examined in a longitudinal study at three different points of time (June 2004; November 2004 and 2006) the educational and vocational training paths of lower secondary school leavers. The study shows that in the first year 35% of youths decided for a further qualifying school education. The number of those that started a training scheme after the end of the last compulsory school year or changed into measures to prepare for a vocational training is at this time equivalent to 26%. 9% of lower secondary school leavers had no follow-up measure and were therefore jobless.

According to the DJI transitional panel, lower secondary school leavers still take their lead from the traditional path of biographies: compulsory school attendance – vocational training (DJI 2007). It is however only a minority that can realize this goal.

By the remaining youths, measures of pre-vocational training or further education are seen as an alternative way to make up for the lack of access and competitive disadvantage. By attempting a higher educational qualification, young adults hope to improve their chances of in-school or in-company vocational training. Similar results are found in the current Shell study. Thus, in 2010 nearly half of lower secondary school leavers are aiming for a better school qualification (Leven, I. et al. 2010, 75). This ambitious goal shows the importance that today's youth is placing on education and at the same time their awareness of the fact that low qualifications increase the risks of unemployment and poverty (cf. op. cit., 75ff.)

The fact that 35% of lower secondary school leavers decide to go for further education, confirms the assumption of the Shell study of a stronger drive for education by young people. The study's results also showed that in general lower secondary school leavers have, or have to have, more willingness to adapt to the circumstances and conditions of a service and knowledge society than graduates with higher school-leaving certificates.

This high measure of required flexibility limits without any doubt the shaping of individual biographies. Within a few months (vocational) educational goals are dismissed and young people are increasingly forced to find a new direction. Within this dynamic, turbulent process the majority succeeds in sticking to established objectives but, and this is the crucial aspect, along with this flexibility often comes the abandonment of specific (job) goals (DJI 2007, 4).

Vocational preparation in general is associated with the young people's hope, according to the DJI transitional panel, to improve their chances of vocational training. In reality, the effectiveness of vocational preparation measures is doubtful. The share of those that go into vocational training after a vocational preparation measure (35%) and those that enter a second vocational preparation loop (29%) are nearly the same (ibid.). If one, furthermore, compares the percentage of successful candidates after vocational preparation measures with that of youths without qualification, the legitimisation of transitional or vocational preparation measures are again put to the test: after one year, no less than 28% of those jobless since the end of compulsory schooling are, after all, in training. The urgent question

that arises is how it can be that in the case of preparatory measures, the share of successful applicants has only improved by 7%.

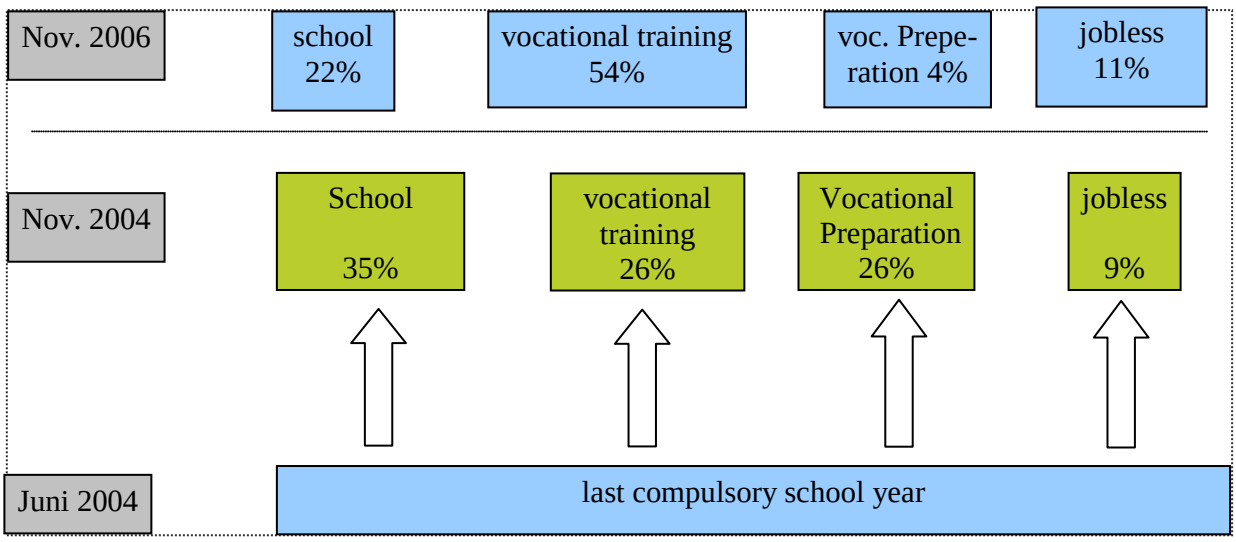
In some groups, e.g. youths of Turkish background who were not born in Germany, the share of those that are, and will most likely remain, without a job after vocational preparation is significantly high. If one compares the paths of youths with a German background with that of those from immigrant families one year after the last compulsory school year, it becomes apparent that schooling for youths with a migration background is significant, or is made significant. The share of those that continue to go to school after the last compulsory year is distinctly higher among youths with a migration background than for youths of German origin. Thus, at the time of the second survey, every third youth with a migration background but only every fifth youth of German background attended a school. To look at vocational training: only about a third of youths with a migration background but more than half the youths with a German background were undergoing it. The share of those that attended a preparatory vocational measure at that point of time is about the same for both groups.

Moreover, the DJI study noted that nine out of ten youths who were successful in entering a vocational training were still in this training one year later. The number of drop-outs was low and confirms the thesis either that successful entry into vocational training goes hand in hand with a high probability of a stable progression or that drop-out occurs later (cf. DJI 2007, 3. Other studies assume a drop-out rate of about 25%).

In summary, it is, however, to be noted that only 46 % of lower secondary school leavers are still not in vocational training two-and-a-half years after leaving school, which confirms the theory that youth is a vulnerable developmental stage (for an overview cf. diagram 3).

To sum up, one can say that lower secondary school leavers are chiefly faced with two risks. In the transitional phase between school and work, some already drift into social exclusion and are not reached by educational and vocational preparatory measures. The transitional system is fraught with risk since it is far from offering a guarantee of vocational training placement. This is confirmed by ever longer waiting loops and low chances of success.

Diagram 3: **Educational and vocational pathways of lower secondary school leavers** (Hauptschule; N = 1322; cf. Reißig/Gaupp/Lex 2008)



4. Basic structures of the transitional system

While in the two previous chapters we looked at the start (time of school leaving) respectively the end (start of vocational training) and focused on the social inequality and risks of social exclusion, we shall in the following take a closer look at the transitional system for educationally and socially disadvantaged youths. We shall also give a short outline of the tools available for the support of the disadvantaged (4.1) as well as political responsibilities (4.2).

4.1 Tools for the support of the disadvantaged

According to the classification by Tabea Schlimbach (2009) there are 4 relevant areas in the transitional system:

a) early help and prevention in school (job orientation);

b) vocational preparation in the transitional system;

c) vocational training for disadvantaged: and

d) individual and local transition management.

The following text deals mainly with measures of vocational preparation and alternative vocational training (which is mainly federally and state funded)[105].

Job preparation in the transitional system

In vocational preparation in the narrower sense, educational and vocational partial qualifications are offered, with the former clearly constituting the more extensive part. Here a wide spectrum of measures has developed which is difficult to distinguish in terms of their basic intentions and which at first glance are doubtful in their matching to individual biographies.

The number of youths that have taken part in a scheme of job preparation by the Federal Employment Agency has been steadily growing from 1992 to 2007. With a growth rate of 111%, numbers have more than doubled. It is remarkable that with the various schemes, although different, similar trends are emerging. Thus the number of those that finished the school-based pre-vocational training year (BVJ) and the first year of vocational schooling has been growing steadily. Moreover the number of participants in the BVJ has grown from 37,156 to 62,077 between 1992 and 2007 – which is equivalent to an increase of 67%.The BGJ (first year of vocational schooling) showed an increase of 47%, which in absolute figures means a growth from 31,325 to 46,031 youths.

[105] Details of the preventive measures and career orientation as well as strategies of the local transitional management are focused in WP4 because of their regional heterogeneity.

Vocational colleges (BFS), which offer (or should offer) job-related basic skills, showed, compared with the other measures, also high growth rates. While in 1992 there were 110,252 students who attended a vocational college, there were already 189,892 of them in 2007. This equates to an increase of 72%. For the entry qualification (EQ), introduced in 2004, 37,233 youths registered by this time (cf. Beicht 2009, 3).

The total number of beginners in the partially qualifying measures described above was 484,052[106] in the year 2007 compared with 807,756 new registrations for fully qualifying, in-company, external and in-school training schemes (cf. Kroll 2009).

The much smaller share of vocational partially qualifying schemes are characterized by a significantly higher share of practical learning arrangements. They differ in their specific occupational fields and in their regional projects and are detailed in WP4.

Scheme	BVJ (school-based pre-vocational training year)	BGJ (first year of vocational schooling)	BFS (Vocational colleges for job-related basic skills)	EQ (Entry Qualification, Established in 2004)
1992	37,156	31,325	110,252	-
2007	62,077	46,031	189,892	37.233
Increase of	67%	47%	72%	-

The data given above shows that the number of measures in the transitional system keeps expanding, that the partially qualifying measures of vocational preparation only marginally improve the chances of vocational training and that the poverty risk of this vulnerable group is particularly high. For a steadily growing number of young people the path from school leads through a multitude of institutionally structured qualifying measures "ending mostly in marginal jobs" (Braun et al. 2009, 961).

Vocational training for disadvantaged youths

The training circumstances can be differentiated as described above by various arrangements. While the classical in-company training arrangements are going down in quantity, the in-school vocational schemes are gaining in popularity and number during the last years. Youths "at this stage" appear superficially successfully provided for.

External training schemes are, however, a special construct: a vocational training at an external institution (BaE) is a kind of training that does not take place in a company but at a

[106] In this context, we have to note that there are additional job preparation schemes offered by states and municipalities, e.g. in the framework of youth welfare or youth social work, "for which there is however no systematic survey" (Beicht 2009, 3).

recognized (social) institution. The vocational training qualification is of the same value in status as one from a company (which however appears doubtful in its informal recognition). In the framework of vocational training at external institution, youths and young adults that have not found a vocational training placement and additionally require further support receive a qualifying vocational training with the aim of becoming integrated into the general labour market. The job centre decides for each individual case if the eligibility requirements are given and initiates the placement.

The BaE (training at external facilities) is in addition accompanied by remedial teaching as well as socio-educational support.[107]

4.2 Institutional and political responsibilities

The problem of (educationally disadvantaged) youths with problems of accessing vocational training and labour markets are is at the same time approached by several social institutions and actors:

From the aspect of schools and school politics:

- General schools (lower secondary, special schools and secondary schools) are at least implicitly under fire due to the above mentioned poor results as "handing over institutions",(cf. the public and political discussion of the disparagingly called Restschools), and thus under pressure to act, or at least improve the vocational guidance in their schools.
- Vocational schools as "receiving institutions" are seeing an increase in clients since the number of qualifying vocational courses has grown enormously. At the same time they carry a considerable proportion of responsibility for the support of the educationally disadvantaged.

From the perspective of the Employment Agency or the labour market policy:

- The high proportion of youth unemployment represents a financial as well as a specialist problem associated with the risk of longterm unemployment.
- Since many youths remain without any vocational qualification, even the qualification as low-skilled is problematic and at least for the medium term will cause problems on the labour market.

From the perspective of local youth and social policies:

- The local social policies is responsible for basic social benefits and therefore also for the longterm effects of (youth) unemployment.
- Local authorities are also responsible for youth welfare and according to §1 KJHG „the right for support of development and education towards an independent and socially adapt personality of every adolescent , also the right for fulfilment of their work aspirations in particular pursuant to § 13 KJHG of juvenile welfare work:

[107] The "pedagogically conceived" training environment looks like an interesting aspect for the case study (cf. also Cloos 2008).

- (1) Young people who due to being socially or individually disadvantaged and therefore in need of more support should be offered socio-educational help as part of youth welfare in order to assist with their vocational training, integration in the working world and social life.

This way the political responsibilities for these social problems are not clear cut. While labour market policies are mainly dealt with at a federal level, school policies are a genuine task of the federal states, social policies and youth welfare again are communally managed. Additionally on a European level there are more and more socio-political initiatives so that some pilot programs are funded from the EU social funds (cf. Kompetenzagenturen, Jugendmigrationsdienst, Jugend stärken etc.).

Already on the local level, basic disagreement can be found between Youth Welfare Services, which are more oriented towards personal development and social integration, and job-orientated youth social work (cf. Polutta 2005).

The majority of measures are funded, however, by the Job Centres in accordance with the Employment Promotion Law (SGB III/Social Code) or the *Grundsicherungsgesetz* (SGB II), which guarantees basic security, while support according to § 13 ("Youth social work") of the Child and Youth Services Act (SGB VIII) plays a subordinate role.

5. Conclusions and perspectives

Because of the (structural) problems described above as well as various activities in social, educational and labour market policies, "the last twenty years have seen, in the transition from school to work, a great variety of offerings that is difficult to keep track of not just for young adults" (G.I.B. 2010, 16). This state of affairs – sometimes referred to as a "regular jungle of measures" – is made even worse by a continuously changing landscape of funding bodies (ibid.).

This has resulted during the last years in increased (political) efforts to create a structured local transition management (cf. for example Braun 2007; Müller/Braun 2007). This transition management pursues the two basic aims of, first, the individual counselling of youths in their transition process and, second, the creation of a coherent local offering, usually differentiated into case and network management.[108]

In the previous chapters it became evident that there is – at least in the political field – a strong relationship and cooperation between the systems or rather areas of education and employment. The changes on the labour market as well refer to a crisis of the former successful dual system, where it was a combined affair of the state and the economy.

In the following we try to take a broader view onto three aspects: qualification as a collective good vs. the paradox of qualification, Social work and its orientation dilemma in the transition from school to work and last but not least the biographies of transition and the transition system as a course of risk.

Qualification as a collective good vs. The paradox of qualification

Currently one can observe a paradoxical situation of today's youths. Some scientifics describe it in a binary and metaphorical way (cf Mierendorff/Olk 2002,129). While the sunny side of individualisation displays new options and increased opportunities for the future design of one's biography, the dark side shows the emergence of two sources of danger. First, it is getting continuously more difficult for adolescents to develop viable strategies in order to compensate for insecurities and societal intransparencies and avoid biographical ruptures. Second, they are increasingly held to account for their failed employment history. Given these adverse circumstances, it is precisely during adolescence that tensions and ambivalences are heightened (cf. Mierendorff/Olk 2002,129). And this is where the paradox of qualification comes in: on the one hand, youths are counselled to invest as much time and money as possible into gaining qualifications in order to compete successfully in the labour market. On the other hand, they can be guaranteed only to a steadily diminishing degree that their efforts at qualification will be worthwhile (cf. Mertens, 1984).

The "paradox of qualification", a term often used, refers to the fact that qualifications, although demanded by the employment system and provided by the education system, are not used or only insufficiently. The question suggests itself here whether and to what extent educational efforts can contribute to the solution of vocational training and employment

[108] Within WP 4 (german case study) this local transition management will be focused an furthermore the questions of the categorisation of the youth, the addressing of parents as well as the cooperation of the different actors will be explored.

problems when, despite a lack of skilled labour, a further shrinking of the labour market is to be expected in view of the increasing use of technology.

The paradox of qualification as explanatory principle illustrates again the de-standardisation of educational and biographical histories. Decisions, although in accordance with the norms of society and taken with the best of intentions in the here and now, can by no means guarantee the future of the individual but rather compound the problems of orientation of youths. “This shows again clearly that youth as breathing space is dissolving” (ibid.) and that the individualization and pluralisation of life situations serve to privatize risks which qualifications bring with them. It is a not infrequent occurrence that these tensions end up in short-term, hedonistic behaviour (cf. ibid.)

Social work and its orientation dilemma in the transition from school to work

The flexibilisation and erosion of traditional employment structures are currently turning discontinuous employment histories as well as temporary and precarious employment situations into those fragments from which subjects are confusingly forced to derive some sense of “security”. This condition leads to a “longing for a ‘feeling, sympathetic whole’ in a fragmented world” (Abels 2008). This construction process of generating a sense of self-confidence or security is made even more difficult by material and social exclusion and deprivation.

From a subject-theoretical perspective, it is above all children and youths that are exposed, in the phase of their identity formation, to increasing risks. The “dilemma of orientation” refers to the crisis of the promise of realisable lives and life plans, as held out by the model of normal employment, which are to ensure societal and cultural participation (cf. Galuske (2001). The dilemma of the Youth Vocational Counselling Service is based today on - at least as far as conceptual action strategies are concerned- the (homeo)static ‘standardized pattern’ of a continuous employment history, which however corresponds to an ever diminishing degree to the real freedoms and possibilities in the life worlds of youths. To put it differently: the prospects of permanent employment or secure transition from school to work/the labour market as promised at present are illusory. This argumentation elucidates that the labour-market-oriented Youth Vocational Counselling Service finds itself, at the end of the full-employment society, facing apparently insoluble dilemmas. It wastes, in addition, because of its institutionalized fixation on the labour market, the chance to establish, for example within the framework of projects, individualized learning settings that promote the development of youths and make it possible for them to lead, even in modern work societies, sufficiently self-determined private and vocational lives.

Biographies of transition - or the transition system as a course of risk

The transition from school to work marks, in almost classic fashion, two thresholds: first, the transition from school to vocational training; and, second, the transition from vocational training to the labour market.

The identification of these two moments is, however, not sufficient to capture the multi-layered mechanisms and dynamics from the point of view of individual biographies and relevant institutions.

These crystallization points in the long-lasting and demanding transition from school education to gainful employment need not necessarily cause problems (and therefore need not necessarily refer to socially disadvantaged youths) although they both are, admittedly, always also concerned with the development tasks of young people and imply the potential risks of the exclusion of youths (cf. Walter/Walther 2007). But how do youths meet the challenges and insecurities of transition? How do they find their place between their own vocational wishes, and the opportunities and risks offered by the institutions involved? On what trajectories do their biographies base?

The concept of subject-oriented transition research (Stauber et al. 2007) will therefore be expanded in this EU-research project WorkAble by a focus derived from the theory of justice: the research question is not only how youths manage their lives or how they appropriate their (normative) biography, but is also about seeing them in perspective, in relation to objective states-of-affairs and subjective chances of realization.

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Institutional Mapping
The Swedish case

General presentation of the Swedish educational regime and basic statistical overview of the main educational data at national level

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General presentation of the Swedish educational regime and basic statistical overview of the main educational data at national level

The welfare state

The Swedish welfare state is administered at three different levels with different responsibilities. At the central level, the state is responsible for social insurances (i.e. public pensions, sickness insurance, unemployment insurances[109] etc), the police and the armed forces. The state has also, via the Public Employment Services the main responsibility for labour market policy. At the secondary municipal level there are 19 counties and two regions (Västra Götaland and Skåne). The county councils main responsibility is overseeing tasks that cannot be handled at the local level but require coordination across a larger region, most notably health care. At the primary municipal level, there are 290 municipalities (kommuner) with an extensive responsibility for matters relating to the inhabitants of the municipality and their immediate environment.

The municipalities are legally or contractually responsible for:

- Childcare and preschools
- Elderly care
- Support for the physically and intellectually disabled
- Social assistance
- Primary and secondary education
- Planning and building issues
- Health and environmental protection
- Refuse collection and waste management
- Eergency services and emergency preparedness
- Water and sewerage

On a voluntary basis, the municipality can be responsible for activities such as employment, leisure, cultural activities (apart from libraries, which are a statutory responsibility), housing, energy, industrial and commercial services (Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions 2010).

Local government and funding system

Since the local level of administration is responsible for providing primary and secondary education, the general municipal government and funding system will be described at some length before introducing the Swedish school system.

[109] Unemployment insurances are formally administered by the unions but in praxis by the state via legislation and financing.

According to constitutional law, the municipalities are self governed. Local government has a long tradition in Sweden, based on the belief that local administration and local responsibility could best meet local needs. It is true that the state, via the national parliament, is the only political body with legislative power and in that sense, the authority dictating municipalities' responsibilities. However, the regulations are mainly formulated in terms of outline laws, leaving a great deal of freedom for municipalities, county councils and regions to organise their activities as they see fit. The Local Government Act (komunallagen) sets out the comprehensive framework for all self-governed operations and in addition, there are laws and ordinances covering specific areas (e.g. The Education Act). The scope for local and regional self-government is also affected by decisions taken by the European Union.

Independent powers of taxation

Municipalities, county councils and regions are entitled to levy taxes in order to finance their activities. Taxes are levied as a percentage of the inhabitants' income. Within certain limits, municipalities, county councils and regions decide on their own tax rates. Ranging from 29 to 34 percent, the average, overall local tax rate is 31.5 per cent (Statistics Sweden 2009). Approximately one third goes to the county councils and regions and two thirds to the municipalities. Tax revenues are the largest source of income and account for approximately two-thirds of the total income of municipalities and county councils and regions.

State grants

Grants provided by the state are either block grants or earmarked grants. Block grants are paid per inhabitant and each municipality, county council or region can use this money on the basis of local conditions. Earmarked grants must be used to finance activities decided by the state, sometimes over a specific period of time. A recent example is the temporary "recession grant" (konjunkturstöd), designated for mitigating the effects of the economic crisis during 2010, that was distributed to all municipalities, county councils and regions in December 2009. Another example is the grant, designated for an expansion of the municipal adult education during 2010 and 2011 that was settled in spring 2010 (Swedish Government 2009).

Fees

Municipalities, county councils and regions may charge users for their services. Child care is one example of municipal service partly financed by fees. A non-profit principle applies, however, which means that fees may not be higher than the costs relating to the service concerned. If the municipalities, county councils and regions are obliged to provide a service, they may only charge for the service if specifically permitted to do so by law.

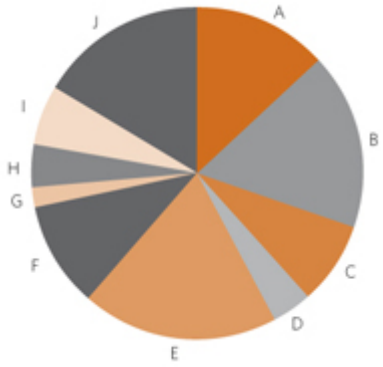
Tax equalisation

Since there are major variations in the average income of the inhabitants, and since the cost for providing the services to which citizens are entitled varies a system in which the municipalities and county councils are financed via local income taxation will inevitable lead to big differences. Consequently, there is a risk that municipalities and county councils with "a service demanding population", i.e. a large share of children and elderly, and/or a weak labour market, also will have a fragile taxation base. In order to ensure fairness, a system has been introduced with the aim of providing equitable conditions in all municipalities, county

councils and regions. This is the local government equalisation system, which entails redistributing the revenues of the municipalities, county councils and regions on the basis of their tax base and level of expenditure. In short, this means that municipalities with a strong taxation base have to transfer money to municipalities with a weaker taxation base. The consequence is twofold. First, the economic differences, and therefore also differences in the services that are provided, is minimized. Second, difference in taxation level is fairly limited. The equalisation system is managed by the State.

Figure 1: Distribution of costs and revenues

Distribution of the municipalities' costs in 2009



A – Pree school, care of school-age children 13%

B – Comprehensive school 17%

C – Upper secondary school 8%

D – Other education 4%

E – Elderly care 19%

F – Support for handicapped persons 10%

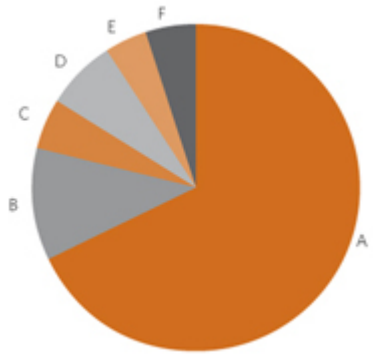
G – Economic assistance 2%

H – Individual- and family care (exkl economic assistance) 4%

I – Business activity 6%

J - Other 16%

Distribution of the municipalities' revenues in 2009



A – Tax revenue 68%

B – Governmental block grants 11%

C – Government grants for particular purposes 5%

D – Fees and charges 7%

E - Rental, sales of public business 4%

F – Other revenues 5%

Source: Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (2010b)

The educational regime

Following the social democratic welfare model (Esping Andersen 1996) the notion of education as one cornerstone of the modern welfare state has been especially pronounced in Sweden and the other Nordic countries. Access to equal opportunities for all children irrespective of gender, social class, geographical background, religion, and special needs is a fundamental idea in the education policy. Providing a free of charge education with a broad range of alternatives, as well as postponing pupils' separation on different tracks as long as possible, has for long been regarded as crucial elements in achieving this objective. The educational system – organisation and allocation of resources – has been regulated in detail by

the state. Reforms has mainly been initiated from the central level with their implementation governed by the state through a national curriculum, a great variety of special subsidies and a great number of detailed regulations concerning organisation, staff and daily work (Lindblad et. al. 2002:285; Arnesen & Lundahl 2006: 291).

Education is still regarded as one of the major methods of preventing unequal life chances. However, the last couple of decades, the governance of education has moved away from the classic social democratic model, characterized by centralised state governance and universalistic policies. Since the beginning of the 1990: s, there has been an ongoing transfer of the educational responsibility and governance to the municipalities. Far more decisions concerning schools and education are taken at the local level and far more actors are involved than before. Governance by objectives and results instead of governance by rules and regulations has been introduced. Increased opportunities for school choice, with consequences in terms of competition between the different schools is another feature of the system. The process of deregulation is not an isolated Swedish phenomenon. However, Swedish education has been restructured faster and more radically since the 1980s compared to most other countries, becoming one of the most decentralised educational systems in the OECD (Arnesen & Lundahl 2006: 287; OECD 1998).

The education system

Education for children and young people is provided by the public authorities in the form of preschool classes, compulsory and upper secondary school, and for adults, in the form of municipal adult education (komvux). There are also equivalent forms of education for individuals with special needs, such as learning disabilities, of all age groups. All these forms together constitute the public school system. Alongside, there are independent schools run by individual natural or legal persons (Swedish Government 2008a; The Swedish National Agency for Education 2010a). The public schools dominate heavily with around 90 per cent enrolment rates (OECD 2010). However, when looking at upper secondary education separately, the figure is lower. Since the introduction in 1992, the share of students attending independent upper secondary schools have been ever increasing with the tendency most pronounced in the cities. Today, 22 per cent of all students at upper secondary level are enrolled at independent schools, whereas county councils and regions answer for one[110] per cent and the municipalities for 77 per cent (Swedish National Agency of Education 2010c).

Obligatory school attendance applies to compulsory school, which is a nine year education, open to everyone between the age of seven and 16. Compulsory schooling includes compulsory comprehensive school, the Sami school (for children whose parents belong to the Sami minority), the school for deaf and hearing- impaired and compulsory school for children with learning disabilities (The Swedish National Agency for Education, 2010a). The comprehensive school consists of primary education (grades 1-6) and lower secondary education (grades 7-9) without any streaming or tracking. It has been guided by a national curriculum from the start, however, with a change towards more steering via goals and results rather than regu-

[110] The low share is mainly due to the fact that county councils and regions only run upper secondary education in the sphere of Natural Resources and Health Care.

lations since the process of deregulation was initiated in the 1980s (Lindblad & Lundahl 1999: 209ff).

Municipalities are responsible for a major part of the primary and secondary education, and consequently, education represents a large share of the municipal budgets; 40 per cent on national average 2009 (see figure 1 above). The cost of a pupil's place in school – for everything from teacher's salaries, premises, school transport, teaching materials, school meals, to pupil welfare services and administration – can vary between schools and municipalities. All education in the public school system is free of charge.

Funding

As most other municipal activities, the public school is funded through local tax revenues plus the governmental block grant to municipalities which is linked to the equalisation system mentioned above. Each municipality receives a specifically calculated amount, and it is the municipality that distributes it between its different activities according to local needs and priorities. From time to time, there are also earmarked government grants for educational purposes that are paid for a limited period when the Government wishes to stimulate development in certain areas.

Independent schools that provide education equivalent to that provided in preschool classes, compulsory school and upper secondary school, and that have been approved by the Swedish School Inspectorate (Skolinspektionen) are entitled to grants from their pupil's home municipalities - independent schools are not allowed to charge students for the education. The amount of the grant, which is determined on the basis of the school's undertaking the pupil's needs, is to be paid according to the same criteria the municipalities apply when distributing resources to the schools within their own organisations. For independent schools at upper secondary level, the grant for a pupil on a particular study programme is to be equivalent to what the programme would cost the home municipality. If the home municipality does not offer the programme, the independent school is to be compensated with an amount that is determined by the Swedish National Agency for Education and that is equivalent to the average national cost of the programme (Swedish Government 2008a).

Governance

The governance of preschool, school and adult education is divided among the Parliament, the Government, the school authorities, the municipalities, the various school organisers and the individual schools.

The Parliament and the Government determine national objectives and guidelines. This shall guarantee a high level of quality in all operations and that they are equal in the entire nation. The Parliament has the legislative power and the Government implements the decisions of the Parliament. The operations are governed by a number of steering documents:

The Education Act, decided by the Parliament, sets out the responsibilities of the municipalities, comprehensive objectives and assignments for education, rules for students and parents.

Regulations contain rules and are passed by the Government. There are specific regulations for each form of education – for instance the upper secondary regulation and the regulation for independent schools.

Curricula are in the form of regulations and contain comprehensive objectives and guidelines for various operations. The curricula also describe the fundamental values and the task of each operation. The curricula are determined by the Government.

Syllabi complement the curricula and state the objectives of the education and the educational targets in various subjects. The Swedish national Agency for Education (Skolverket) decides on the syllabi for national courses in upper secondary school. The syllabi of local courses are determined by the board of education.

School authorities: As the Parliament and the Government have a comprehensive national responsibility, all operations must be followed up and evaluated. Every year, municipalities, county councils and independent school organiser shall follow up and assess their educational operations in a quality report. The organisers shall make this report available to the public and the reports are examined by the Swedish Schools Inspectorate. The National Agency for Education carries out national follow-ups and evaluations and presents a collected assessment of the schools to the Government.

Municipalities are bound in law to ensure that everyone who is entitled to, and who requests, a place in preschool, school or adult education is offered one. This responsibility also includes standing by and acting as a "back up" if an independent school closes down. Since most independent schools are run by joint-stock companies, an organiser might decide to close down due to financial loss. In such cases, all children and students in that operation have the right to be offered an equivalent place in the public school system – a commitment making the situation unpredictable and hard to handle for municipalities.

Every municipality shall appoint one or several boards to govern the public school system. They are also responsible for setting up a plan that shows *how* the schools shall be organised and developed within the framework of the national steering documents. The municipality shall continuously follow up and evaluate the school plan.

An important issue is to decide on what premises resources shall be distributed to the different schools. The basic principle, prescribed by law, is that schools shall receive a specific amount attached to each individual enrolled in their operation (skolpeng). If a pupil chooses to change school during a period of education, the amount attached to that pupil is transferred to the new school. The size of the amount is decided by the municipalities and besides the statutory principle; municipalities are free to distribute resources on other principles as well.

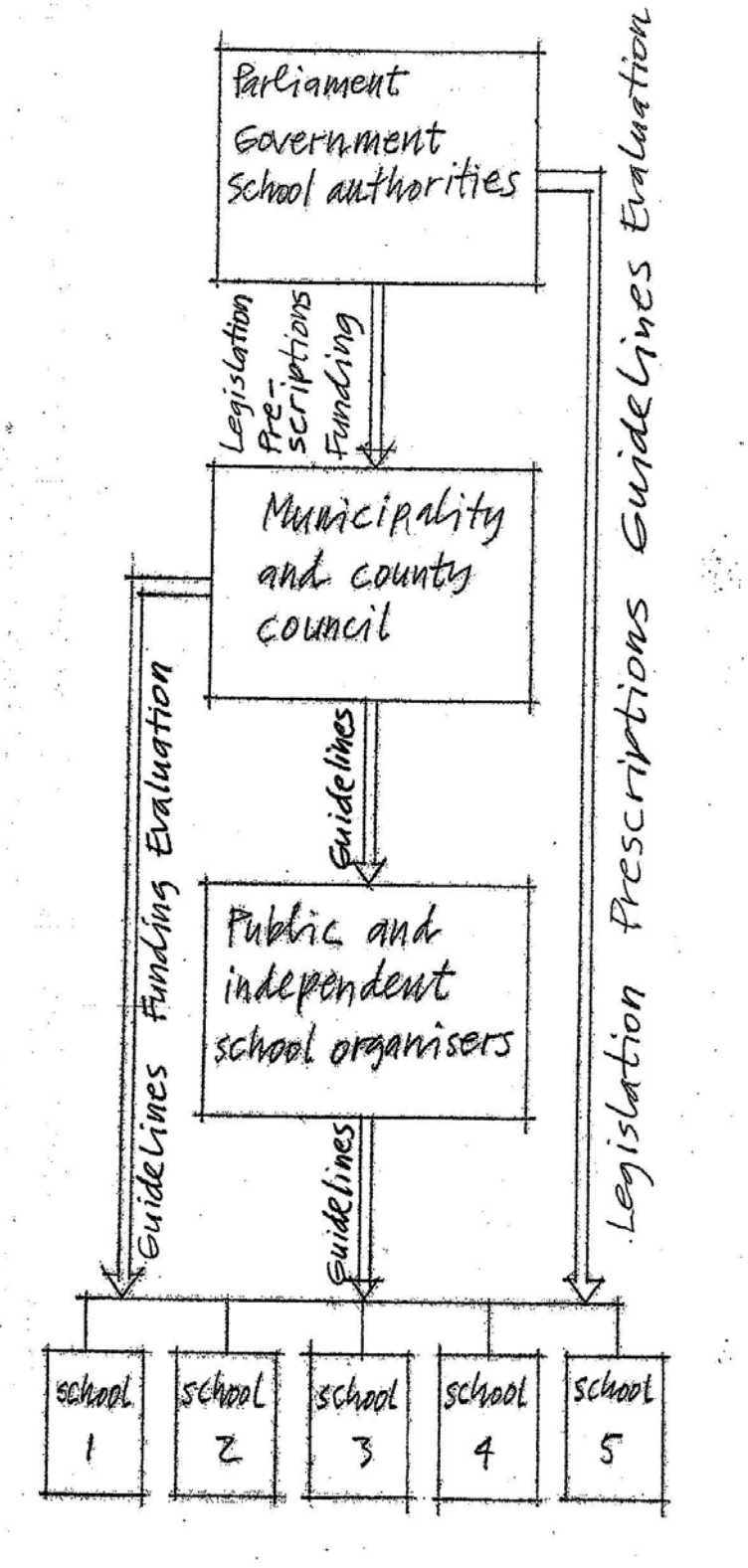
An organiser is the entity responsible for a certain form of education programme or operation (preschool, compulsory school, upper secondary school, adult education) and as mentioned above, the majority of the units are municipal. Municipalities, as well as other organisers, shall run their activities based on those objectives and frameworks established at national level. However, the steering documents allow a great scope for organisers to determine *how* to achieve the objectives. This can involve decisions about how the resources shall be used. It can also involve decision about ratios for different personnel categories such as welfare officers or school nurses.

Hitherto, independent school organisers have been embraced by a specific national legislation, leaving even more room for self-governance concerning contents and forms of education. In by the new Education Act, that will come in to force autumn 2011, independent schools organisers will be embraced by the same regulations as their public equivalents.

Schools are responsible for developing the education, and for ensuring that students have the possibility of improvement. Each member of the staff shall contribute towards the achievement of the national objectives, even if the primary responsibility rests with the head teacher. Although framed by national as well as local regulations and guidelines, the people who work in the schools have great freedom to organise their activities and to choose methods and forms of working.

Again, it is worth emphasizing that the national rules and regulations are formulated in terms of comprehensive objectives and guidelines, leaving a great scope of freedom for the responsible municipality, as well as school organisers and individual schools to decide *how* to run their activities within the framework of the national legislation.

Figure 2: Governance and responsibility



- Parliament and Government determine national objectives and guidelines. School authorities follow up and evaluates.

- Municipalities bear the responsibility for providing education according to national objectives and regulations. Decide on premises for distribution of resources.

- Public and independent school organizers run their operations according to objectives and regulations established at national as well as municipal level.
- Schools run their operations within the framework of national and municipal objectives and regulations as well as according to guidelines established by the school organizer.

Upper secondary education

The Education Acts states that municipalities are the authorities responsible for ensuring that all young all young people who have completed compulsory school shall be offered a place in upper secondary school. Young people have the right to begin their education up until the first calendar half-year of the year they reach the age of 20. They are not obliged to attend to education provided within their home municipality – students have the right to apply for a place at a school anywhere in the country. However, if there is an equivalent education programme available in the home municipality, the receiving school will accepted the student as far as a place is available (The Swedish National Agency for Education, 2010a).

Individuals older than 20 years can attend upper secondary *adult* education (komvux). Municipal adult education shall also be provided as an opportunity to complete unfulfilled education at both compulsory and upper secondary level (Swedish Government 2008a).

To all it intents and purposes, contemporary upper secondary education is based on a reform proposed in 1991 (SOU 2007: 28 ff). The reform is strongly influenced by the spirit of that time, urging decentralisation and a programme-orientated and goal-driven education. All programmes have the same format: they are all three years of duration with a number of common core subjects, providing general eligibility for higher studies. An important implication of the reform was that vocationally oriented programmes became more theorised than previously. Individual programmes were established as well as the opportunity to set up special designed programmes, with local courses and branches, as a means for giving local school governing the freedom to adapt the education to labour market needs. Municipalities are the bodies deciding what special designed programmes there shall be and today, there is a vast number of different alternatives throughout the country. Since the programmes are locally organised and since the selection of alternatives may change quite rapidly, there is no official data available showing how many different programmes there are. According to a web-page organised by, and directed to, future and present students, there are at least 250 special designed programmes (www.gymnasium.se).

On the whole, upper secondary education has for a long time been subjected to notorious reformation and change – a process strongly contributing to difficulties in grasping the system. The difficulties do not only apply to researchers trying to map out and describe the educational regime, but very much so to those directly affected (young people and their parents). Young people and their parents are confronted with several choices – there is a vast variety of programmes offered by public as well as independent school organisers throughout the country. Furthermore, the introduction of independent school organisers, combined with the funding principle, attaching an amount to each student, has brought about a competitive situation where schools devote a lot of time and effort in trying to attract as many students as possible - the methods very similar to any advertising campaign run by private companies (send outs, public advertising bills, advertising in news papers, exhibitions etc.). It is near at hand to assume that the complexity and the competitive strategies has a segregating effect. To understand the system, to sort out what consequences different choices might lead to, almost requires having parents familiar with the Swedish society in general and the

educational system in particular, leaving young people with foreign background and low educated parents in a less favourable position.

The remodelling continues. In early summer 2010, a new Education Act was accepted. As already mentioned, the reform will come in to force in July 2011 (education for children and young people) and July 2012 (adult education). Obviously, all data, figures and facts in this paper have to be based on the present situation.

Educational routes

Upper secondary education offers three types of programmes: national programmes, special designed programmes and individual programmes. There are 17 national theoretical and/or vocational programmes including mandatory courses, optional courses, individual choices of subjects and project work. Special designed local programmes combine subjects from various national programmes with local courses. Finally, there are individual programmes designed for pupils with particular educational needs.

Pupils who do not have passing grades from compulsory education in at least one of the following subjects: Swedish/Swedish as a second language, Mathematics and English, are not qualified to apply for a national programme. Instead, these pupils are offered the opportunity to study on an individual programme in order to get passing grades, after which they can transfer to a national or special designed programme (The Swedish National Agency for Education 2010a).

Main route

In most OECD countries, graduation[111] from upper secondary education is becoming a norm (OECD 2010). In Sweden, this is an explicit official goal (Swedish Government 2004) and, although not compulsory, to enter upper secondary education has become a more or less unavoidable choice since there are very few (if any) alternatives available. This is also true for those who leave comprehensive school without having sufficient passing grades for entering upper secondary education. The last couple of decades, this group has constituted around 10-12 per cent of each batch (The Swedish Government 2008b; The Swedish National Agency for Education 2010b). In order to pave the way for those lacking formal eligibility, the individual programme was established (The Swedish Government 2008b). Accordingly, virtually all adolescents are given the opportunity to enter upper secondary education after leaving the comprehensive school and virtually all do so (98% according to Swedish National Agency for Education 2009). The majority of the pupils (ca 70%) pass through the system within the appointed time of three years (Swedish Government 2008b).

[111] "Graduation" might have different meanings. In this text the concept refers to receiving a leaving certificate with eligibility for higher education. This requires passing grades in Swedish/Swedish as a second language, Mathematics and English along with passing grades in at least 90% of all courses within the education programme as a whole (The Education Act)

Alternative routes

Around 30 per cent of each batch does not follow the expected route and those who attend to an individual programme are heavily overrepresented within this group (Swedish Government 2008b). However, it should be pointed out that those attending an individual programme constitute a very heterogeneous group in terms of the reasons for being there. It is not just those who lack eligibility to other programmes. In fact, the individual programme has become a kind of transit station for pupils who after some time at a specific programme want to terminate their current studies. Some pupils realise that their first hand choice was not the right one, whereas some were not accepted for their first hand choices in the first place. In those cases, it is possible to attend to an individual programme in the meantime while waiting for an opportunity to apply for the "right" programme next term or year. Yet others simply experience difficulties in managing the work load. They are in need of extended support and other educational solutions than those available within the national and special designed programmes (SOU 2008:27). In 2007, 45 per cent of all pupils' who attended an individual programme had eligibility for national programmes.

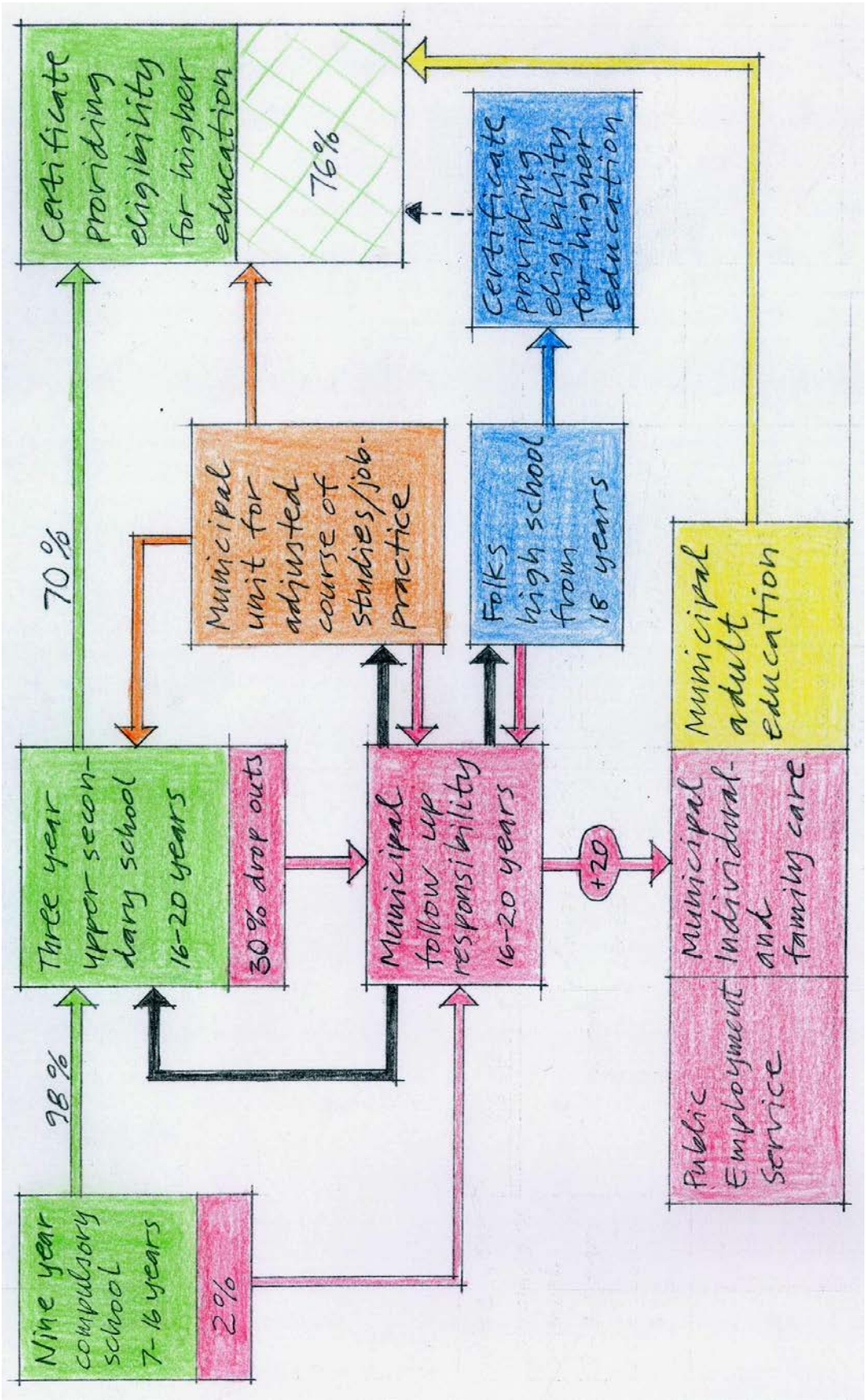
Other factors associated with unfulfilled studies are mainly related to social background such as the parents' standard of education and ethnical background. Male students with a foreign background, who immigrated to Sweden later than the first year in compulsory school, and whose parents have a low level of education, constitute the group with lowest records (Swedish National Agency of Education, 2008).

That education is regarded as a prerequisite for good future prospects is a nationally and internationally accepted "fact" (OECD 2010). Accordingly, various measures are taken for preventing drop-outs and bringing early school-leavers back to school. In the Swedish context, there are usually guidelines formulated at municipal level encouraging schools to work along specific lines in order to prevent drop-out. In practice, it is very much up to each school to decide on what methods and measures to be used.

The responsibility for those who do not enter upper secondary education and students who finally drops out rests on the municipality. All young people who have left comprehensive school without being registered at any upper secondary education are embraced by the "municipal follow up responsibility" (kommunala uppföljningsansvaret) up until their 20: th birthday. The responsibility is statutory, however, the wording of the Act (Swedish Government 2005) leaves room for interpretation and the way that the responsibility is enacted is up to each municipality to decide. The lowest acceptable effort is to keep an updated register of individuals who "qualify" for the follow up responsibility. Besides that, all activities are in the hands of the municipal authorities.

The following presentation is based on strategies used in one of the biggest municipalities in the country. The case can by no means be considered representative for Sweden as a whole. Besides official documents, the data derives from interviews with stake holders at different levels and positions within the municipal administration, with school personnel, and with staff at the Swedish Public Employment Service.

Figure 3: Main route, alternative routes



The green stream represents the main route as described above: 98% of all young people enter upper secondary education after completing compulsory school and within three years 70% of each batch passes with leaving certificate providing eligibility for higher education. However, when extending the time span another seven years, the figure rises with six points (Swedish Association for Local Authorities and Regions, 2010), with several, and sometimes intertwined tracks leading to graduation. Here, it should be noted that the six points include a wide range of "drop-outs". Besides those who actually dropped out, the additional graduates are students who have extended their education one year or so due to travel or studies abroad. Those attending an individual programme as a transit station in waiting for admission to the "right" programme are included as well.

Having the variety of reasons and conditions in mind, everything below the green stream represents alternative routes. The municipal follow up responsibility (the red box in the middle) is the starting point for all activities. Based on the registration list, the responsible unit tries to get in touch with everyone in order to inform them about what options there are. Although not explicitly expressed in terms of a formal objective, all efforts aim at encouraging the individuals to complete their education. This can be accomplished by re-entering their previous education, by entering an individual adjusted courses provided by a special unit within the municipal education system or, on reaching 18 years, by entering a folk high-school[112]. For those considering all forms of education unconceivable, there are few options. Within the operations of the special education unit mentioned, it is possible to do up to six months full time job practice, either in combination with theoretical courses or solely work place practice. The education unit does not offer a fixed list of employers or work sites who agreed up on accepting an apprentice. Instead, help is offered in the form of a personal coach, who contributes with social support as well as assistance in looking for an appropriate work place. From the municipality's point of view, the experiences made during the process of arranging the practice by oneself, is considered vital.

Like the other alternatives available, job practice aims at encouraging individuals to complete their education. The underlying objective is that the coaching, the process of arranging the practice, as well as the actual work experience, will contribute to the individual being more motivated and less tired of school, and more clear about what educational track to choose.

As the figure illustrates, anybody who drops out from one or the other track will repeatedly be re-registered, re-contacted and re-offered the options described up until the age of 20 years. After that, the follow up responsibility expires. However, since the municipality is responsible for offering adult education at upper secondary level, the possibility to complete unfulfilled studies remains, although heavily relying on the individuals own initiative.

[112] Folk high-school is a type of schooling with a high degree of freedom and independence, mainly organised by non-profit organizations, trusts or other associations, trade unions etc. There are no special entrance requirements for general courses. The schools are eligible to issue a certificate showing that the student has knowledge equivalent to upper secondary studies.

Drop- outs and early school leavers

Most young people do enter one or the other educational track offered by the municipality and some of them do complete their education sooner or later. Apart from students who more or less deliberately extend their studies one year or two, the rising level of through put is mainly due to complementary studies within adult municipal education and folk high-schools (Statistics Sweden 2007). The responsibility for the group of young people who does not enter any of the educational routes rests on the municipal individual- and family care in the home district. Here, mainly conversational therapy and other forms of social support is offered. As long as an individual is younger than 20 years, there are no real alternatives when lacking graduation from upper secondary education or equivalent (folk high school).

Besides "municipal adult education", there are two boxes below the 20-year limit (figure 3), representing the authorities people can turn to for support when unemployed and without other sources of financial maintenance. The individual- and family care is the municipal authority that decides on, and administers, economic assistance to citizens living within a particular district. It is possible to receive economic assistance from the age of 18, but only if the individual has completed upper secondary education. If not, the individual is embraced by the municipal follow up responsibility and not entitled to financial support. The Swedish Public Employment Service is a government authority with the objective of matching those looking for work with employers looking for competence. It is also the authority responsible for administer any labour market measures. From the age of 16 it is possible to be enrolled at the Public Employment Service, but the age limit for any measures generating payment is 18. Both at the individual- and family care and at the Public Employment Service, young people without upper secondary education are recommended to complete their education in order to improve their chances in life.

What happens then?

For people younger than 20, upper secondary graduation act as a kind of admission ticket to society in several ways. It has become crucial, not only for entering the labour market, but also for rights concerning measures provided by the Employment Service as well as financial support if unemployed. That there is a positive relation between education and employment is a well-known fact; on a national level, higher levels of educational attainment typically lead to higher employment rates (OECD 2010: 102).

Several Swedish authorities and institutions are continuously producing follow-up studies on drop-outs. In 2003, a study by the National Labour Market Board[113] showed that the level of employment was nearly 20 percentage units lower among drop-outs and the time of registration at the Public Employment Service was 60 percent longer compared to those who had completed their upper secondary education (National Labour Market Board, 2003). The same year, the Expert Group for Public Economics published a report showing that the share of individuals who neither work nor study the following years after leaving upper secondary

[113] National Labour Market Board was closed down in 2007 and the assignments were transferred to The Public Employment Service.

school is considerable larger among drop-outs compared to those who completed their education. It takes more time for drop-outs to reach a stable position on the labour market and they take a costly long way around through the educational system (Expert Group for Public Economics, 2003)

In a more recent study carried out by Statistics Sweden (2007), a central measure used is to what extent people have a stable position on the labour market or not. The measure is divided into four different levels: established, insecure, weak, and outside the labour market. Criteria's for the different categories are registered annual income 2005, combined with data on whether the individual was employed or not and to what extent he or she had been involved in any kind of labour market policy measures.

Table 1. Beginners at upper secondary education autumn 2000 by employment/studies 2005 *(percentages)*

	Completed upper secondary education			**Uncompleted secondary education**		
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
University	38	30	34	3	2	3
Other studies	15	12	13	30	19	24
Military service	0	3	2	0	3	2
Established	16	28	22	13	21	18
Insecure	10	11	10	9	11	10
Weak	16	14	15	25	25	25
Outside labour market	2	2	2	14	13	13
Not in population	2	1	2	6	6	6

When looking at level of establishment, the differences are quite obvious in the senses that having a weak position or being outside the labour market are situations considerably more common among individuals lacking upper secondary graduation. But as the table shows, the most pronounced differences concern studies. Of obvious reasons, far more people who completed their education were studying at the university compared to those who did not. An interesting point here is that, compared to most other OECD-countries, the significance of upper secondary education for employability seems to be quite modest in Sweden. The difference in unemployment rates between those with upper secondary education and those with a lower level of education is comparatively low (OECD 2010: 109). Instead, ter-

tiary education stands out as the central watershed. Consequently, upper secondary graduation seems to be a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for favourable life chances for young people in Sweden.

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Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this report is to describe the educational system in Scotland with a focus on those young people who fail to make the transition to work, education or training. It examines the policies, structures and strategies, and seeks to identify what may work in engaging disengaged young people.

The research methods used to undertake this part of the research included a review of relevant policy documents and academic literature relating to the education system in Scotland and interviews held with appropriate local, regional and national stakeholders. The interviews sought to gather detailed information on the educational system in Scotland and in particular to examine the links between the education and employment systems in Scotland; the role of partnership working in the implementation of educational policy in Scotland; the role of local organisations; and finally the degree to which young people are involved in the formation and implementation of education policy in Scotland.

The remainder of this document is structured as follows: section two outlines the different aspects of the education system in Scotland; section three focuses in more detail on youth unemployment and disengagement; and a final section draws together the findings of this stage of the research.

2. THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN SCOTLAND

Scotland has a long history of universal public education and its education system is distinctly different from other parts of the United Kingdom. In the UK the education system is devolved to England, Wales and Northern Ireland (where the systems are all similar) and to Scotland. Traditionally, the Scottish system has emphasised breadth across a range of subjects, while the English, Welsh and Northern Irish systems have emphasised greater depth of education over a smaller range of subjects at secondary school level; university degrees typically take four years to complete whereas they take three years to complete in the rest of the UK.

Education and training in Scotland is a devolved issue alongside, health, local government, social work and justice. The Scottish Parliament has full legislative competence on this matter. Education is at the core of the Scottish Government's strategic objectives designed to help Scotland flourish which aims to create a country that is wealthier and fairer; healthier; safer and stronger; greener; smarter[114]. Education policy is not seen in isolation but is seen as being part of the wider national policy context and as contributing to national outcomes.

Political responsibility for education at all levels is vested in the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Government's Education and Lifelong Learning Department. The First Minister for Scotland has overall responsibility for the education system with day to day responsibility delegated to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning who is supported by the Minister for Children and Young People and the Minister for Schools and Skills. Ministers are advised by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) and Learning and Teaching

[114] Scottish Government – Strategic Objectives - http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Strategic-Objectives

Scotland (responsible for the development of the curriculum) and the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). Appendix one outlines the key stakeholders in Scottish education ranging from those responsible in national government and non-departmental public bodies to those who manage the day to day running of individual schools.

At the institutional level, Local Authorities (LAs) and schools themselves hold much of the executive powers for school education. For example, the school curriculum is not prescribed in statute and head teachers are responsible for the day to day management of their schools. Similarly further and higher education institutions are responsible in the main for their own administration.

Inspections and audits of educational standards are conducted by three bodies: the Care Commission inspects care standards in pre-school provision; Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education for pre-school, primary, education, further and community education; with the Scottish office of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA Scotland) responsible for higher education.

Funding

Gross revenue expenditure on school education increased by 5.9% between 2006/07 and 2008/09 and figures for 2010/11 show education budgets have risen again from £4.6 billion in 2008-09 to £4.9 billion in 2010-11 - a real terms increase of 1.7 per cent[115]. State schools are funded by the 32 local authorities in Scotland which are responsible for primary and secondary education delivery. The Scottish Government pays an annual grant to local authorities, which then decide how much of the grant will be given to education. Money is then delegated to schools to spend. Control of the budget is at the school level and decisions are largely made by the head teacher in consultation with staff and the school board.

The 20 Scottish higher education institutions and 43 publicly-funded colleges are funded by the Scottish Government via the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), a non-departmental public body of the Scottish Government, drawing on funds provided by the Scottish Government. Although they receive public funds from the SFC, further and higher education institutions are nearly autonomous. They also generate some of their own income. The 2010-11 Scottish Budget provided universities with an extra £42.9 million for learning, teaching and research compared with 2009-10. This represented a record £1.076 billion for universities. Colleges, meanwhile, received a total cash increase of £44.8 million in 2010-11 compared with last. However, the £1.3 billion cut by Westminster from the next year's Scottish Budget represents the toughest settlement since devolution[116].

Qualifications

Qualifications at the secondary school and post-secondary (further education) level are provided by the Scottish Qualifications Authority, which is the national awarding and accrediting body in Scotland, and delivered through various schools, colleges and other learning centres. Scotland has slightly higher levels of qualifications that the rest of the UK with relatively few people with their highest qualification below SCQF level 5 or below[117].

[115] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Facts#a5
[116] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Facts#a5
[117] UKCES, Ambition 2020: World Class Skills and Jobs for the UK, 2010, p. 39

Scotland has its own qualification framework that is separate from that in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (see appendix two). There are three groups of qualifications provided by the SQA: National Qualifications, Higher National Qualifications and Scottish Vocational Qualifications

1. National Qualifications[118]

- Standard Grades are taken in the third and fourth year of secondary school (these are equivalent to GCSEs taken in England, Wales and Northern Ireland)
- National Units: Most Units are designed to take 40 hours of teaching and can be taken at schools, colleges, and in other training centres. National Units can be built up into National Courses, National Progression Awards (NPAs) and National Certificates (NCs)
- National Courses include Access 1, 2 and 3 are designed for students with support needs. Intermediate 1 and 2 are for students with Standard Grades. Highers (minimum for university entrance) and Advanced Highers (equivalent to the A levels taken in England, Wales and Northern Ireland) are the stepping stones to degree courses and HNCs and HNDs. Skills for Work Courses offer practical experiences and students will spend time at a college or local training provider
- National Progression Awards are mainly short programmes undertaken by colleges in specialist vocational areas
    - National Certificates (NCs) are for 16-18 year olds usually at college are linked to occupational areas and aimed to help students enter employment or further study

2. Higher National Qualifications

- HNCs and HNDs provide skills for employment and HNDs can allow entry to degree courses. They are offered by colleges, some universities and training centres.

3. Scottish Vocational Qualifications

- SVQs are group awards that are primarily delivered in the workplace to give them the skills for their occupation

These three types of qualifications, as well as those academic qualifications given by higher education institutions, can be further categorised using the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) which describes the level of each qualification (see Table 3). SCQF Level 1 is the lowest level of qualification and includes Access 1 qualifications. SCQF Level 12 includes doctoral degrees awarded by higher education institutions.

The Structure of Education in Scotland

This section examines the structure of the education system in Scotland, describing school education, college education, university education, non-vocational learning and life long learning.

[118] It should be noted that the qualifications system is due to change in Scotland coming into effect in 2013

School Education

Scotland has a comprehensive education system and in Scotland all children aged between 4 and 16 receive compulsory education. Pupils attend primary school between the ages of 4 and 11 (classes Primary 1-7). Children are usually admitted to primary school in mid-August, after their fourth or fifth birthday and there are no entrance exams. Children must attend secondary school between the ages of 12-16 years (classes S1-4). Schools are open for 190 days per year and the school year usually runs from mid August to June. There are 2,722 schools in Scotland and 681,573 pupils.

The majority of pupils attend publicly funded schools. However, there are 150 independent schools which receive no public funding and are independent of the LAs. In the first 3 years of primary school class sizes are limited to 30 pupils. At primary school pupils are usually taught in mixed ability classes and at secondary school there is a mix of mixed ability and ability defined classes. At primary level pupils' progress is assessed through e.g. teacher observation, discussing their work with them and setting tests. In secondary school, pupils are subject to continuous assessment and from S3, pupils begin to study for National Qualifications (NQ) from the SQA .

Education authorities define catchment areas for schools although parents can express a school preference, dependent on the availability of places.

Local authorities are responsible for:

- Providing adequate education for the area and ensuring schools are fully accessible
- Implementing educational policy
- Assessing the special educational needs of children and providing help where necessary
- Providing adequate facilities for physical education and training and other recreational activities
- Monitoring, assessing and reviewing the standard of education provided in schools

In 2009 data on teachers in Scotland shows that:

- There were 23,255 primary school teachers, a pupil teacher ratio of 15.8. 92% of primary school teachers were female.
- There were 25,371 secondary school teachers, a pupil teacher ratio of 11.9. 61% of secondary school teachers were female.
- The mean age of primary, secondary and special school teachers was 43.0.
- There was an increase in the proportion of teachers aged under 40 years (up to 39% in 2009, from 38% in 2008) and those aged 55 years and over (up to 21% in 2009, from 20% in 2008)
- Where data is available, it was found that 2.5% of teachers and from non-UK, white backgrounds and 1.5% from other minority ethnic groups.

To qualify as a primary school teacher individuals either need to have a four year Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree in Primary Education or a one-year Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) if they already have a degree. To be eligible to become a secondary school

teacher individuals must either undertake a four year four year Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree or the a one-year Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) (full time, part time or by distance learning) if they already have a degree. Teachers must register with the General Teaching Council for Scotland before they can teach.

In terms of parental involvement, Parent Councils were introduced in the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Bill and are intended to replace school boards. The council, or board, has a special responsibility to represent and communicate with parents through the new parents' forum, and has a number of powers, including:

- Input on the appointment of senior staff, such as the head teacher
- Ability to spend money raised or donated to benefit the school
- Power to raise anything of interest to parents, such as homework, bullying or school uniform, with the head teacher or local authority
- Option to take unresolved matters to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education

The curriculum in Scotland is non statutory and the government only provides a framework for learning and teaching and LAs and schools decide what is taught. Schools and LAs can also decide on what and how to teach for post compulsory education courses. Colleges are entirely free to decide on curricular content. One of the biggest changes in the education system is that the Scottish Government is currently rolling out the new framework for the 3 to 18 curriculum – the *Curriculum for Excellence.* The *Curriculum for Excellence* has been developed through engagement with teachers and practitioners, and has also drawn upon international research. It is implemented by LTS, SQA, HMIE and the Scottish Government.

The *Curriculum for Excellence* sits in a broader framework of strategies designed to help children and young people in Scotland flourish and seeks to instil ambition among school children[119].

Three frameworks (*Early Years Framework, Equally Well* and *Achieving our Potential)* have been developed to provide a strategy to help the most vulnerable in society, in order to ensure that children and young people fulfil their potential. Alongside these, *Skills for Scotland: a Lifelong Skills Strategy,* promotes lifelong learning in order to meet the needs of employers and the economy and to develop employment opportunities.

The new *Curriculum for Excellence* aims to provide a flexible curriculum for 3 to 18 year olds, it aims to 'achieve a transformation in education in Scotland by providing a coherent more flexible and enriched curriculum from 3 to 18'[120]. It focuses on promoting reflection on learning and gives pupils 'the knowledge, attributes and skills to flourish in life'. The curriculum outlines the experiences planned for children centred round the curriculum areas and subjects; interdisciplinary learning beyond subject boundaries; a positive school ethos; and opportunities for achievement within and beyond the classroom. The curriculum also acknowledges the value of learning experiences outside the classroom e.g. within the home and the community. It is centred around the development of four capacities, organised in 8 curriculum areas (expressive arts; health and wellbeing; languages; mathematics; religious and moral education; sciences; social studies; and technologies):

[119] 'Curriculum for Excellence' is the reform of national qualifications for young people, which includes the development of SCQF qualifications at levels 4 and 5 etc. More information can be found at: http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/37916.2088.html
[120] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/curriculum

1. Successful learners
2. Confident individuals
3. Responsible citizens
4. Effective contributors.

The *Curriculum for Excellence* has 5 learning levels:

Table 1: Curriculum Levels (Source: Scottish Government)

Level	Stage
Early	The pre-school years and P1, or later for some.
First	To the end of P4, but earlier or later for some.
Second	To the end of P7, but earlier or later for some.
Third and Fourth	S1 to S3, but earlier for some. The fourth level broadly equates to SCQF level 4.
Senior phase	S4 to S6, and college or other means of study.

There is also guidance for early year's workers, social care and health practitioners working with children in the age range birth to three in the document *Birth to three: supporting our youngest children*. It highlights the central role of relationships, responsiveness and respect. The *Curriculum for Excellence* builds on the foundations built at this stage. Revised guidance is set to be distributed in winter 2010.

It is difficult to fully evaluate the impact of the CfE as it is still in the process of being implemented. The responses from stakeholders on the CfE were largely very positive and it was seen as a positive step forward for Scottish education, particularly for learners. One of the key themes in relation to the CfE that came out of the interviews was that it represented a move away from seeing education and learning as something that is only experienced at school. This can be seen to have links to the capability approach where wider experiences and a range of options are valued. The CfE is about recognising the importance of what a young person does outside school of that and giving it value. As one stakeholder notes:

> *"it is moving away from the concept that all learning takes place in schools and is delivered by teachers, it is acknowledging that learning can take place in a variety of different contexts...Schools should see themselves as being part of the community and having more of an outward focus to their community"*

For example the CfE looks at the potential of non SQA qualifications, as being part of the curriculum such as Duke of Edinburgh Awards[121] Furthermore, it has been demonstrated elsewhere that the experience of learning outside of school, with a different learning style and in a new environment can help to tackle disengagement[122].

[121] http://www.dofe.org/
[122] Council of Europe (2010) Breaking the cycle of disadvantage-the role of education in combatting poverty, inequality and social exclusion.

Although the CfE was seen as a positive development it was recognised by the stakeholders we interviewed that it represented a major culture change in the way education is taught in schools and colleges and that it may take some time to change the attitudes of both students and teachers to the learning process.

College Education

Scotland has over 40 Colleges offering both further and higher education courses, 22% of activity offered is higher education and 78% of activity offered is further education. Post compulsory education falls into 2 categories: secondary education for 16-18 years (classes S5-S6) in schools; and colleges which provide vocational, upper secondary education, post-secondary non-tertiary and higher education for those aged 16 years and over. In these Colleges learners can undertake Further Education courses, not taught in schools, which covers levels 1-6 on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) e.g. academic courses up to Higher level and basic skills courses. School pupils can undertake short or medium length practical or vocational courses within a local college as part of their school curriculum under the School College Partnerships agreements. All 32 LAs have partnership places in at least one college in their area.

The sector is funded by the Scottish Funding Council, acting on behalf of the Scottish Ministers. This includes funding for the School College Partnerships agreements[123]. Strategic direction for the college sector is provided by the Lifelong Learning Directorate of the Scottish Government. They provide annual guidance to the funding council and liaise with stakeholders such as the SQA and UK government departments.

There were 483,472 student enrolments in 2008/09 with full-time study accounting for 62% of all student activity (the highest numbers since AY2004-05). 29% of teaching is for students from Scotland's most deprived postcode areas. Employers funded 39% of the working age enrolments enabling them to enhance or gain new work-related or job-specific skills.

There are a range of vocational training opportunities, often delivered in colleges but also in the work place. For example, Modern Apprenticeships offer paid employment and a chance to for young people aged 16-19 to train for a job. They offer vocational training in a range of sectors and participants can obtain a Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) or NVQ, depending on what is most appropriate for that sector. The costs are met by the employer and SDS. The Scottish Government has introduced Modern Apprenticeships at SVQ level 2. This replaces the training programme Skillseekers run by Skills Development Scotland to help young people aged 16-19 not in further or higher education to develop skills for work. *Get Ready for Work* is open to 16-19 year olds and helps them to improve vocational and core skills. Following training young people are given temporary work experience placements and they are supported by a *Get Ready for Work* training provider.

Colleges are also heavily involved in the implementation of the CfE and have for some time been implementing the principles of the new curriculum. For example interviews with stakeholders in the college sector highlighted that colleges already have a good track record in recognising wider achievement and helping students recognise the wider skills that they have.

[123] The refreshed Skills for Scotland is committed to strengthen the partnership approach to skills through: "improving the linkages between colleges and local businesses" and "supporting the role of Community Planning Partnerships in planning and delivering local employment and skills support services" (p. 51)

Research carried out by Scottish Funding Council (2010)[124] on what attracts disengaged young people to college showed that young people were positive about their experience at college and common reasons why the college was seen as more attractive that school were: that is was a more relaxed adult environment; lectures were more engaging and supportive that teachers; and there was more choice in what to study, rather than being forced to take particular subjects.

University Education

There are 20 autonomous higher education institutions in Scotland: 14 campus based universities, one distance-learning university, an educational partnership institution based in the Highlands and Islands, two art schools, a conservatoire and an agricultural college. Scottish domiciled students and EU students undertaking full-time non-advanced degree courses do not have to pay tuition fees. Part time students, those on low incomes and those from asylum seeker families may be able to get waivers or be exempt from paying fees. Applications to university are made through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). UCAS is a UK-wide service which enables pupils to apply to up to five universities from a choice of every single higher education institution in the UK.

In the UK (including Scotland), academic qualifications at this level are not national awards, but are granted by individual institutions. The institutions must have degree awarding powers recognised by the UK authorities. Institutions that do not have these powers can provide courses that lead to a degree in a recognised institution. Universities have an important role to play in enabling the transition from school to university and encouraging the participation of those from disadvantaged backgrounds and facilitating non traditional routes into university.

For example universities can play a direct role in developing, and in some cases, delivering the school curriculum and in providing complementary support for pupils while they are studying; universities host many activities to encourage pupils to think differently about some of what they are hearing in the classroom or to stimulate interest in subjects they may not yet know or enjoy; and universities visit schools to engage and enthuse pupils.

For those that need more support, or did not consider university while at school, there are a number of alternative routes

• Summer schools leading to entry. Universities run summer schools and evening classes for those who just missed their grades or who decided late that they want to pursue an academic career. Many universities offer guaranteed entry for those who complete summer schools successfully.

• Articulation with colleges. Universities and colleges work together to develop progression routes so a student studying further education qualifications can progress straight to university, often with advanced entry into the second or third year.

• Support, guidance and careers services. Universities offer support and guidance services for pupils well before the point at which they enrol in the university. Pupils can contact a university to discuss any aspect of admissions and university careers services are also happy to advise on which careers are open to them if they succeed in getting onto a course.

[124] SFC (2010) Findings of the MCMC peer research project

• Consortia approaches. In many cases it is not just the university which works to help give access to pupils who might otherwise lose out. Consortia projects such as LEAPS and ASPIRENorth all involve primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities and LAs in a series of initiatives aimed at getting pupils from low participation schools into university. Engagement can start as early as primary school, and in many cases pupils who complete the programme successfully are guaranteed a place at university.

Universities are also active in helping students make the transition to university. For example, there are:

- Preparation classes and top-up programmes. Long before pupils leave school, universities are already helping them to get ready for university. They run classes in schools to help pupils develop their study skills and offer intensive catch-up classes (such as in maths) if students need or want extra preparation to ensure a successful start to university.
- Information and guidance materials. Universities produce a wide range of resources to help pupils and students get more information about any of the questions they have about studying at university and which provide tips and advice to help them prepare.
- Induction and orientation. Universities have detailed programmes of induction and orientation to help school pupils adapt to university life.
- Mentoring and 'buddying'. The mentoring process which begins at school continues into the start of university. New students often have access to existing students who can help them find their feet. This can be one-to-one 'buddying' schemes or it might well involve the same mentors who came to visit them in their school.
- Care-leavers support. Young people who leave the care system often have a very particular set of needs when they move out on their own and into university. Many universities have put in place dedicated support for new students who have come from the care system.

Non-Vocational Learning

The Scottish Government defines non-vocational learning as "*as participation in <u>any</u> learning which was not job related."*

The National Adult Learning Survey (NALS) in 2005 found that participation non-vocational learning (28%) is significantly lower than participation in vocational learning (74%). Participation in non-vocational learning in Scotland was 3 points higher compared to the rest of the UK (England and Wales). The proportion of people planning ('very' or 'fairly' likely) to do non-job-related learning in the next 2 or 3 years (53%) was considerably higher than the proportion who had taken part in this type of learning in the previous three years (28%).

The majority of community learning and development activities and programmes are non-certificated. However, the modular courses validated and certificated by the SQA provide an incentive to those adults involved in vocational training.

Life Long Learning

One of the objectives behind the Scottish Government's lifelong learning strategy (Skills for Scotland: A Lifelong Skills Strategy, 2007) is "*to ensure that learning is open to everyone at*

any age". Initiatives and programmes have been set up to develop and enhance skills, support adult literacy and numeracy and provide opportunities for those with special needs.

There are three main areas on lifelong learning highlighted by the Scottish Government:

1- Adult literacy and Numeracy (ALN)

The 2008/09 'Progress in Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland' report, describes the difference that literacies learning has made in a number spheres, one of them being to working lives[125].

2- Community Learning and Development (CLD)

In 1999 the Scottish Executive approved a radical re-focusing of community education following publication of the 1998 report: *Communities: Change through Learning* (The Osler Report), which emphasised that through learning people can build confidence and the capacity to tackle wider social issues, such as health or community safety, but also acquire essential skills, such as literacy, without which social exclusion is more likely.

In 2000 the Scottish Executive established the Community Education Training Review which produced a report in 2002 and after a consultation exercise the Scottish Executive issued a policy response '*Empowered to Practice - the future of community learning and development training in Scotland'.*

The Scottish Government National Dossier (2005) defined community education as "*a way of working which encompasses a variety of formal and informal learning opportunities and is involved in the development of core skills, including adult literacy, numeracy and use of information and communications technology (ICT); engagement with young people to help them experience positive development - whether they are of school age or beyond; educational support to individuals, families, people with disabilities, interest groups and communities; and the promotion of lifelong learning and healthier, more positive lifestyles within the context of community and voluntary activities.*

Those active in the provision of community education include the LAs, the voluntary sector, local adult guidance networks, other education providers and fields such as health and community safety

The Scottish Government is investing in a programme (Upskilling of the Community Learning and Development Workforce in Scotland) which aims at developing the CLD workforce across Scotland. Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) is the managing agent for the 2009-11 Programme, which administers the grants to local CLD partnerships and supports them to deliver on agreed outcomes.

It is a characteristic of many courses offered through adult education that they have no formal entry requirements.

There are a number of initiatives to help with funding of lifelong learning:

1- Professional and Career Development Loans

[125] Scottish Government 'Progress in Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland 2008/09' http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/09/02153858/0

These are an option for funding work-related learning. Vocational courses do not necessarily have to lead to a qualification to be funded and courses at colleges or learning providers can be funded. The learning provider has to be registered with the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) and Career Development Loan programme.

2- Individual Learning Accounts (ILA)

Only courses offered by approved ILA Scotland learning provider (including learning centres, local colleges, universities and private training companies) will be funded.

Many firms (especially large firms), according to the Scottish Government, are providing in-house training and re-training courses, organised by their own training officers and certificated by the firms themselves. Increasingly, validation and certification of such courses is carried out by the SQA.

Businesses are now also closely involved in helping to implement the Government's New Deal programme for the long-term unemployed by offering new jobs with training possibilities.

3. YOUTH TRANSITIONS, YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT AND DISENGAGED YOUNG PEOPLE

This section focuses on the transitions young people make from school to education, training or work. The emphasis here will be on those young people who have difficulties in making this transition and who enter negative destinations, either before leaving school, or after leaving school. It begins by considering youth unemployment and employment and then sets out the broad context for skills and employment policies in Scotland.

Destinations of young people leaving school in Scotland

The key source of information on young people leaving secondary school in Scotland comes from the Scottish School Leavers Destination survey[126]. The latest figures from the Scottish School Leavers Destination survey for 2008/9 show that:

- the proportion of school leavers entering positive destinations in 2008/09 was 85.7 per cent, down from 86.4 per cent in 2007/08;
- girls (87.2 per cent) are more likely than boys (84.3 per cent) to enter positive destinations upon leaving school;
- The proportion of school leavers entering full-time employment was 18.4 per cent in 2008/09, down nearly 7 percentage points compared to the 2007/08 figure of 25.3 per cent.
- The proportion of school leavers entering training has remained at around 5 per cent since 2004/05;
- proportions entering higher or further education have increased by 3.8 and 2.2 percentage points since 2007/08, to reach 34.9 and 27.0 per cent respectively;
- the unemployed and seeking employment and training category has increased by just over half a percentage point to 11.5 per cent, the highest rate since 2003/04 when it was 13.3 per cent The

[126] Scottish Government (2009) Destinations of Leavers from Scottish Schools 2008/09

unemployed and not seeking employment or training category (which included those entering voluntary work prior to 2006/07) has risen by about a tenth of a percentage point to 1.6 per cent in 2008/09;

- girls are more likely to enter further or higher education than boys after leaving school, while boys are more likely to enter the categories of training, employment or unemployed and seeking;
- staying-on in school past the minimum leaving age is a good indicator that the young person will enter a positive destination upon leaving school. Over 93 per cent of school leavers who left at the end of S6 entered a positive destination, compared with around 75 per cent of those who left at the end of S4. Staying on rates increased significantly between the 2008/09 school year and the start of the 2009/10 school year, after a number of years with little change. The provisional S4 to S5 staying on rate increased by around 3 percentage points, while the provisional S4 to S6 staying on rate increased by around 5 percentage points;
- Those school leavers who live in large urban areas are less likely to enter a positive destination than those from more rural areas, although this may be linked to deprivation since many deprived areas are in urban locations;
- Around 75 per cent of school leavers from the ten per cent most deprived areas entered a positive destination compared with just over 93 per cent of those from the ten per cent least deprived areas. Similarly, around 14 per cent of those from the most deprived areas entered higher education, compared with over 61 per cent of those from the least deprived areas;
- Leavers with Additional Support Needs (ASN) are less likely to enter a positive destination than those without. Around 86 per cent of school leavers with no recorded ASN entered a positive destination compared with around 78 per cent of those with a Record of Needs (RoN) or a Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP) and just under 70 per cent of those with an Individualised Educational Programme, but no RoN or CSP. Leavers with social, emotional or behavioural difficulties were the least likely to enter positive destinations at 55 per cent;
- Leavers identified as being looked after at the time of the pupil census in their leaving year were less likely to enter positive destinations (55 per cent) as were those who were identified as registered for free school meals in the census (71 per cent);
- Leavers who have been assessed or declared as having a disability are less likely to enter positive destinations (81 per cent) than the average;
- Attainment of qualifications also has an impact on positive destinations. Of the unemployed and seeking group, around 85 per cent have no qualifications at Higher or better, compared to around 53 per cent of all leavers.

The figures show that the vast majority of young people enter positive destinations. For example in their study of youth transitions in the west of Scotland Furlong et al (2003)[127] found that although initial transitions to work can be difficult to accomplish, the majority of young people quickly learn how to cope in the world of work and develop career management skills. However, it is clear that a significant number are not making this successful transition and it is this group of young people that we wish to focus on here. Indeed, although Scotland has, for instance, one of the highest rates of employment for 15-19 year olds in the OECD, it has been recognised that there are still too many young people who are not in education, employment or training. This group of young people have widely been referred to, in the UK and Scotland, as NEET-Not in Education Employment or Training.

> *"The NEET group is a heterogeneous one. An individual classed as 'NEET' might be a young parent whose parental responsibilities are their key barrier to work; a young person with physical disabilities or behavioural difficulties; a young person who is the main carer for a family member; a young person on a gap year before entering uni-*

[127] Furlong et al (2003) Youth transitions: patterns of vulnerability and processes of social inclusion, Scottish Executive

versity; or one who has dropped out of a college course but has yet to decide on next steps"[128]

The most recent data indicates that the number of 16-19 year olds Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) was approximately 36,000 in 2009 which equates to 13.8% of the 16-19 year old population. Over the past year (2009) the size of the NEET group has increased significantly, by 5,000 (2 percentage points). Over the previous four years, there had been a significant reduction in the size of the NEET group, down 6,000 (2.4 percentage points) between 2005 and 2008. Males generally have a higher proportion of 16 to 19 year olds NEET compared to females. Although it is estimated that 36,000 are in the NEET category this does not take account of the number who are in this category for a very short time or are taking a 'gap year' before starting university.

Whittaker (2008)[129] argues that NEET label is very negative by defining young people by what they are not and further states that by defining young people in terms of their employment status we may overlook other issues which they need support and help with such as homelessness, abuse and criminal behaviour. Indeed, the Scottish government no longer refers to this group as NEET because of the negative connotations of the term, but instead as the 'More Choices, More Chances' group.

A particular group of young people in Scotland are those with generally poor experiences of school, and who leave school early (before the legal leaving age) and transfer to a local adult college - termed 'exceptional entry winter leavers'. Exceptional entry allows students to enter college in the term before their statutory school leaving date – such young people attend college while formally remaining the responsibility of their school. Such arrangements represent an innovative model of supporting transitions to further education among a specific, potentially vulnerable client group, while also offering lessons for the development of school-college collaboration in other areas. Based on an analysis of official data, new survey research with schools and colleges and in-depth case studies, this Canduela et al (2010)[130] identified how schools and colleges work in partnership to support these early school leavers. We find that schools and colleges have developed a range of innovative approaches to engaging with winter leavers, and that the majority complete their programmes or achieve other positive end-of-year outcomes. However, they found that the most disadvantaged young people remain least likely to progress. They also identified lessons for good practice in school-college partnership-working and considering implications for policies to prevent young people from finding themselves not in education, training or employment.

Youth Unemployment

One of the major impacts of the economic downturn in Scotland, and the rest of the UK, has been the increase in youth unemployment. At the UK level, in the period 2008 to 2009 younger workers have seen a fall in their employment rate of 3.9 percentage points and a rise in the ILO unemployment rate of 4.2 percentage points, which is more than double that

[128] Scottish Executive. (2006). *More Choices, more chances: A strategy to reduce the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training in Scotland*. (Edinburgh: Scottish Executive).

[129] Whittaker, L. (2008) "Scotland's Shame": A Dialogical Analysis of the Identity of Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training, *Psychology & Society*, 2008, Vol. 1 (1), 54 - 64

[130] Canduela, J., Elliott, I., Lindsay, C., Macpherson, S., McQuaid, R.W. and Raeside, R. (2010) 'Partnerships to support early school leavers: school-college transitions and winter leavers in Scotland', *Journal of Education and Work*, Vol. 23, No. 4, pp. 339-362.

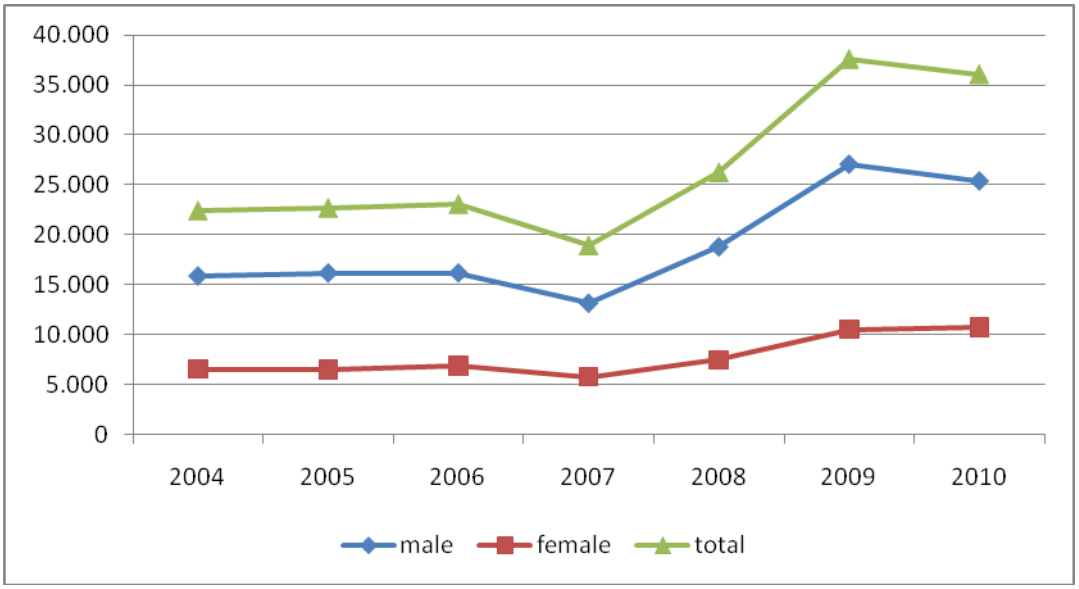
of the population as a whole (DWP, 2009)[131]. Furthermore, recent research from IPPR (2010)[132] indicates that overall youth unemployment currently stands at 18% of 16-24 year olds, the highest level in 15 years. One of the main reasons that young people have been so affected by the current economic downturn is that recruitment freezes by employers mean that that fewer young people are able to enter the job market (Oxford Economics, 2010)[133] resulting in rising unemployment for younger age groups. In addition, young people are less likely to have the skills and work experience employers are looking for. The declining opportunities for younger people may also partly explain the sharp rise in applications and admissions to universities and colleges[134].

Unemployment can have a long lasting impact on a young person's future career prospects and earnings potential (Furlong et al, 2003, Scottish Executive, 2007). Bell and Blanchflower (2009[135], 2010[136]) considered the impact of long term unemployment on adults and found that people who had been unemployed in their youth had lower average life satisfaction 40 and lower wages, so suffering a long term 'scar' compared to other unemployed adults.

Figure One shows the changes in claimant count for the 18-24 age group from 2004 to the latest available data in Nov 2010 and clearly illustrates the increase in the numbers claiming JSA in this age group. The increase is particularly apparent for males which increased from 15,870 in 2004 to 25,375 in 2010, reaching a high of 27,050 in 2007. Similar figures of disproportionately large increases in youth unemployment occur in the other parts of the UK, such as Northern Ireland[137].

[131] DWP (2009) Monitoring the impacts of the recession on various demographic groups, Sheffield: Department of Work and Pensions
[132] http://www.ippr.org.uk/pressreleases/?id=3846.
[133] Oxford Economics (2010) Why has unemployment not risen more in the recession, Economic Outlook, 34, pp 5-12
[134] http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/1362951.stm
[135] Bell, D., Blanchflower, D. (2009) Youth unemployment: déjà vu? Dartmouth College, USA, Working Paper
[136] Bell, D., Blanchflower, D. (2010) Young people and recession. A lost generation? Dartmouth College, USA, Working Paper http://www.dartmouth.edu/~blnchflr/papers/Economic%20Policy%20Article%20v3_2 4.pdf
[137] McQuaid, R., Hollywood, E. and J. Canduela (2010) *Employment Inequalities in an Economic Downturn* – report for the Equality Commission Northern Ireland, 28 September 2010 http://www.equalityni.org/archive/pdf/EconDownturnFinalFullReport260910.pdf

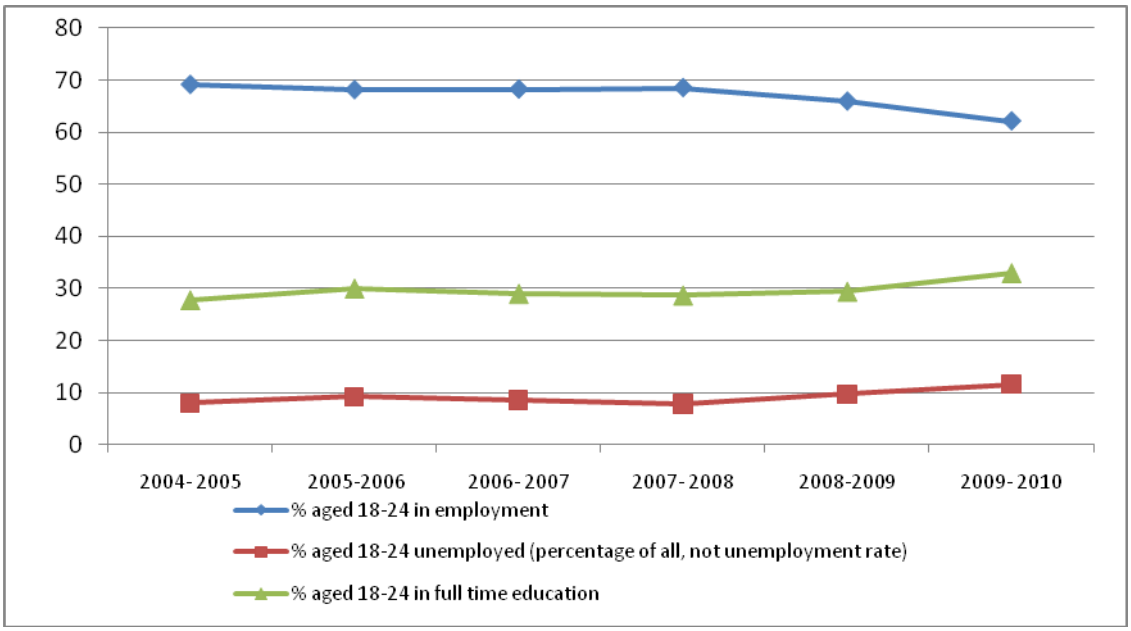
Figure One Claimant Count for 18-24 age group in Scotland 2004-2010



Source: Nomis Claimant Count

There were similar changes in employment for this age group, employment rates declined from 69.1% in 2004 to 62.1% in 2009, correspondingly the percentage unemployed increased from 8.0% to 11.6% and those continuing in full-time education increased from 27.9% to 32.9%.

Figure Two Changes in activity for 18-24 year olds Scotland 2004-2009



Source: Annual Population Survey, NOMIS

Addressing the issue of vulnerable youth and youth unemployment

Background of Skills and Employment policies in Scotland

The Scottish Government provides a framework for considering skills and employment in terms of the Government's Economic Strategy[138], the Recovery Programme[139], the National Performance Framework[140] and Single Outcome Agreements, Workforce Plus,[141] and the 2007 Skills Strategy[142], which was refreshed in 2010[143]. These, together with local Community Planning Partnerships, stress the importance of partnership and the integration of support for individuals and employers. In 2011 there is also an on-going review of post 16 training being carried out for the Scottish Government by William Roe (a board member of UKCES and Skills Development Scotland).

The relationship between the Scottish and UK governments is important on employment issues. There are close working relationships between the UK government (Jobcentre Plus – the UK Public Employment Service), the Scottish government (particularly the government department of Skills Development Scotland) and local bodies, especially operationally[144]. Jobcentre Plus had a number of policies aimed at helping young people make the transition to work and other groups who are disadvantaged. The Scottish government has also had a number of policies to help disadvantaged young people and parents. The UK Commission for Employment and Skills, along with the Scottish government and regional and local agencies also promotes greater integration between the employment and skills systems.

The Skills for Scotland strategy aimed to "encourage the integration of employment and skills services to facilitate the journey individuals make from long-term unemployment to sustained employment and in-work progression" (p.46). The aim is to develop an integrated career guidance and employment vacancy service for unemployed adults which would eventually come to embrace all the services, at both a national and local level, that were able to help individuals into sustained and rewarding employment (including Skills Development Scotland and Jobcentre Plus services). This has partly been done through the Integrated Employment and Skills service (IES) that covered the whole of Scotland by August 2010.

Policy approaches

At a general level for all age groups, the UK policy on unemployment and employability since 1997 has been driven by the view that work remains the best route out of poverty for most people. The focus of the previous Labour administration was on dealing with poverty through work, in particular, by promoting supply side measures through skills development with focus on a 'work first' approach to activation policy. In relation to this a number of reviews were undertaken such as the Leitch Review of Skills and the Freud Review of Welfare to Work Programmes. In addition, large amounts of policy have been directed at increasing

[138] The Scottish Government (November 2007), The Government Economic Strategy (GES)
[139] Scottish Government (January 2009) Scottish Economic Recovery Programme www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Economy/economic-situation
[140] Scotland Performs www.scotland.gov.uk/About/scotPerforms
[141] Scottish Executive (June 2006), Workforce Plus: An Employability Framework for Scotland
[142] The Scottish Government (September 2007), Skills for Scotland: A lifelong skills strategy
[143] The Scottish Government (October 2010), Skills for Scotland: Accelerating the recovery and increasing sustainable economic growth
[144] The refreshed Skills for Scotland (2010) states that Skills Development Scotland is currently engaged in a wide range of partnerships, operational and strategic, at a local, regional and national level, including the new Service Delivery Agreements being developed with local authorities in recognition of their crucial role in skills development, as well as their role as the lead body for CPPs (refreshed Skills for Scotland, p. 53)

employment and dealing with worklessness through measures such as the New Deal, Minimum Wage and Tax Credits.

Even with the economic downturn and the change in UK government there has not been a major shift in policy. There is however, greater emphasis on the benefits systems as being a key cause of worklessness. Indeed, employment remains the key policy goal, rather than any other form of activity such as caring or voluntary work.

The provision of employment services is currently reserved to the UK Government, and delivered in Scotland by Jobcentre Plus, an agency of the Department for Work and Pensions. While employment services are reserved, training for employment is a shared responsibility between the UK and Scottish Governments. Employment is also impacted by a broad range of devolved policy areas, including education, skills, health, regeneration, and childcare.

The Scottish policy context in this area is also informed by the following:

Workforce Plus Workforce Plus is the Scottish Government Employability Framework and sets out a framework to support partnership working at a local level to tackle long term unemployment and in particular hard to reach groups. This strategy acknowledges that that a key factor in moving people out of poverty is through work:

More Choices More Chances A Strategy to Reduce the Proportion of Young People not in Education, Employment or Training in Scotland (further details on this strategy are provided below).

The Scottish Government's Economic Strategy Sets out the short and long term targets in relation to economic growth.

Skills for Scotland: Accelerating the Recovery and Increasing Sustainable Economic Growth The Scottish Government has refreshed the Skills for Scotland Strategy. This refreshed Strategy makes clear the Scottish Government's commitment to training and skills and sets out a flexible, responsive, partnership approach to meeting Scotland's skills needs at a crucial point in our economic recovery.

Skills for Scotland: A Lifelong Skills Strategy . This Strategy is a framework to show how all of the constituent parts of the education and learning systems can contribute to giving Scotland a skills base that is world class.

Concordat between the Scottish Government and local government. This concordat sets out the terms of a new relationship between the Scottish Government and local government, based on mutual respect and partnership.

New Deal for Welfare: Empowering People to Work. Part of the UK Government's on-going programme of welfare reform and focuses on reducing dependency on benefits and supporting more people into employment

Achieving Our Potential: A Framework to tackle poverty and income inequality in Scotland. This Framework sets out further priorities for action and investment to deliver improvement in: reducing income inequalities; introducing longer-term; measures to tackle poverty and the drivers of low income; supporting those experiencing poverty or at risk of falling into poverty; making the tax credits and benefits system work better for Scotland.

The Scottish Government has developed a range of strategies to help prevent young people entering the NEET category. In particular, the Scottish Government NEET strategy, *More*

Choices, More Chances aims to target local areas where levels of young people NEET is a problem. The strategy has been published alongside Workforce Plus the Scottish Executive's Employability Framework for Scotland, although much of the MCMC emphasis is on prevention in the pre-16 stages. The strategy identifies the sub-groups known to be, or become, NEET: care leavers; carers; young offenders; young parents; low attainers; persistent truants; young people with physical/mental disabilities; young people misusing drugs or alcohol.

The priority in this strategy is given to progressing young people who are NEET into education and training, rather than into jobs without training. Indeed, evidence from the stakeholder interviews suggests that further training, rather than minimum wage employment, was seen as a preferable option for young people as it would improve their long term job prospects and would contribute to improving the skills base of the Scottish workforce. Further, it was felt that in the current economic climate of high youth unemployment there were very few opportunities for young people in the labour market anyway. The MCMC strategy intentionally prioritises education and training over employment as desired outcomes for the NEET group and it argues that ensuring the long term employability of young people is more likely to be secured through furthering their education and training, whether through formal or informal learning.

An important part of the *Curriculum for Excellence* is the strategy on 16+ learning choices and the transitions made by this age group. It will be universal from December 2010 and will mean that all young people will be offered a post in post-16 learning before they leave school. A range of partners are implicated in the delivery of the strategy e.g. schools, LAs, Skills Development Scotland and colleges.

It should also be noted, and it is an issue that came up in the stakeholder interviews, that the group that is most difficult to reach is those past 19 who are at most risk of becoming long term unemployed. It was highlighted that 'older younger people' were often harder to address because of the lack of programmes for this group and the gap between children and adult services.

Inter-agency working

It has been widely indicated that inter-agency working across a number of policy areas is the most effective way of addressing disadvantage[145]. Throughout the policy literature and the evidence from the stakeholder interviews it was clear that one of key elements in approaching vulnerable youth was the importance of inter agency working. For example in policy terms although there are separate policies for education, such as the Curriculum for Excellence, such policies are seen as being linked into the wider policy environment with links to policies on employability, health and social care, for example. Even within education itself, under the CfE, school education is not seen in isolation but there are clear links to the early years framework through to college and university learning and life long learning. As one Stakeholder notes:

> *"You can't really underestimate the value of partnership working; it is about working with the community and beyond that and having parity of esteem"*

Examples of partnerships included schools and colleges working together so school students were able to include college courses in their studies which meant a wider range of options

[145] Council of Europe (2010) Breaking the cycle of disadvantage-the role of education in combatting poverty, inequality and social exclusion.

were available to them and they could experience the college environment before leaving school. Promoting partnerships between schools and colleges is central in much of the policy on ways in which to engage young people.

Careers Scotland and Skills Development Scotland play a key role in ensuring an integrated approach to supporting young people in order to maintain a focus on employability. Both Additional Support for Learning and forthcoming Getting It Right for Every Child legislation are strengthening existing partnership approaches, clarifying the co-ordination role of 'key workers'.

Although inter-agency working was seen as important a number of issues were raised in relation to its effectiveness. At the local level there is often a lack of awareness of the range of organisations that are there to help and support young people.

Engaging disengaged young people

It was made clear through from the interviews that there was no particular stage that young people were likely to fail and that young people can fall through the net and disengage at any stage. However, research has suggested that particular attention should be given to 'key transition points' such as transition from pre-school to primary school; primary to secondary school; compulsory to post compulsory education; and education or training to the labour market; and that at each of these stages there is a higher risk of disengagement[146].

> *"They don't see the relevance of education at all. The relevant factor is missing at that stage in their lives. They're quite happy to be disengaged and disaffected at that time. They don't want to take up opportunities. They've actually made a choice. Not interested".*

During the interviews stakeholders were asked about the most effective ways of engaging with those who have become disengaged. A number of factors were mentioned such as early intervention, a number of respondents stated that those most likely to disengage could often be identified at the pre-school stage, highlighting that interventions at age 16 where often far too late. Providing effective and timely guidance was also seen as key. This also fits with the CA where is stated that in order to achieve capabilities individuals must be fully aware of the options and choices available to them.

Currently young people receive formal guidance from S2, it was stated that other sources of information and ways of delivering information should also be included. It was felt that very often young people were not given advice early enough or the right kind of advice. It has been indicated from elsewhere that some young people do not make fully informed choices when choosing college courses[147]. Helping young people make informed choices was seen as important to future career success and stability. However, it may be that some vulnerable young people are not being made fully aware of the choices open to them. This is an issue that may need to be addressed by schools, colleges and other community providers. For example it has been shown that better information on colleges and the practical aspects of what to expect when at college would help more young people apply to college and improve retention rates once in college[148].

[146] [146] Council of Europe (2010) Breaking the cycle of disadvantage-the role of education in combatting poverty, inequality and social exclusion.
[147] SFC (2010) Findings of the MCMC peer research project
[148] SFC (2010) Findings of the MCMC peer research project

Also significant is the finding that that information about college or other destinations, was of particular value to vulnerable young people when it came from someone with whom they had a trusting relationship such as peers, family etc. This highlights that social networks etc. can be very important in shaping whether young people see education as relevant to them.

Evidence from the interviews also suggested that positive relationships between staff and young people are important in addressing disengagement. Indeed research has suggested that teachers and other educational staff who provide learning are key players in the effort to reduce the effects of disadvantage[149].An example was a given of a programme that brought together teachers and youth workers so that they could share the experiences and skills they have in dealing young people with complex needs. In particular it was felt that teachers could learn a lot from youth work approaches.

Supporting Vulnerable Groups

Support for those with additional needs

The 2004 *Additional Support for Learning Act* (amendments were also made in 2009) outlines the provisions that must be made by education authorities for children with additional support needs. LAs must support children and identify and monitor additional support needs by preparing a coordinated support plan, taking in the views of other relevant agencies. LTS provides tools and resources to support children with additional support needs, for example those with Autism spectrum disorders; Deaf and hearing impaired; Dyslexia; English as an additional language; Highly able children; Looked after children; and Visual impairment. They also provide tools and resources to promote equality and help education providers address the barriers faced by refugees and asylum seekers, young carers, travelling communities, young people with disabilities etc.

The Scottish Government also promote equal opportunities so that young people can get the most out of their education[150] and, under the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000, that children attend mainstream schools, except in exceptional circumstances. They have a duty to make arrangements for children who cannot attend school because of ill health

Support for migrant workers and asylum seekers

The Adult ESOL Strategy for Scotland sets out the government strategy for the provision of publicly funded ESOL. It aims to improve collaboration and coordination, raise the quality of teaching and learning and support learning and progression. Most publicly funded ESOL courses are free to learners. Where there is a fee ILA Scotland can provide support depending on eligibility. The website www.esolscotland.com (provided by the Scottish Government) provides resources for practitioners e.g. guidance for classes based on the theme of answering a job advert, a directory of providers etc.

The third sector also provides support and training for migrant workers. The Workers' Educational Association, a voluntary sector provider of adult learning, runs the English at Work programme for migrant workers in the Scottish Highlands enrolled in ESOL courses. A 'Living in the Highlands' Tutor Resources Guide for English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) tutors has been produced. The course runs over 10 weeks and the course covers issues such

[149] [149] Council of Europe (2010) Breaking the cycle of disadvantage-the role of education in combatting poverty, inequality and social exclusion.

[150] Scottish Government – Equal opportunities - http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/welfare/equal-ops

as opening a bank account, paying bills and National Insurance. The programme is funded by the Highlands and Islands Enterprise, the Scottish Government (through Highland Adult Literacy), and the European Social Fund[151]

Looked After Children

The 2007 Scottish Executive report *Looked after children and young people: we can and must do better* seeks to better understand the educational barriers faced by looked after children. It outlines 19 actions (e.g. central government working together with a range of stakeholders, improving training for those working with looked after children, commission guidance and raising awareness in further and higher education) to be delivered under 5 key themes – *"working together; becoming effective lifelong learners; developing into successful and responsible adults; being emotionally, mentally and physically healthy; and, feeling safe and nurtured in a home setting"*.

The website www.lookedafterchildrenscotland.org.uk (provided by the Scottish Government in association with LTS) provides information, advice and practice for professionals working with looked after children – those looked after by LAs at home with their parents and away from home.[152]

Financial support with higher and further education for care leavers is much the same as that available to other students. However, in the assessment of eligibility for the Young Student Bursary and student loans payments made to care leavers by LAs are disregarded. The Vacation Grant for Care Leavers is means tested and is available to cover accommodation costs during vacations. The charity, the Frank Buttle Trust, has a Grant Scheme for Students and Trainees open to young people who are estranged from their family, orphaned, adopted, cared for by friends or family, care for a single parent or those with full refugee status or indefinite leave to remain

Winter Leavers

Another strategy is that of 'Exceptional Entry'. In Scotland there are 2 statutory school leaving dates. Students' whose birthday falls between the beginning of October and the end of February can leave school in the December closest to their 16th birthday. 'Winter leavers' have been found to be at risk of not being in employment and education, have low educational attainment (more likely not to have achieved Standard Grade) and are more likely to have learning or other disabilities. In order to counter the likelihood that this cohort becomes NEET the system of exceptional entry allows students to begin college in the term before their statutory school leaving date.

Involving young people

One of the key issues that this wider research process is aiming to address is to identify the degree to which the education system gives individuals the freedom to choose a life they have reason to value. In the case of this research we were interested in how young people themselves were involved in decision making and policy formulation in the education system. For the stakeholders this was the one question that was most difficult for them to an-

[151] Scottish Government (2008). *Sharing a Wealth of Experience: Scottish Models of Financial Learning for Adults.* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government)

[152] Looked After Children and Young People - What do we mean by 'looked after'? - http://www.lookedafterchildrenscotland.org.uk/about/what/index.asp

swer, perhaps reflecting that it is not a process that they are familiar with. Indeed there were only a few examples of the involvement of young people, although the value of their involvement was acknowledged. For example it was highlighted that the principles of the CfE centre on putting young people at the centre of learning. One stakeholder in particular highlights the difficulties in this process:

> *"It is a culture thing in the change of power balance between the adult and the professional and giving that power back to young people"*

It was also raised in the interviews that young people often have difficulty in articulating their own skills and needs. Colleges in Scotland are currently developing a toolkit to help young people address this issue:

> "*Young people need to have the confidence to feel that if they are expressing their views they are going to be taken on board*"

It was widely felt that there was lack of a 'learner's voice' in the education system and that it would take a long time redress this balance.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This sections pulls together some of the issues raised in the previous two sections and will address those issues that have been previously identified in WORKABLE as important in understanding youth transitions and how the CA can be used to understand these transitions. This will focus on the integration of the education and employment systems in Scotland; balance between vocational and academic learning; the role of multi-level policy making (in particular the role of local organisations); effectiveness of policy aimed at young people; the involvement (or voice) given to young people.

Integration of education and employment systems in Scotland

Within the Scottish policy environment it is evident that efforts are being made to make links between different areas of policy such as health, education, social care and employment (e.g. through Community Planning Partnerships or the Integrated Employment and Skills Jobcentre Plus[153]). In particular employability is a thread that can be seen as running through all aspects of education policy and strategy. The situation in Scotland however is complicated by the fact that unlike education, employment is not a devolved issue. This means that although education policy is developed by the Scottish government, employment policy remains with Westminster. This can make the integration of the two systems more problematic. However, this is partly addressed by Scotland having its own employability strategy[154].

The new Curriculum of Excellence aims to address the gap between education and employment by having a strong employability focus and encouraging vocational learning within

[153] The Scottish Employability Forum brings together key agencies to work together to remove barriers at a national level, and it is supported and informed by the National Delivery Group comprising local employability partnerships and others to provide a more coherent, joined-up framework to deliver employability services

[154] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Business-Industry/Employability

schools. However, it was highlighted in the interviews that school education still has a very strong focus on academic learning and that there is still a long way to go for many schools in making the links between employment and education. Colleges were much stronger in this area, having more of a tradition in vocational learning. Colleges have been involved in the employability agenda for some time and have much stronger links with employers. Although there is evidence of links with employers it was generally felt that more could be done to build links with employers.

It was clear from the interviews and the policy documents that transitions for young people were framed as being from school to further education or training and to the final destination of employment. Little mention was made of other possible destinations such as caring or voluntary work (although volunteering is an option under MCMC). This indicates a narrowing of possible options for young people, with work still being seen as the ultimate goal. This is in contradiction to the CA which argues that there should be a diversity of options available to people, which might not necessarily be paid work.

Balance between vocational and academic learning

Traditionally the balance in the Scottish education system has been towards academic learning. In particular schools have tended to focus on academic qualifications and progression to higher education, with vocational learning seen as the choice for less able students. Opportunities for vocational learning in schools have tended to be limited and are dependent on individual schools. The Curriculum for Excellence may go some way to redress this imbalance. One of the key features of the Curriculum for Excellence is that is emphasises the importance of all types of learning. It may be that the new curriculum may provide more opportunities for vocational learning. As one stakeholder notes:

> *"I don't think they are very…it does appear that schools still view their main progression route as being into higher education"*

The benefits of vocational learning were highlighted throughout the interviews to both academic and vocational learners. For example it was stated that all students should have the opportunity to undertake some kind of vocational learning. This was seen as being applicable to all stages of learning from schools right through to post graduate study. The widening out of the scope of education would give young people a far greater choice in what they can study. This can be seen as having links to the CA where increasing choice is seen as enabling the ability of individuals to achieve their capabilities.

Multi-level policy making

Multi-level policy making was seen as important in the areas of education and employment, particularly when addressing the issues facing excluded young people. Inter-agency working was seen as key in addressing issues facing many young people as they often require the input of a number of different agencies such as social work, employability services, health care and local projects.

The range of stakeholders involved in strategies aimed as disengaged young people ranged from national organisations such as Jobcentre Plus and the Scottish Government to Local Authorities and community based projects. As education is a devolved issue it is delivered at the Scottish level through the Scottish government with a lot of flexibility in how it is imple-

mented at the local level. For example Local Authorities, Colleges, Universities and Schools have a lot of flexibility over what is taught and how it is delivered at the local level.

Local input and involvement was seen as important in effectively delivering services that were appropriate to the needs of local areas. This was particularly the case for Colleges and community organisations. However, the issue of schools not being fully involved in the local community was raised and identified as a factor that needed to be improved. The improvement of such links would improve the range of choices and information available to young people.

Although the input of local organisations was recognised and valued it was clear that more could be done to improve local involvement. For example it was highlighted that although the CfE valued community based learning, a 'culture shift' was still needed to change the perceptions of community based learning as being as valuable as learning undertaken in more traditional settings.

All the stakeholders interviewed fully recognised the benefits of involving local organisations in the addressing the issues facing disengaged young people and the added value they provided. Nonetheless, it should be noted that this stage of the research did not involve the input from local organisation that may have provided a different viewpoint. Local organisations are intended to be the focus of the next stage of the research.

Effectiveness of Policy

More Choices, More Chances was implemented in 2006 in response to the large number of young people in Scotland who were in the Not-in-Employment-Education-or-Training (NEET) category. There was evidence that some impact was being made on this group with a decline in numbers in the NEET category. However, the economic downturn along with the associated increases in youth unemployment, increasing demand for college and university places, and lack of job openings has led to an increase in the MCMC category. Cuts in public spending may also mean that there will be cutbacks in the services that have helped disengaged young people, not only in the area of education but also employment services, health, social work and social care.

Stakeholders were asked if there was any evidence of the 'creaming of young people', whereby those who are easiest to help are given the most support and opportunities. Stakeholder were keen to point out that Equalities Legislation and legislation to support vulnerable young people were now an integral part of all policies in Scotland and therefore vulnerable young people should not be discriminated against. However, it does remain the case that the most vulnerable young people such as cared for children, those with disabilities, those from deprived areas etc. remain those groups of young people who are most likely to be disengaged. Furthermore, stakeholders indicated that cuts in public spending in other areas such as social work and the voluntary sector are likely to have a negative effect on this group of young people.

The Curriculum for Excellence has been implemented to tackle the issues of disengaged youth by emphasising early interventions, putting young people at the centre of learning, giving value to learning and achievement outside of school. However, as it is still at the very early stages of being implementing it is too early to gauge its effectiveness.

Involvement of young people

One of the areas that we were keen to explore in this research, and a factor that contributes to debates in the CA, was how young people themselves were involved in the formation and implementation of education and employment policy and the initiatives and programmes to support disengaged young people. In particular this can be seen as relating to the idea of empowerment in the CA where individuals should be sufficiently empowered to have autonomy and a voice in the delivery and implementation of the programmes in which they are involved, recognising that in order for individuals to realise their capabilities they need to be empowered to make informed choices that are right for them.

There was some evidence that young people were consulted in relation to policies and strategies that affect them. The Curriculum for Excellence contains a number of elements that is likely to increase the involvement and empowerment of young people. Stakeholders pointed out that traditionally policy implementation has been a top down approach and including the input of young people will require a culture change from all involved, including young people themselves. Indeed it noted that getting young people involved was often a very difficult process, particularly those who have become disengaged.

It was noted that in order to engage young people you need to make learning relevant to them. Especially for those who are doing poorly academically, social networks etc. can be very important in shaping whether young people see education as relevant to them. The more academic get their reinforcement etc. based upon their results and are less likely to become disengaged unless they do badly (in terms of marks/ lack of course success). In some cases it is important to work in primary schools and early years to help build aspiration and engage with learners. This suggests a link to the CA, especially in terms of young people identifying if things are relevant (and important) to them.

The findings of this stage of the research have shown that in the case of Scotland steps are being made to integrate the education and employment systems, in particular through inter-agency working. Historically the school education system in Scotland has focused on academic achievement and qualifications while vocational study was largely confined to colleges or the workplace. The Curriculum for Excellence seeks to give vocational and community learning greater relevance in schools and give more emphasis on employability throughout the education process. It is also likely to give more choice to young people. As it is in the very early stages of being implemented it is difficult to assess its effectiveness.

Disengagement of certain groups of young people has long been an issue for Scotland. The economic downturn and cuts in public spending may mean that it may become more of an issue in following years. However, a number of strategies are in place which are designed to address the problems facing this group, although the impact of cuts in public spending remains a major concern.

APPENDIX ONE: KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN SCOTTISH EDUCATION

Stakeholder	Responsibility
First Minister for Scotland	Overall responsibility for the education system with day to day responsibility delegated to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning who is supported by the Minister for Children and Young People and the Minister for Schools and Skills
Scottish Government Directorate for Learning supports schools policy and workforce development.	Works closely with LAs and supports Learning and Teaching Scotland and the Scottish Qualifications Authority.
Directorate for Lifelong Learning works for the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning	Responsible for post school learning e.g. looking at employability training, higher education and adult education
Children, Young People and Social Care Directorate	Work across government to help improve outcomes for children and young people
Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)	The national accrediting and awarding body in Scotland. They authorise all vocational qualifications, approve education and training institutions and develops, issues and reviews qualifications
The Scottish Funding Council (SFC)	Provides funding to higher education institutions and publically funded colleges, also ensures teaching quality is enhanced and assessed; monitors the financial situation of colleges and universities; collects data on the sector; and advises the Scottish Government.
HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE)	Executive Agency of the Scottish Ministers which inspects, reviews and evaluates education services as well as the joint inspections of services for children and the education functions of LAs. Inspections are carried out in a variety of institutions including primary schools, secondary schools, independent schools, colleges and teacher education, using principles such as equality and diversity, best value and improvement and capacity building
The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)	Monitors quality of higher education
Scottish Public Services Ombudsman	Deals with complaints made against higher and further education institutions
Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS)	A non-departmental public body, funded by the Scottish Government, and the main Scottish curriculum body. LTS works in 5 areas: curriculum implementation and planning and assessment; support for learners; community learning and development; *"embedding International Education, Education for Citizenship, and Sustainable Development Education within Curriculum for Excellence"*; and providing

	technologies to support learning. As from 01 July 2011 LTS will be merged with HMIE to form the Scottish Education Quality and Improvement Agency.
Skills Development Scotland (SDS)	A non departmental public body. They provide services for employers, e.g. developing skills in the workforce and redundancy support; learning providers; and individuals e.g. advice and training programmes such as *Modern Apprenticeships, Skillseekers*, *Get Ready for Work* and *Training For Work*. Careers Scotland is part of SDS and delivers careers advice and employability services. They work in partnership with a range of local organisations e.g. learning providers, voluntary organisations, Scottish Enterprise and the Job Centre to promote lifelong learning and develop employability and enterprise
Local authorities (each of the 32 LAs has an education authority)	Responsible for publicly funded pre-school and school education. They are responsible for staffing, financing, providing buildings, making provision for those excluded from school, the implementation of Scottish Government policy, accounting for the curriculum following the guidance from the Scottish Government etc. LAs also carry out quality assessments and schools and further education colleges themselves are responsible for carrying out institutional level monitoring.
Head teachers	Responsible manage the day to day running of schools
School Boards	They are made up of parents and school staff to direct the running of schools. They have powers to e.g. make appointment, manage the out-of-hours use of school premises and set occasional holidays.
Parent Councils	Representative statutory bodies for parents which can influence decision making within schools e.g. recruitment, and can help support the work of schools

Appendix 2: The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (Source: SCQF)

SCQF LEVELS	SQA QUALIFICATIONS			QUALIFICATIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS	SCOTTISH VOCATIONAL QUALICATIONS
12			Professional Development Award	Doctoral Degree	
11			Professional Development Award	Integrated Masters Degree Masters Degree Post Graduate Diploma Post Graduate Certificate	SVQ5
10			Professional Development Award	Honours Degree Graduate Diploma Graduate Certificate	
9			Professional Development Award	Bachelors / Ordinary Degree Graduate Diploma Graduate Certificate	SVQ4
8		Higher National Diploma	Professional Development Award	Diploma Of Higher Education	SVQ4
7	Advanced Higher	Higher National Certificate	Professional Development Award	Certificate Of Higher Education	SVQ3
6	Higher	National Certificate	National Progression Award Professional Development Award		SVQ3
5	Intermediate 2 Credit Standard Grade	National Certificate	National Progression Award		SVQ2
4	Intermediate 1 General Stan-	National Certificate	National Progression		SVQ1

	dard Grade		Award		
3	Access 3 Foundation Standard Grade	National Certificate	National Progression Award		
2	Access 2	National Certificate	National Progression Award		
1	Access 1				

THE DANISH SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, AARHUS UNIVERSITY DENMARK

Trends in the Danish Institutional Development: Changing Paths in the Educational Structure

- Educational mapping with an emphasis on educational practices for adolescents in the transition between compulsory education and labor market

Niels Rosendal Jensen, Dirk Michel, Christian Christrup Kjeldsen, DPU

CONTENT

INTRODUCTION

This paper merely presents a description based on information concerning the Danish educational system. Three main purposes are presented. First of all it will give a presentation of the structure of the Danish educational system as well as a brief introduction to the aims which the educational institutions - from a political and governmental perspective - are obliged to seek following Danish legislation in the field of study. Secondly we will present a macro-level institutional mapping summed up in a graphical illustration. Third the paper tries to bridge these insights to the in- dept case study, methodological considerations and empirical connections to the Capability Approach.

PART I: EDUCATION IN DENMARK A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL REGIME

At this stage it is not our endeavor to make a full in depth analysis of the educational regime in Denmark. The Danish educational regime shares in many ways similarities with the other Nordic countries. On the contrary we will start drawing the picture from different sights and save room for issues that particularly during the next project period may show up to be more likely comparable. First we present a short historical view.

A short historical view

To better understand the present Danish system of education the constitutional phase of this educational regime is of some importance. We may for that reason highlight various steps in building the educational system.

Social reproduction

As we shall refer and broaden later in this paper - Denmark have compulsory schooling for all children. Compulsory education for all children in Denmark was introduced in the General Education Act of 1739. The introduction is often interpreted as a sign of the philosophy of enlightenment and of the pietistic movement. The basic idea was that children irrespective of their parents' class and social position should be met on an equal basis in order to get a minimum of basic skills. In those years every class had its own school. Although enlightenment pointed to encouragement of getting knowledge, the knowledge introduced to the particular class was determined by status and function in society.

The aim of education was not to create a kind of elevation into another class; therefore, the individual child was taught exactly those skills appropriate to the lot of his class. The aim of schooling was to teach pupils to accept and be satisfied with the circumstances of life.

Except for the minimum base society accepted education as serving to function as a social reproduction of the inequalities of the contemporary society.

Equality of opportunity

Equality of opportunity arrived in the aftermath of the National Constitution 1849. The Education Act was an outcome of a new understanding of mankind: enlightenment, combined with idealism and for the decades to come in alliance with the labour movement. The idea of the Constitution was that the masses should be educated and enlightened within the ordinary school system (the state school), since the constitutional fathers were well aware of the influence of peasants' own free schools. Over time this meant that the idea of school as a means of social reproduction was substituted by ideas on equality, primarily underlining the need of recruitment (climbing the ladder to a better position by using even the highest levels of education (e.g. university)). 1903 a first kind of unified school system was installed (compulsory school + gymnasium); this was later seen as comprehensive unified schooling. Not only in instrumental terms, but in value terms as well, meaning that comprehensive schooling could also function as a social fabric and develop a greater sense of solidarity between societal classes and citizens. At the beginning of the last century the principle of equality and comprehensive schooling gained a strong position; the position was upheld during most of the 20th Century.

Education as common good: comprehensive education and equality

By the early 1930'es the Social Democratic Party had been in government; during the world crisis they adopted the Keynesian idea of a welfare state. Keynes argued that equal distribution of income and opportunity would stimulate economic growth.

Later another argument showed up: that of human capital. Human capital is accumulated via education and seen as an investment in coming economic growth. In Denmark the argument was further used to develop comprehensive school reforms.

The main effort of creating educational equality through equality of opportunity was combined with the idea of equality of results, understood as consequent equality. It was no longer enough for the state to provide people with similar opportunities, but had also be concerned with whether people took advantage of the access and whether it was successful. The contested point in Denmark had to do with an old saying: different people need different kinds of opportunities. Not aiming at all children reaching the same level, but rather aiming at reducing the differences children and adolescents possessed when entering school. Different backgrounds demand different treatment. Hereby, educational policy introduced different provisions with the aim of ensuring actual participation and a substantial degree of success. Differences in outcome should no further be attributable to differences like wealth, income, power or possession. In this policy the state played the major role: equality of results or outcomes did necessitate inequality of provisions and resources.

The policy stressed a joint connection between educational equality and efficiency as a key for societal development, not forgetting schooling as an instrument for unity, social cohesion, solidarity and mutual respect. These were the reasons that comprehensive schooling was extended from 7 to 9 years, and that upper secondary schools were unified as well. The changes in the Compulsory Education Act 1975/76 resulted in the principle of a beginning integration of handicapped children as well. From 1980 this was implemented.

The 'hard' welfare state developed a sort of hard control to be sure of the successful implementation. In those years the state appeared to be the "good fairy", ensuring social justice,

fairness and democracy. Thereby, the state represented general interests or even superior societal interests. This implied that the state took over a huge number of planning the future of the Danish people. The state bureaucracy had the obligation to create innovations of the educational system alongside with the demand to be the supreme controller of that policy. At the end of the 1970'es it was heavily discussed whether children were to be understood as 'state property' or as 'parental property'. Looking back somewhat 30-40 years later the state won the competition.

During the historical development we have underlined the perspective of equality which in a Capability Perspective would call for the answer of one of the initial questions, namely: "Equality of what?" Also in the case of Denmark the question of equality has to be addressed in more dimensions:

1. Economic dimension – the state provided parents and adolescents with economic benefits;
2. Social dimension – equality as mutual respect had to be advanced through the public school; the public school was seen as a guarantee that all pupils would be supported in a learning environment;
3. Cultural dimension – to iron out the differences a national curriculum was established.

Summing up, equality was conceptualized as a combination of standardization regarding subject matters and frameworks plus individualization with regard to instructing and learning.

During the years discussions were going on concerning the right of the state and the right of the parents, heavily supported by the bourgeois parties. This seems to be the first criticism. The second developed from the left wing which disliked the efficiency ideals as well as the central control. The third 'obstacle' showed up to be some unexpected research results, namely that the implementation of the ideals of equality was not exactly a rose garden, but rather a via dolorosa. It seemed still that school achievements could be reduced to family background.

Education as a private good: individual consumerism

If we should try to fix a date of departure for consumerism, the year 1983 might fit. A new political order took over late 1982 and presented a new agenda the following year. The new agenda contained a belief in a strong state with neo-liberal philosophy (market based, choice-driven consumerism). This philosophy seemed to promote a renewed confidence in market forces and individual responsibility. In brief this meant that the equality motive acquired lower priority compared to the advantage of individual rights and freedom of choice. Individual rights are strengthened as a consequence of the weakening of collective rights. There are many labels available, but we name it conservative modernization (Apple 2001).

Based on this short analysis we will follow up by use of the description and self-understanding of the Ministry of Education.

For our purpose we have found a few documents showing the Danish educational policy. But first a short passage of summing up.

For quite a century the motive of equality has been living in Denmark and other traditional welfare states. Equality has been understood as recruitment and as a social perspective.

Recruitment meant that there should be equal opportunities and equal results – stressing that education should be determined by abilities, resources, interests, and ambitions of the individual – irrespective of social background, place of residence, gender or ethnicity. Simultaneously, the idea of social cohesion, national unity etc. has been part of the curriculum.

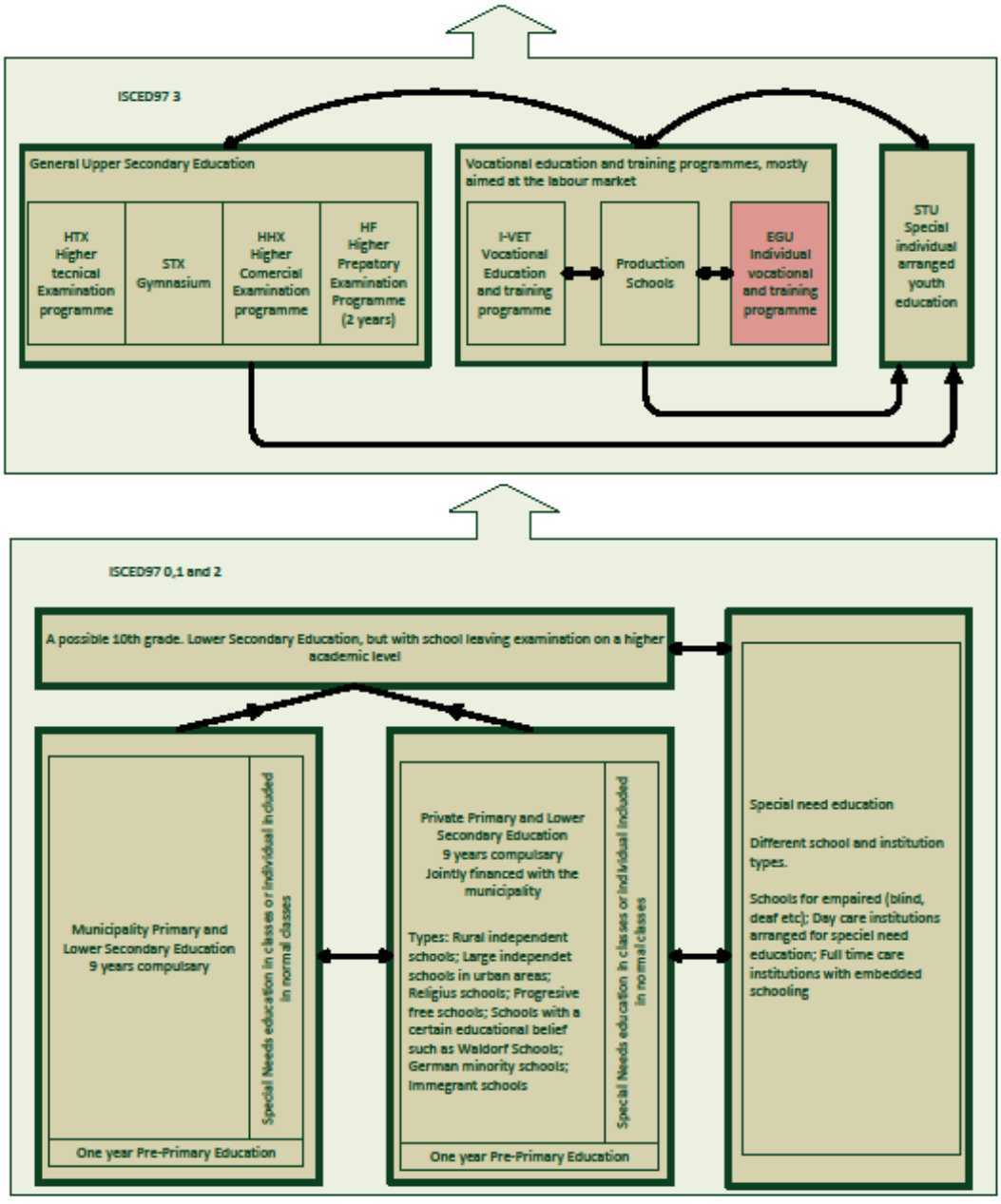
A lot of measures have been tried: interventions like financial measures, legal, informative and evaluative.

Actual state-of-art

On one hand one can identify equality as a sign of solidarity (democracy/equality-dimension). At the same time demands of efficiency and instrumental perspectives are raised on the other (price/quality-relation). Social justice is weighed up against individualism (freedom and right to self-determination). Equality is weighed up against an individualism which conserves or even sharpens the basic differences between citizens. The old way of making education underlined equality as social justice, endorsed through equality of results. Neo-liberalism stresses user/consumer and freedom of choice.
This sketch of the development of the educational regime has been done as brief as possible in order to use this as a point of departure for understanding the Danish way of developing education.

In short: The Danish understanding of education

Below we first present the all-embracing principles of the educational system by means of an official document. The first so called fact sheet presents the general principles of lifelong education – from kindergarten to elderly care (Appendix A).
The Danish educational system has undergone many of the trends comparable to those of Europe. The impact of the student movements in the late 1960´es - which formed the student revolts - has in Denmark challenged the - at the time present - system of education, too. The mass-universities could be seen as an example. In the public discourse and debate university education has a major position. Let us instead leave the scene to the parts of the system that have the function to ensure education and vocational training as well as prepare for further education in for instance university programs, but of course not only for this sector.
These first stages can be compiled in the following illustration:


ISCED97 3
General Upper Secondary Education
HTX Higher tecnical Examination programme
STX Gymnasium
HHX Higher Comercial Examination programme
HF Higher Prepatory Examination Programme (2 years)
Vocational education and training programmes, mostly aimed at the labour market
I-VET Vocational Education and training programme
Production Schools
EGU Individual vocational and training programme
STU Special individual arranged youth education
ISCED97 0,1 and 2
A possible 10th grade. Lower Secondary Education, but with school leaving examination on a higher academic level
Municipality Primary and Lower Secondary Education 9 years compulsary
Special Needs education in classes or individual included in normal classes
One year Pre-Primary Education
Private Primary and Lower Secondary Education 9 years compulsary Jointly financed with the municipality
Types: Rural independent schools; Large independet schools in urban areas; Religius schools; Progresive free schools; Schools with a certain educational belief such as Waldorf Schools; German minority schools; Immegrant schools
Special Needs education in classes or individual included in normal classes
One year Pre-Primary Education
Special need education
Different school and institution types.
Schools for empaired (blind, deaf etc); Day care institutions arranged for speciel need education; Full time care institutions with embedded schooling

When describing the paths that children, adolescents and later on adults have to undergo – a lifelong journey for all, according to the official policy – it seems natural to begin at the initial step when kids are entering school. For the sake of comparison the different ISCED levels have been provided as well.

There are some main characteristics which is often referred to as a special Nordic practice within the primary and lower secondary educational system. In Denmark these two stages are not divided. Instead the system consists of a comprehensive school that covers both primary and lower secondary education called *"The Folkeskole"*. Said differently, the first two educational stages covers the age range from six to sixteen/seventeen years going from grade "zero" until grade nine, with the possibility of a grade ten if chosen and thereby have a more advanced leaving examination of the *Folkeskole* (FS10).

The administration as well as the funding is placed in the local municipality. This municipal primary and lower secondary school has some main purposes which can be identified in the legislation for the compulsory education.

Seen from a legislative point of view following demands to the institution can be found. First of all the compulsory school is supposed in cooperation with the parents to give pupils knowledge and skills. It should prepare them for further education as well as give them the desire to learn more. It should make students familiar with Danish culture and history, by giving them an understanding of other countries and cultures, too. Interaction with nature should be understood. The pupil should also receive an individual development that covers a diversity of dimensions (Ministry of Education, 2010, p. §1). The development is monitored in different ways. For instance there is mandatory testing in a range of subject matters. As part of the latest legislation each pupil should develop an individual learning plan in all subjects he/she is taught in. This is understable as a change carried forward by a political demand for accountability.

If we proceed a little further this initial point in the educational path for the majority of children in Denmark also have the responsibility to teach and develop working methods and create opportunities for experience, in-depth studies and initiative, so that students develop awareness and imagination and gain confidence in own ability as well as the ability to decide and act (Ministry of Education, 2010, p. §1 litra 2).

The municipal primary and lower secondary school has the responsibility to prepare pupils for participation - joint responsibility - rights and duties, in a society with freedom and democracy: "*School work must therefore be characterized by intellectual freedom, equality and democracy."* (Ministry of Education, 2010, p. §1 litra 3). If we compare these responsibilities (which exists in the legislation at least), we find many of similar substantial goals like the ones that Martha Nussbaum argues for with her list of basic human capabilities. For instance her idea on "*Senses, Imagination, and Thought"* fits well with the aim to *"develop awareness and imagination and gain confidence in own ability and the ability to decide and act"*. Likewise the demand to give the pupils an understanding of their interaction with nature can be seen as a mean for Nussbaums capability "*Other Species".*

Alongside the public school *private* schools are to be found as well, which are jointly funded by the municipality.

The illustrative mappings show the further directions through the Danish Educational System with an emphasis for pupils' early transition from education into labour market.

We will now proceed with some statistics of the different population sizes.

Statistical descriptive overview

Pre-Primary Education

As can be seen from the mapping the pre-primary education, which is compulsory, can be followed at different schools (public, private, special need schools etc.). For the school year 2008/2009 the following distribution between these institutions can be found.

	Municipal (pre- and)primary and lower secondary schools	Private	Special need schools	Other	Total
Number	56164	8596	407	45	65213
Percentage	86.12 %	13.18 %	0.62 %		

(UNI-C Undervisningsministeriet Databanken, 2008)

The level of private school usage at the initial level follows the trend of the entire primary and lower secondary school. An increasing trend has been discovered (Uni-C Statistic og Analyse, 2009). Certainly there are some substantial differences between the school types, but just to mention one which has to do with didactical premises: In public schools the average number of student of class is 20.1 pupils, whereas it is only 17.0 pupils per class in average in the private schools.

Primary Education

For the school year 2008/2009 statistics from the Danish Ministry of Education show that children start at school at the expected age of 7 years in grade 1. Only 2 percent starts at an earlier age. (UNI-C Statistik og Analyse, 2009)

Pupils ISCED97 3

In a comparative perspective it seems important within the ISCED standard to distinguish between the different level 3 categories. As can be seen from the mapping, there is in Denmark a general upper secondary level of education (STX,HTX,HF, HHX) as well as a vocational education and training at the upper secondary level. Following OECD´s manual this can be subcategorized into "ISCED97 3A" and "ISCED 3A – Type 3 (vocational or technical)"
At the same time we have used the same categorisation as the Danish Ministry of Education with respect to the special need educations, which build upon leaving after at least nine years of compulsory education. Therefore the EGU, which has our utmost attention and STU is placed at this level. A further argument for this is that: *"This level includes special needs*

education programmes and all adult education which are similar in content to the education given at this level." (OECD, 1999, p. 39)

ISCED97 A type 1

Concerning the general part of this educational level and its institutions we find the following distribution of pupils.

Table 1 Numbers

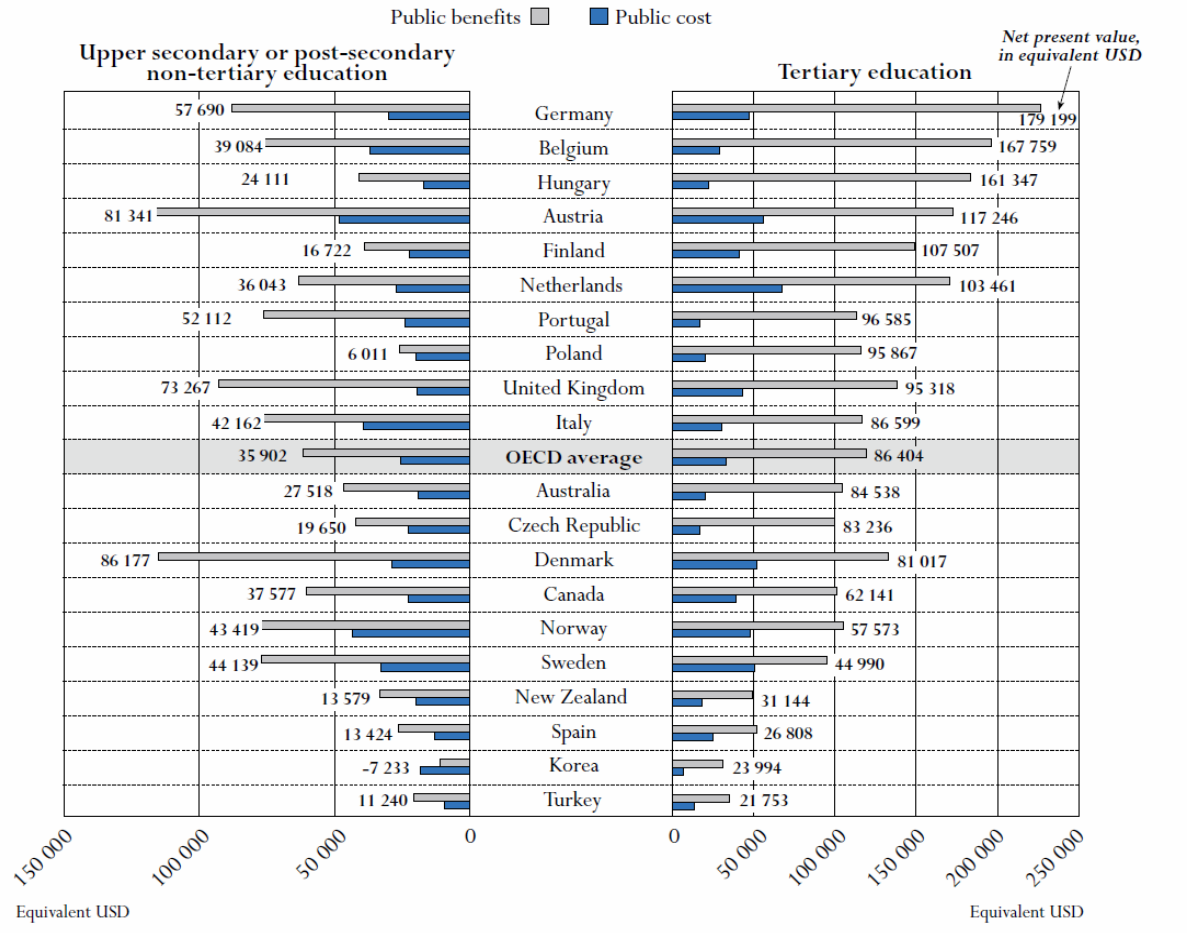
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	*2010*
Stx	16938	18045	18762	19377	21111	*21400*
Hf	3815	4279	3847	3942	4000	*4300*
Hhx	6322	6589	7141	6870	6917	*6900*
Htx	2135	2248	2240	2425	2659	*2900*
Total	**29210**	**31161**	**31990**	**32614**	**34687**	***35500***

Table 2 In percent

Stx	57,99	57,91	58,65	59,41	60,86	60,28
Hf	13,06	13,73	12,03	12,09	11,53	12,11
Hhx	21,64	21,15	22,32	21,06	19,94	19,44
Htx	7,31	7,21	7	7,44	7,67	8,17
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

It becomes quite interesting if the gender is taken into account as well. Six out of teen are females in those educational programmes. The typical STX (Gymnasium) pupil is a girl whose parents have higher education. More than 20 percent of the STX pupils have parents with a long higher education.

If we for just for a moment use the lenses of the human capital perspective (in opposition to a human capability view), it is worth mentioning that these educations in Denmark following OECD report : "Education at a Glance" (2010) show that the public benefits in relation to the public expenditure are among the highest in comparison to other OECD countries.



In other words Denmark has a high rate of return when investing in public goods – understood as:

> THE BENEFITS FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR ARE ADDITIONAL TAX AND SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION RECEIPTS ASSOCIATED WITH HIGHER EARNINGS AND SAVINGS ON TRANSFERS, I.E. HOUSING BENEFITS AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE THAT THE PUBLIC SECTOR DOES NOT HAVE TO PAY BECAUSE OF HIGHER LEVELS OF EARNINGS. (OECD, 2010, P. 146)

Let's turn our attention to the vocational and training programmes focusing on the basic vocational training which has been estimated to be a special focus in the Danish stakeholder interviews and the Danish case study.

Trends in the institutional development for the Basic vocational education and training programme (EGU) – the danish context for the case study

In our institutional mapping and overview of the Danish educational system we have found that this special arrangement for adolescents ought to have our attention in the frame of the WorkAble project. One of the many reasons for this is that this basic vocational education and training programme (EGU) is an *individualised* programme aimed at both employment and continued education. Further it can be seen as a possibility for those adolescents who do not fit into the more ordinary educations having a labour market perspective.

Following the Danish Ministry of Education the main aim for the pupils is:

> TO ACHIEVE PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS THAT BOTH ADMIT THEM TO ONE OF THE OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES LEADING TO A PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION, AND PROVIDE A BASIS FOR EMPLOYMENT. THE PROGRAMME AND THE COMPETENCE AIMED AT, WITHIN A PROFESSIONAL SECTOR, ARE DESCRIBED IN THE EGU PUPIL'S PERSONAL EDUCATION PLAN (MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, 2010)

From a Capability Perspective it is obvious that those pupils are offered new capabilities to his or her capability set. These capabilities are chosen individually for the single person. The content of the individual plan is meant to be negotiated between a person in the guidance system (counsellor), the parents and the pupil. Following Martha Nussbaum capabilities can be divided into internal capabilities and external circumstances (Conceptual paper WorkAble). From this view point it will be interesting to reveal if the adolescents in this educational practice (making the plan with a counsellor) really have the external circumstances (capability) that fit with the capability of voice as Jean-Michel Bonvin describes it (Conceptual paper WorkAble).

When putting attention to the vocational and training programmes focusing on the basic vocational training the elements that are individual build together as building blocks like Lego have a content that in many ways are much broader than the ordinary school subjects. If we look on the content of the education in practice we find that pupils for instance are

offered small focused seminars in lessons covering topics such as: *"Food for one," "Dinner for two," "Take care of yourself - disease," "When do you stay at home from work if you are sick" "Take care of yourself - Dating,"*. As well as such an activity as: "*Give bread at work - but what kind of bread?"*. In the last example the syllabus describes the purpose as *"To be able to choose the 'culturally appropriate' when you have to give bread to the coffee at work. That you do not 'fall through'*. ". The process is described concretely in an educational manual. For example: *"First there will be a collection of students 'preconceptions in the field -' What would I choose to give at work if I just had a driving license? The teacher will inform about, for example: What time of day you give rolls. Do you have spreads? When at the day do you start giving pastry. What you choose for the afternoon break. When you give something to drink instead - and what"* (Stakeholder interview and documents).

But who are these young people enrolled in the programme? The legislation *"describes the target group as persons under the age of 30 who live in the municipality and do not receive education (including in a production school programme neither), do not have a job and do not have the preconditions for completing another qualifying youth education."* (Ministry of Education, 2010) . Further more:

> THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN QUESTION ARE TYPICALLY, PRACTICALLY-ORIENTED, OFTEN COME WITH A WEAK EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND, AND ARE NOT VERY ACADEMICALLY INCLINED." (MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, 2010)

The statistics of pupils within this kind of arrangements are at the moment placed at different organisations, but at the present there is an ongoing work for a more coherent data collection. This work, done by UNI-C, will track pupils from their EGU and a number of years afterwards. The organisation UNI-C, which is the organisation that provides data and statistics for the Ministry of Education has only published data for enrolled pupils in the EGU programme for 2008. Therefore we are glad that one of the organisations which also have data for the cohort of students within EGU – Uvdata - have given us access for some of their meso-level data.

As an overall picture it is obvious for 2009 that the total number EGU pupils, according to figures from UVdata A / S is 2438.

The figure for the first four months of 2010 we interpret as an expression of a continuous raise. The inclining trend has also been shown for the years 2005-2008 (UNI-C 2008). At the same time it must be noted that 40 municipalities in the first four month of 2010 have reached a higher or equal number of EGU students as for all of 2009. Comparing this with the UNI-C's statistics and analysis for the years 2006-2008, we may also record a decline in age among EGU students.

The five municipalities in Denmark with the highest number of EGU students in 2010 are:

1. Aarhus (155)
2. Odense (107)
3. Copenhagen (101)
4. Aalborg (79)
5. Viborg(60)

We will in future dig a little deeper because of the differences between the municipalities. In many ways they are different in Denmark due to demography, job possibilities, history and the local governance. Therefore it would be wrong simply to look at the total number of pupils who are currently enrolled within the EGU programme in each municipality. The figure may reflect other factors - such as municipal size, success in relation to reducing the target group through the mainstream educational system, the actual number of adolescents in the age group etc. It may also be an expression of the chosen service level within each municipality.

From our stakeholder interviews it has become obvious that there are many reasons for interruption of the education. The stakeholders report an amount round about 2/3 of the pupils that interrupt their individual planed education. One of the stakeholders has been arguing for a more diversified view on interruption within this context, because many of the pupils interrupt to go in the ordinary vocational and training system (VET). Therefore it has been common to work with an understanding of ”positive” interruption as a success criterion, because*:*

> A SPECIAL FEATURE OF EGU IS THAT IF, DURING THE COURSE OF THE EGU PROGRAMME, IT IS ASSESSED THAT THE PUPIL HAS ACHIEVED THE PREREQUISITES FOR, AND THE WILL, TO GO ON TO AN EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMME IN A QUALIFIED MANNER, OR TO ACHIEVE PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT, IT MAY BE APPROPRIATE TO DISCONTINUE THE EGU PLAN. IF THEY CONTINUE TO POST-COMPULSORY EDUCATION, THE PUPILS MUST HAVE CREDITS FOR THE SCHOOL-BASED PARTS THEY HAVE COMPLETED.

The case-study design and sample selection

The developed case study design has been clued-up with the following methodological considerations of the method. The overall aim has been similar to the ideas behind the case study research, namely to have: *”a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence”* (Robson, 2000 p. 52). Therefore biographical interviews and partic-

ipant observation are parts of the design as well as quantitative surveys. The benefits of a case study design lies in many ways in bringing different data (e.g. paradigm different, such as qualitative and quantitative, too) together for triangulation (Ramian, 2006 p. 26). Therefore following Robert K. Yin *"a good case study will therefore want to use as many sources as possible"* (Yin, R. 2003 s. 85). Yin also stresses that*"For case studies, theory development as part of the design phase is essential"* (Yin 2003a:28). We have – based on this - made a drawing of our initial ideas for this method/theory development in the paper.
The method has, according to Yin, its legitimacy as a research method with an opportunity for generalization (Yin 2003:10-11). This methodological position is challenged by those who believe that it does not adequately substantiate knowledge in addition to the particular knowledge which is tied to the particular case study. The discussion has been debated for many decades (Yin 1981:58-61), which historically can be substantiated by the fact that Francis N. Maxfield already in 1930 raises the issue and states that *"there has been some reasonable hesitation in accepting this technique as valuable for research"* "(Maxfield 1930 p. 118).
Another issue at stake is the possibility for comparison of the different case studies. Due to the circumstance that the Danish case study in many ways has similarities to the German study, we will replicate in Danish a bundle of the context relevant questions that will be used in the German survey. Discussions on the premises of educational comparative research will follow, but overall we bond with the statement that:

> DIE ORIENTIERUNG AN EINEM ALLGEMEINEN MODELL VERGLEICHENDER FORSCHUNG KANN ALS EINE RÜCKKEHR ZUR GRÜNDUNGSPHASE DER VERGLEICHENDEN FORSCHUNG […] VERSTANDEN WERDEN.

The outline for the case study

We will first select 30 out of 98 possible municipalities in Denmark. This sample strategy can be characterized as a *"Judgement (Purposive) sampling"* (Mueller, Schuessler, & Costner, 1977, s. 370). In no sense this sample will be at random, instead we will use the data from UVdata and choose both typical and extreme cases in relation to the number of EGU pupils, the target group involved, etc. The reason is the total number of pupils and the diversity in local government in regard to EGU. Therefore: "*The expert may legitimately pit his or her personal judgement against the operation of the laws of probability."*(Mueller, Schuessler, & Costner, 1977, s. 370), when the population is either difficult to frame or has a little size. In each of these municipalities we will do a quantitative inquiry where 10% of the target group will be collected via survey. The result from this online survey will be used to follow up by doing qualitative interviews and field observations at schools, workshops, etc. – maximum 30; following their life biography and particularly looking into their personal point of view on the "offer", their perspectives, etc.

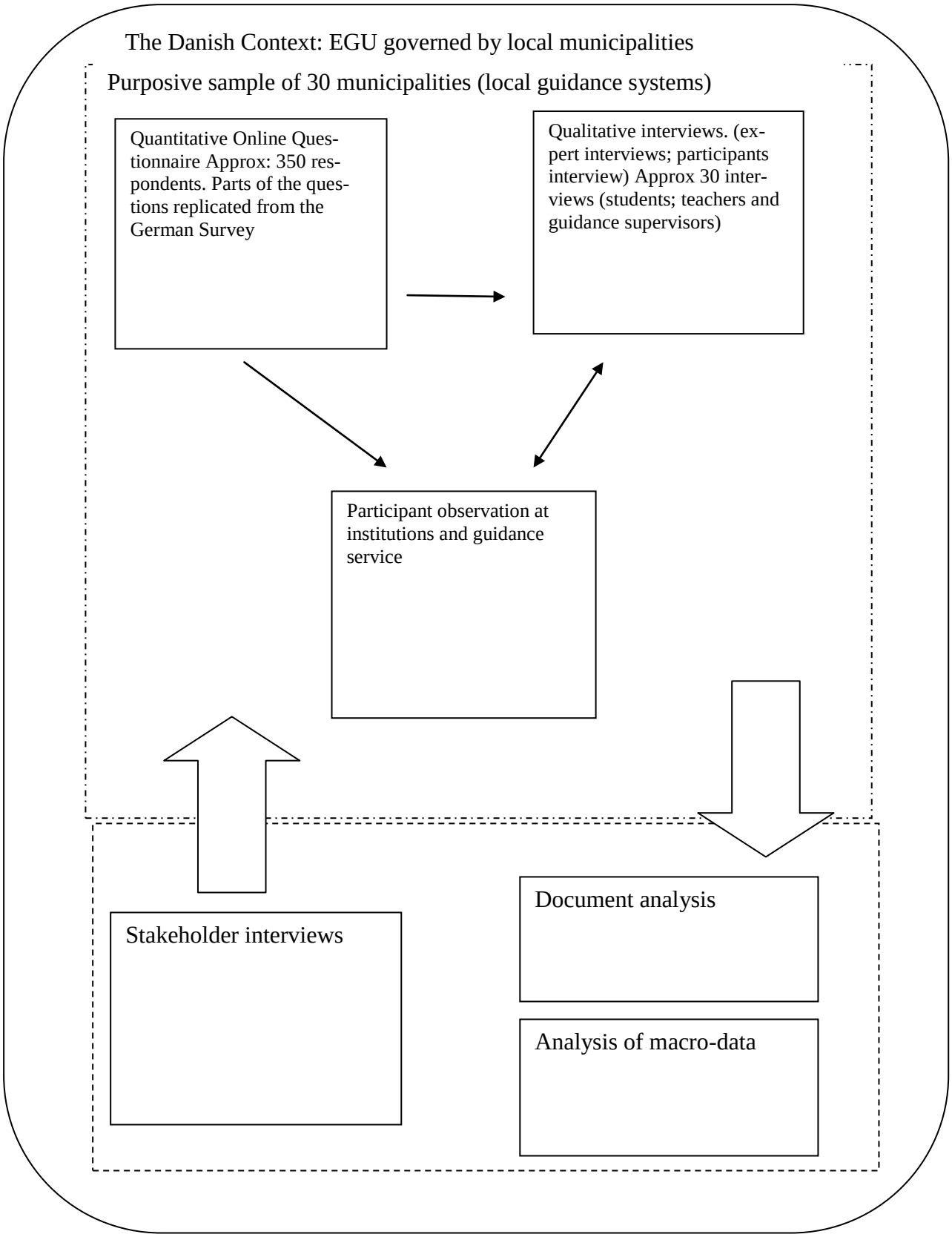
At the same time we will pick a number of training/education facilities, aiming at EGU-pupil, conducting participant observation, looking into the practice of the schools, talking with teachers/trainers/workshop leaders and pupils and making observations on practice and outcomes.

Besides pupils and schools we have selected a number of stakeholders. They are representatives of municipalities who are responsible for offering the option for the young person as well as enterprises (smaller and bigger companies). From our first research it has been clear that the Danish Trade Union Council as well as the Danish Industry (employers' main organization) and the Ministry of Education's special branch on EGU are important stakeholders and will therefore be working partners as well.

Thereby we collect data from the micro level (pupils, teachers/trainers etc.), the meso level (schools, institutions, management, plans, successes and problems; enterprises) and macro level (Ministry, national organizations, 3 municipalities).

Methods: survey, qualitative interviews (incl. biographical data), participative observation on the spot, documents (policy, legislation, evaluations of outcomes).

Collected in an illustration:



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Appendix A: Official Ministry Document on Lifelong Learning

UNDERVISNINGS MINISTERIET

Lifelong learning

In Denmark, there is a tradition of taking part in education through all phases of life.

Introduction

Denmark is one of the countries where most people participate in education: adult education and continuing training, on-the-job competence development and liberal adult education activities in their leisure time. Both public and private investments in the development of new qualifications and competences are among the highest in Europe.

A considerable proportion of overall learning and competence development takes place in connection with the job, and it has long been an established practice for provision to be made for the employees' competence development and educational planning in the enterprises in the collective agreements between the social partners.

A highly qualified and well-educated workforce plays a decisive role in the global knowledge economy and is the key to Denmark's development as a leading knowledge society.

In light of the challenges facing Denmark, the Government has launched extensive educational reforms that will contribute to securing continued growth and welfare in Denmark in the years to come. The reforms are to ensure higher quality and better coherence in educational efforts– from pre-school class to higher education and in adult education and continuing training.

In spring 2007 the Government finalised a report on Denmark's strategy for lifelong learning as part of European cooperation on education. This constitutes the Government's contribution to the realisation of the common goals in the Lisbon strategy. The report is available at: www.uvm.dk. The overall aim of the strategy is to make Denmark a leading knowledge society with strong competitiveness and strong cohesion. Education, lifelong skills upgrading, research and innovation at the highest international level are crucial for achieving this aim.

Objectives for lifelong learning

The strategy for lifelong learning includes the following objectives:

- A coherent education system from pre-school to higher education must provide the opportunity for everyone to acquire excellent basic skills, a qualifying education and a solid foundation for lifelong learning. There must be equal opportunities and room for all.
- The education programmes must be world-class. The education system is to foster talent and be more accommodating to weak learners. Quality is given pride of place, and education must match the needs of the labour market and the society.
- There must be relevant, high quality adult education and continuing training for everyone in the labour market which matches the needs and puts particular emphasis on the need for lifelong skills upgrading for those with the lowest level of education. There is a shared responsibility to ensure that everyone in the labour market is engaged in lifelong learning.
- Systematic competence development in the workplace should be strengthened in both public and private enterprises. Increased public and private investment in continuing training and competence development for employees is to contribute to improving the skills of individuals and strengthening the development of the enterprises.

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Changes of Polish educational regime and reproduction of inequalities.

The cooperation in education for professions related to power industry: improvement of capabilities of vocational students or formatting them to labour market demand?

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INTRODUCTION

In the first part of our report we would like to explain the sources of the structural problems of educational regime in Poland that have profound consequences for limiting capabilities for work of a large part of Polish population. Therefore, we will analyse both the impact of the radical economy restructuring from centrally planned into liberal economy on creating new skill requirements and the political attempts to adapt formal institutions regulating education system to market economy and democracy. Side effects of these processes were the following.

On the one hand, the access to employment has become restrained by the collapse of large state companies and massive lay-offs. People have faced the threat of unemployment that appeared suddenly and at an unexpected scale, and turned out to have structural character. Despite improvement of economic situation – in particular between 2006 and 2008 – the share of long-term unemployed remained high. In march 2010, 26.5% of unemployed were registered for more than 12 months and 20.6% of them were registered between 6 and 12 months (GUS). On the other hand, economy has suffered from shortages of highly qualified workers in newly created or developing sectors. Despite massive investment of households in education of young generations, these structural problems persist and young people – as a particularly vulnerable group – have to deal with their consequences.

Reformed educational system as well as newly institutionalised labour market policies did not succeed to overcome these problems. We will argue that they have created some mechanisms that actually sustain their reproduction. The main institutional problems to be accounted for are, among others, underdevelopment of early childhood education and lifelong learning system, significant differentiation of education paths starting at the age of 15/16 years old, difficult financial situation of upper secondary education level, separation of vocational schooling system from employers, poor quality and inadequate offer of vocational education, unequal educational opportunities depending on place of residence and level of education of parents. We will discuss sources of these problems basing it on the analysis of the division of competences and resources between actors in the field of education and educational paths.

The second part of the report will be devoted to the preliminary results of the case study. It will refer to the agreement on cooperation for education in vocations related to power industry, which has been signed between the Capital City of Warsaw, Vattenfall Heat Poland S.A, and Warsaw University of Technology. Its aim is to help us understand how various actors with different normative orientations and interests (an employer, local authorities, tertiary education institution) try to overcome some of these structural problems of educational regime, namely the crisis of vocational education and mismatch between labour demand and labour supply. We will also try to include the perspective of students from vocational school who are the potential beneficiaries of the cooperation between the abovementioned actors by looking at this initiative from a broader angle. This means that we will focus not only on the aspect of preparation of vocational students for purpose of future employment but also on the problem of negative selection of students to vocational schools – do they choose this path (from other options) or is the choice made for them (they do not have any other options, because of their exam results).

PART I EDUCATION REGIME IN POLAND

1. IMPACT OF ECONOMY RESTRUCTURING ON NEW SKILL REQUIREMENTS AND CAPABILITY FOR WORK

The restructuring of economy from centrally planned into liberal produced a radical shift in terms of skill requirements[155]. Enterprises were forced to rearrange their strategies, find specialisations and "niches" and reduce costs in order to survive the competition in globalised world. In consequence of cost-reducing strategies, companies have also given up to perform some of the educational functions typical for the communist system: company vocational schools were closed. It resulted in the separation of vocational schooling system from employers, which latter revealed to have far-reaching consequences.

Reconfiguration of the structure of production, development of new sectors, transfer of technologies have deeply changed labour demand over a short period of time. Those factors together with massive unemployment and precariousness related to short-term contracts, had profound impact on people's lives since they limited capability for work of an important part of Polish population[156]. Economic unemployment rate – almost inexistent during communism – reached its peak of 20% in 2003 and 2004 and during only these two years job loss affected 3,5 million of Poles (LFS 2003,2005). Almost half of the working population declared in 2007 they had experienced unemployment during their life course (Gardawski 2009: 318). In consequence of mass dismissals, easy access to disability and early retirement schemes at the beginning of 1990s, both employment and activity rate decreased rapidly. Employment rate was at the level of 53.5% in May 1992, 47.5% in 2000 (Q2) and 50.4% in 2010 (Q2), whereas initial level of activity rate was 61.4% in May 1992 and then 56.8% in 2000 (Q2) and 55.7% in 2010 (Q2) (LFS). This economic dynamics has created demand for "new" competences and skills and worsened market-position of low qualified workers – people with qualifications that had been needed mostly in collapsing sectors or simply living in regions particularly struck by the crisis. Also young people entering labour market were particularly vulnerable group. Regional differences have persisted: in some territorial units the registered unemployment rate was at the level of 36.7% in 2007, while the average was 14.8% (GUS 2007). Similarly to changes in developed countries that had been taking place decades before, the shift from centrally planned to market economy meant the end of one-job-per-life era and less predictability in skill requirements over the life course. In response to systemic changes, Poles massively invested in initial education. The proportion of people with tertiary education has increased from 9.7% in 1995 to 21.2% in 2009 (Siergiejuk 2010). During the same period, a number of graduates from general upper secondary schools increased by 23% (ibidem).

[155] This part of text is mostly based on the analysis of changes of education and training in Central and Eastern European countries during transition and accession processes conducted by Mertaugh, M. and E. Hanushek (2005). (Mertaugh and Hanushek 2005)

[156] The data on labour market was beforehand used in the report "Poland: EWCO comparative analytical report on Trends: 20 years of changes in work and its conditions" (Sztandar-Sztanderska forthcoming)

2. EDUCATION SYSTEM

The inherited education system was adapted to different economic reality. Educational offer was centrally planned to meet needs of the industry, mainly in manufacturing. Many actors – local administration, schools as well as parents and pupils – had little say over the educational offer. The first attempts to reform it occurred soon after 1989. In the case of the primary and secondary education, the main aim was decentralisation by triggering the process of taking over the management of primary schools by communes (*gminas*). Among the main changes brought in 1991 were: the introduction of wider autonomy of schools and creation of open contests for their directors as well as the possibility to establish non-public schools[157]. Further reform introduced in the end of 90s' was synchronised with the changes of administrative system and they increased competences of lower administrative levels in a field of education: *gminas, poviats* and *voivodships*[158]. The roles in the system have been distributed between those levels, with the central level preserving some of its competences in planning, financing and supervision.

At the same time the first reformatory steps in tertiary education have been taken[159] – propagating the idea of autonomy and academic freedom. The most visible result of it was the preparation of legal grounds for establishment of private higher education institutions. These steps together with the growing demand of Polish population for university degree have completely changed the appearance of the whole system. When we compare the number of university students in 1990/1991 and 2005/2006 we will see that it has increased nearly five times over those years (from 403,8 thousand to 1953,8) and more than 30% of them have chosen to study in private schools[160] (Sztanderska, Drogosz-Zabłocka et al. 2007). This educational boom was, however, very one-sided. It means that it was based on specializations which were cheap to open and maintain at first place. This resulted in lower increase in those fields of study, which required higher financial outlays, such as technical studies or medicine.

In 2006, the supervision of primary and secondary education was clearly separated from the supervision of tertiary education, since then they fell within the competences of different resorts. The former were to be supervised by the Ministry of National Education while the latter by the Ministry of Higher Education. In consequence, the systems function as two separate universes of rules and – to a large extent – engage different actors into planning, financing, implementation and supervision. Therefore, we will clearly distinguish those two areas.

[157] These changes were introduced by the Act on the education system (Ustawa o systemie oświaty z 07.09.1991).

[158] We are referring here to the Act on the education system (Ustawa o systemie oświaty z 07.09.1991) that defined the fundaments of the current system and was introduced by the rightist, anti-communist government of Jerzy Buzek.

[159] They resulted in Act on higher education from 1990.

[160] This growth is to some extent connected to the demographic peak, but cannot be explained by it fully. The number of people aged 20-24 has increased from 2467,9 thousand in 1990 to 3334,4 in 2005 (beginning of decrease).

2.1 Division of competences and resources between actors in the field of education

Primary and secondary education

From the 1st of January 1999 new – decentralized – administrative structured started to function in Poland, with three levels of self-government: *gminas* (communities, NUTS V level), *poviats* (districts, NUTS IV), *voivodships* (regions, NUTS II). The new division of competences in the field of education as well as the introduced financial mechanisms triggered certain tensions between actors from different administrative levels, which could be described as clash of decentralizing and centralizing tendencies. We will now discuss the tasks of actors from those various levels trying to explain the sources of tensions.

Central administrative level

Among the key actors from the central level we can distinguish the government, the Ministry of National Education and Boards of Education. **The government is responsible for transferring money to self-governments**. It decides in every budgetary act on the amount of the so-called 'educational part of the general subvention for the units of self-government'. Until 2003 it has been defined as 12.8% of the expected income of the state. Since 2003 the subvention has been calculated as the amount allocated on that purpose in the previous year increased by expected costs generated by changes in the educational tasks of self-government units[161]. The educational part of subvention is than reduced by educational reserve – the emergency money (in 2003 it was 1%, in 2008 0.25%). The reserve is supervised by the minister of finance, who distributes it according to the opinion of minister of education and the representative bodies of self-government.

The rest of educational part of subvention is then distributed to each unit of self-government according to the algorithm prepared by Ministry of National Education. The main criterion is the number of pupils in primary and secondary education in a territorial unit, which makes self-governments and schools in their territories to compete for candidates (for more detailed description of criteria, see box 1). It is also important to note that self-governments are not obliged to spend allocated "educational part of subvention" for education purposes only. It happens that they decide to use some of this amount in other fields, for instance health care.

[161] The Act on income of self-government units from November 2003.

Box 1 Criteria for distribution of the educational part of the general subvention for the units of self-government

The algorithm is based on the system of weights, which fall into three categories:

1) basic quota of subvention (relative to number of students – every student except from adult students has basic weight equal to 1),
2) "equalizing" quota of subvention (some groups of students have additional weight which is to be added to the basic weight – for example in the case of student from rural areas or cities under 5 000 inhabitants),
3) quota for non-educational activities (relative to number of students in dormitories, youth shelters, special kindergartens, special educational centres or relative to the general number of students in a particular unit potentially using, for example, the library or psychological and pedagogical counselling.

Interestingly enough the number of weights has risen from 26 in 2000 to 41 in 2008 (see Herbst, Herczyński, Levitas 2009).

Except from designing the algorithm the Ministry of Education has also number of other tasks. According to the act on educational system it is responsible for **designing the curricula and educational standards**, which define minimum curriculum and criteria for preparing and assessing external exams.

These competences give the ministry a new instrument of control. One can argue that the reforms of the inherited educational system have reduced the impact of the Ministry on the contents of programmes in favour of territorial units and teachers themselves. The former have been given a lot of freedom as far as the management of schools and school networks in their territories is concerned. The latter have been given freedom in choosing programmes and textbooks from the accepted ones[162] - and such choice has been previously very limited. However, the introduction of external exams instead of intra-school exams[163] and the control over criteria for preparing and assessing external exams and designing minimum curricula gave the ministry important asset and created some problems, in particular when it comes to vocational schooling. As one of our interviewed experts put it, *programmes* [in vocational schooling] *have remained centrally regulated, which means it is still the other* [communist] *world* [EXP1][164]. The problem that arises – and that will be analysed in detail in the case study – is the ill-adjustment of programmes in the field of vocational schooling to the labour market demand. There are 'occupations' that are not included among accepted curricula, which leads to shortages of workers with specific skills. Moreover, the exams in vocational schools are theoretical instead of checking practical skills that are demanded in work, which also decreases market value of certificates.

[162] 198 programmes have been accepted in the initial open contest in the late 90s and since then the number has only risen.

[163] The Central Examining Commission (with district commissions) is responsible for preparation and assessment of the exams between There are external exams between primary and lower secondary education, lower and higher secondary education, and higher secondary education and tertiary education.

[164] All interviews cited in the text will be given symbols and numbers: EXP stands for an expert interview, LA stands for local authorities or administration interview, EMP stands for an employer interview.

Most of the **supervisory tasks** are fulfilled by the boards of education. Although they function on the level of *voivodships*, they are a part of governmental administration not self-government. They are responsible for monitoring whether schools meet educational standards, act according to the law and are efficiently managed. Boards have also the right to overrule decisions of self-governments as far as management of schools is concerned (for example about shutting down particular school). Above that they play also advisory role for the teachers and directors. Those two different types of tasks – consultancy and supervision – may sometimes be the source of tensions (see Herbst, Herczyński et al. 2009).

Self-governments

As mentioned above, Poland is characterized by three levels of self-government: *gminas* (communities, NUTS V level), *poviats* (districts, NUTS IV) and *voivodships* (regions, NUTS II). **V*oivodships*** perform very specific role in the system of education, which could be described as supportive function. They are responsible for establishing and managing public teachers' training centres (*publiczne zakłady kształcenia nauczycieli*) and teachers' vocational development centres (*placówki doskonalenia nauczycieli*), libraries and other educational institutions which are considered important for a whole region.

More central role in the system has been given to ***poviats***. Among their responsibilities we can distinguish **creation and management of upper secondary education institutions** as well as particular primary and (upper and lower) secondary schools – i.e. special schools (schools for people with special educational needs) and some types of specialised schools like sport or art schools. Also the role of ***gminas*** is crucial, since they have among their own tasks **creation and management of crèches, kindergartens, primary schools and lower secondary education**.

The fact that self-governments (*gminas* and *poviats*) took over the responsibility for managing the school network on their territories had ambiguous consequences. On the one hand it empowered them as animators of their own policy – also in such important field as education. In consequences, many of them implemented cost-rationalizing measures: shut down schools with small number of students, which generated high costs, established bigger but better equipped school units, invested in transporting children to schools. On the other hand, existing system of financing and division of competences created also problems which had systemic consequences.

Most of the educational expenses of *poviats* and *gminas*– except from crèches, kindergartens – should be covered by the 'educational subvention', which is transferred to each of self-governments according to the algorithm discussed above. The amount is a part of general subvention received by particular unit. Although it is marked as money to be spend on educational needs self-governments are free to use it differently.

In practice such situation is marginal in the case of *gminas*. In 2006 only 27 out of 2487 spent on education the equivalent of subvention or less and other decided to add money from their own budgets (see Herbst, Herczyński et al. 2009). Average expenditures on education in different types of *gminas*[165] in relation to subvention have been presented in the table

[165] There are four types of gminas in Poland: urban gminas, urban-rural gminas, rural gminas and cities (urban gminas) with poviat status (all of them are big cities).

below. As we can see, in 2006 expenditures in all those units exceeded the "educational subvention" with the average for all of them together equal to 155.94%.

Table 1 Expenditures of gminas on education (without spending on kindergartens) in relation to subvention in 2006 (%).

Self-government unit	Expenditures on education in relation to subvention in %
Cities with poviat status	157.70
Urban gminas	184.93
Rural-urban gminas	163.03
Rural gminas	148.86
Together	155.94

Source: Herbst, Herczyński, Levitas 2009

Whereas, the average for *poviats* in the years 2005-2009 was lower than the amount of subvention (see table 2). As we can see from the table below it equalled between 87.7% (in 2005) and 90.8 (in 2006).

This difference between *poviats* and *gminas* in terms of money invested in education has its sources in financial situation of the former. *Poviats* practically do not have their own income – most significant are those coming from PIT, which in 2006 were equal to 15% of total income on average. Apart from that, they have to rely on transfers from state budget (mostly the so called special funds), which effects in high fluctuations of their own budgets (see Herbst, Herczyński, Levitas 2009).

Table 2 Expenditures of *poviats* on education (without spending on kindergartens) in relation to subvention in 2006 (%).

Year	Expenditures on education in relation to subvention in %
2009	89.3
2008	89
2007	89.7
2006	90.8
2005	87.7

Source: Baza Danych Regionalnych GUS (Regional Data Bank, Central Statistical Office).

This financial instability of *poviats* has had severe consequences for the networks of upper secondary education. Many schools which were considered too expensive to maintain have been shut down. Upper secondary vocational schools suffered the most, since the costs of their management was higher than upper secondary general schools and the number of students interested in them was dropping. These processes were taking place without any supervision at the systemic level and resulted in shortages in some specialisations (see previous subchapter).

The system of financing education triggers also significant problems at the lowest level of self-government (in *gminas*). Percentages presented in the table above reflect average expenditures. When we have a look at standard deviation of the relation of expenditures on education to educational part of the subvention, we will see it equals 34.5% for *gminas* and coefficient of variation is 28.8% (it is 13.7% and 8.8% for *poviats*) (Sztanderska 2010). This shows us that there are significant differences among the former in terms of the relation between expenditures on education and the money they receive from subvention. The main reason for it is the difference of income. Some of *gminas* are able invest more in education from their own resources than other. This situation generates and reproduces regional disparities. Indeed, the algorithm on the basis of which the amount of educational part of the subvention is being computed takes into account disadvantaged location in order to reduce the differences in wealth – there are higher weights for rural areas or towns below 5000 inhabitants– but not take into account the overall income of units. Meanwhile, there are discrepancies within those categories (among rural *gminas* or among small towns).

Also the division of competences in the area of education creates problems, which sometimes have negative systemic consequences. As mentioned earlier, administrative reform aimed at empowering self-governments. One of the ways to achieve it was to give them tools to create their own educational policy. In some cases this ability was limited by financial shortages. However, as far as the area of education is concerned, it is important to mention also another obstacle created by the system of supervision. As discussed previously, the boards of education, which represent central level of government, have very wide controlling prerogatives. This sometimes generates conflicts with self-governments (mostly *gminas*) over the management of school network. Especially soon after the administrative reform self-governments had to deal with the growing expenses of maintenance and modernisation of schools. Due to the population decline the number of students has constantly been dropping and many of them decided on creating big school units and shut down the small ones to fight excessive spending. There were cases in which such decisions have been overruled by the boards of education blocking the attempts to rationalise costs of education. Those situations have shown the contradiction inscribed in the system – on the one hand self-governments are responsible for management of schools in their territories, but are limited by the power of central government. One may say that the argument of cost efficiency should not be decisive in education. However, when it comes down to poorer self-governments – forcing them to keep particular school may result in mediocre level of teaching and outdated educational base in those units.

Another – sometimes negative – spillover of the reforms of education system (mostly related to the financial mechanisms) is the '*diarchy*' in which schools are forced to function [EXP1]. On the one hand, they have to keep the so called "educational standards" which are defined centrally. On the other hand, they have to implement them for the money they receive from the self-government unit. This has consequences especially for upper secondary vocational

schools. As discussed above, those types of schools are managed by *poviats*, which rarely exceed subvention in financing them. Therefore, more costly units (vocational schools) with too little students are being shut down. To avoid it head masters tend to introduce rapid "reskilling". This means that teachers of vocations – which are not popular enough and too expensive – are asked to change their specialisation into more attractive to students at that time and not generating such high spending. This results in the declining quality of vocational schooling (such rapid change of qualification can hardly guarantee high level of education). Moreover, since in many cases the decisions about opening specialisation are being based on criteria other than labour market demand, those schools are likely to produce people with not only outdated but also redundant skills.

As we can see, the two major reforms – of primary and secondary education and of administrative division – have created some negative spillovers. First of all, the new system of financing schools has contributed to decomposition of vocational education. Underfinanced *poviats* shut down vocational schools in their pursue for savings on outlays. Second of all, it reproduces and generates regional inequalities, since in some of the poorer regions local authorities cannot support education from own resources of self-government.

Also the division of competences evoked negative phenomena. One of the most important seems to be '*diarchy*' in which schools have to function. On the one hand, they have to implement centrally defined curricula. On the other, they depend on self-governments as far as financing of those programmes is concerned – which is often based primarily on the number of students and overall costs of teaching particular subject. Therefore, sometimes they have to decide on opening specialisation which is popular but not necessarily demanded on the labour market. This might be considered the effect of using control understood as hierarchical supervision instead of systemic coordination, which could facilitate the simultaneous functioning of decentralised structure and systemic planning.

Tertiary education

In this part we will discuss the functioning of the system of tertiary education, referring to the legal status defined in 2005 – after over 15 years of rapid changes[166]. We will present how the roles were divided between the government, state institutions and public and private higher education institutions. Although there are advanced plans to reform the system, we will not mention it here and focus on current situation. As in the previous case we will concentrate on responsibilities connected to financing, planning, supervision and implementation of educational goals.

State actors

The government indicates percentage of GDP to be spent on subsides for higher education in every budgetary act. As we can see from the table 3, during the decade 1999-2009 the percentage of GDP allotted to higher education has risen from 0,76 to 0,88 – reaching nearly 1% in 2005. The drop in years 2006-2009 is connected to the last reform of higher education mentioned above, which aimed at reducing the spending (on higher education as well as research) also due to the expected decline in the number of students (see, Jóźwiak, Koźmiński et al. 2009).

[166] Act on higher education from 2005. Several minor amendments have been made since then.

Also **self-governments have slowly become noticeable actors in financing higher education** (mostly private institutions). The amount allotted to this purpose has increased more than 13 times during the past decade. It is most probably linked to the Act on higher education from 2005, which gave self-governments direct possibility to support financially higher education institutions form own territory.

Table 3 Financing of higher education in euro[167] and as a percentage of GDP (1999-2009)

Year	Expenditures in euro		Expenditures as percentage of GDP
	State budget (in millions)	Budget of self-government units (in millions)	
1999	1 216.27	3.41	0.76
2000	1 381.98	5.29	0.72
2001	1 808.88	9.26	0.82
2002	1 698.82	9.6	0.85
2003	1 494.42	5.98	0.84
2004	2 162.86	7.82	0.96
2005	2 506.99	19.9	0.99
2006	2 581.1	31.84	0.94
2007	2 987.55	40.06	0.93
2008	2 658.18	23.97	0.88[a]
2009	2 836.89	47.95	0.88

Source: "Higher Education Institutions and their Finances in 2007" Central Statistical Office, "Higher Education Institutions and their Finances in 2009" Central Statistical Office. [a] GDP – provisional estimation.

If we compare the percentage of GDP allocated to higher education in Poland and selected European countries, we will see they fluctuate between 0.73% in Bulgaria and 2.38% in Denmark (see table 4). Polish public expenditure is slightly above EU27 average. When we add also private expenses Poland's result is almost at the level of third quartile.

There are, however, some stipulations to be made. First of all, Polish GDP per capita is much below European level (Svennebye 2008). Second of all, Poland – as some authors suggest – has to bridge the modernisation gap that started to grow long before economic transition, what requires significant investments. Finally, as mentioned above, there has been immense growth in the number of students in years 1990-2006, which exceeded the growth of state expenses on education[168] (Sztanderska 2010). All those factors should be taken into account, when we consider the financial status of Polish higher education.

[167] The exchange rates are from 31 December of each year. It is so also for every other case.
[168] The situation is slowly reversing because of drop in the number of students.

Table 4 Expenditure on higher education in selected European countries as percentage of GDP by source (2006)

Country	Public expenditure (including subsidies for private schools)	Private expenditure	Total expenditure from public and private sources
EU27	**1.12**	**0.3**	**1.42**
Belgium	1.32	0.3	1.62
Bulgaria	0.73	0.8	1.53
Czech Republic	1.23	0.3	1.53
Denmark	2.38	0.7	3.08
Germany	1.11	0.1	1.21
Estonia	0.93	0.3	1.23
Ireland	1.14	0.2	1.34
Greece	1.44	-	1.44
Spain	0.95	0.2	1.15
France	1.19	0.3	1.49
Italy	0.8	0.4	1.20
Cyprus	1.65	0.8	2.45
Latvia	0.91	0.9	1.81
Lithuania	1	0.5	1.50
Hungary	1.04	0.3	1.34
Netherlands	1.5	0.5	2.00
Austria	1.48	0.2	1.68
Poland	**1.19**	**0.5**	**1.69**
Portugal	1	0.4	1.40
Romania	0.9	0.4	1.30
Slovenia	1.24	0.3	1.54
Slovakia	0.9	0.4	1.30
Finland	1.94	0.1	2.04
Sweden	1.84	0.2	2.04
UK	1.1	0.6	1.70

Source: (EUROSTAT data after: Hingel, Bjerkestrand et al. 2009)

State subsidies are distributed according to the algorithm developed by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. It is based on a system of weights assigned to thematic categories (for details see box 2).

Box 2 Criteria for distribution of the subvention for public universities

The algorithm consists of six categories: 1) number of students on full-time programmes (diversified mostly on the basis of teaching costs – from 1 to 3); 2) number of academic staff (weights 1-5 according to title – also visiting professors are included); 3) indicator of sustainable development (relation between number of academics and number of students – the biggest share of academics the better); 4) number of research projects financed or co-financed by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education; 5) entitlement to awarding doctoral and post-doctoral titles (weights 1-2); 6) number of exchange students (1 for outgoing 3 for incoming).

Those weights are than multiplied by weights specific for each type of public higher education institutions.[169]

The construction of system of weights in the algorithm evokes many controversies. First of all, in fact only 30% resources for each public school coming from subvention are redistributed. 70% is guaranteed as constant (automatically transferred from previous year). On the one hand, it has a stabilising effect. On the other hand, this financial mechanism might lead to "freezing" of the system, since there are limited incentives for competing. Second of all, algorithm does not include amortisation of assets. It has a negative impact on specialisations which require specialist equipment or laboratories. Finally, there are discrepancies in the system of weights between vocational and academic higher education institutions, which gives preferences to the former. Their incomes have increased by nearly 50% between academic year 2005/2006 and 2009/2010, whereas those of academic schools for only 19% (Minkiewicz 2010).

State subsidies constitute around 80% of incomes from didactic activities in the case of public schools and around 3% in the case of private schools[170] . This has consequences to the functioning of those schools, which will be discussed in the next subchapter.

The **ministry** has also large **controlling prerogatives**. It supervises the functioning of higher educational institutions mostly in terms of conformity with the law. It has the last say over universities' compliance to standards of teaching[171]. Finally, even though the minister should acquire opinion of the senate of a particular school in that matter, it has the right to dismiss or suspend its vice-chancellor (for negligence).

Another important actor from the central administrative level is The State Accreditation Committee. Its members are appointed by the minister of science and higher education from

[169] Three types of schools are indicated in the algorithm: vocational (with no right to award doctor al degree) academic (with a right to award doctor al degree) and resort schools – medical, artistic and marine.
[170] Data from 2007: „Polskie szkolnictwo wyższe: stan, uwarunkowania, perspektywy" Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2009.
[171] Standards of teaching are prepared by Central Council of Higher Education, which is an elective advisory body consisting of academics.

the list of candidates indicated by the advisory bodies[172]. The Committee grants or denies permissions for new higher education institutions and verifies the level of teaching at Polish universities according to teaching standards. It has the power to suspend school or department due to negligence (not keeping standards of teaching).

It is important to emphasise that the Committee supervises only the process of teaching itself. Meanwhile, there is no institutional body looking into effects of educational process. Even the schools themselves follow the career of their graduates in a limited way. In consequence, it is difficult to assess which schools give people education and skills allowing them to find satisfying employment.

The prerogatives of central institutions make the system quite centralised – not only in terms of management but also curriculum (see Edquist, El-Khwas et al. 2007). In the next part we will discuss how private and public higher education institutions function in the system constructed in that way.

Private and public higher education institutions

In academic year 2009/2010 there have been 320 private[173] and 135 public accredited higher education institutions in Poland. However, as far as the number of students is concerned public schools still have dominant position – with 67% of general number of students. Public and private schools function as two separate worlds: their systems of financing and management are completely different.

Management of public higher education institutions is to a large extent centrally regulated. The scope of duties and rights of vice-chancellor (and some other authorities such as deans) is determined by law[174]. Moreover, since public schools base their income on subventions from the state, the management of finances is also restricted. They are allowed to introduce tuition, but only in part-time programmes – to which they may to accept maximum equal number of students as to full-time programmes. In consequence, the share of part-time students to full-time students is close to 50% (Sztanderska, Drogosz-Zabłocka et al. 2007). This regulation limits the possibility of those institutions to increase their income. Despite the fact that they might have the financial and institutional ability to open full-time programmes with tuition, they are not allowed to do it. Public educational institutions have also limited chances to implement autonomous employment policy. The system of promotion, scope of duties of employees and salaries are also defined centrally[175].

Private schools on the other hand have more freedom and autonomy in management. Their income is mainly based on tuition fees, therefore they are allowed to invest it freely – as long as they keep the standards of teaching. They are allowed to motivate their employees the way they want (to attract and keep the best academic teachers and scholars). However, their budgets – only minimally supported by the state – do not allow them to compete with

[172] Central Council of Higher Education, Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland, Conference of Rectors of Vocational Schools in Poland, Parliament of Students, university senates, organizations of employers.
[173] Among private schools 305 were the so called vocational schools – having only the right to award students BA or MA degrees.
[174] It is subsequently specified by the statute of each institution.
[175] What seems particularly interesting, this is to a large extent the effect of pressures from the academic society – namely groups aiming at securing university positions. In fact, the rules of employment have been one of the most discussed elements of higher education reform from 2005 (Góral and Walczak 2005)

the largest public universities – especially as far as technical studies and science are concerned.

To sum up – the system of tertiary education is currently set on keeping the status-quo (or control) rather than on promoting the best. First of all, it implements supervision of educational process rather than educational effects – what may result in reproducing programmes which are not adjusted to the requirements of the labour market and challenges of the rapidly changing world. Second of all – at least in the case of public higher education institutions – it is designed to secure status of academic employees rather than award highest quality of work. Finally, it puts private and public schools in uneven positions. Namely, the money from the state are divided on the basis of public/private status, not taking into account the quality of teaching (also in terms of effects). Such approach does not stimulate competition – especially in the case of public entities, which feel quite secure with the guaranteed financing. Moreover, it results in creation of higher education institutions, which produce graduates with skills, which are redundant on the labour market (young unemployed or young people working in jobs below their qualification).

2.2 Educational paths

In this subchapter we will present different indicators and research results that inform us about changes in educational paths in Poland. Using Capability Approach (CA) terms, we can say that available data on this topic allow us rather to analyse 'functionings', understood as consequences of peoples' choices in the context of available capabilities sets in education field, rather than 'capabilities' themselves – which are defined as real opportunities to choose educational path one has reason to value. However, despite this data limitation we will attempt to draw some preliminary conclusions about capabilities. In particular, we will emphasise the impact of certain reforms on reproducing or increasing inequalities in terms of real opportunities to attain higher levels of education between people from different social backgrounds and different territories.

During last 20 years, there has been an enormous change as far as education level of Polish society is concerned. In response to restructuring of economy and increasing returns from education, Poles massively invested in education (see table 5). Between 1995 and 2009, the number of graduates from general upper secondary schools increased from 1 327,000 to 1 631,000 (Siergiejuk 2010). When it comes to upper secondary attainment benchmark – set in Lisbon strategy – Poland was one of the three best-performing European countries in 2008 with the result of 91.3% of upper secondary attainment. Moreover, the proportion of people with tertiary education has increased from 9.7% in 1995 to 21.2% in 2009 (ibidem).

These changes were evoked by the combination of factors. One of them was a dynamic development of private education sector not existing under communist ruling, in particular when it comes to tertiary education institutions.

In the following parts of this subchapter we will analyse main policy developments concerning different stages of educational paths (early childhood education, primary and secondary education, tertiary education) and, if possible, their impact on people's capabilities.

Table 5 Basic information on educational structure of Polish society (aged 25-64)

Education level attainment	Tertiary education	Vocational upper secondary176	General upper secondary education	Basic vocational upper secondary education	No more than lower secondary education
Structure of population education level in 1995 (in thousands)	1 871	4 965	1 327	6 080	5 059
Structure of population education level in 2009 (in thousands)	4 469	5 655	1 631	6 834	2 541
Dynamics (1995=100%)	238,9	113,9	122,9	112,4	50,2
Structure of population education level in 1995 (in %)	9,7	25,7	6,9	31,5	26,2
Structure of population education level in 2009 (in %)	21,2	26,8	7,7	32,3	12,0

Source: (Siergiejuk 2010: 4).

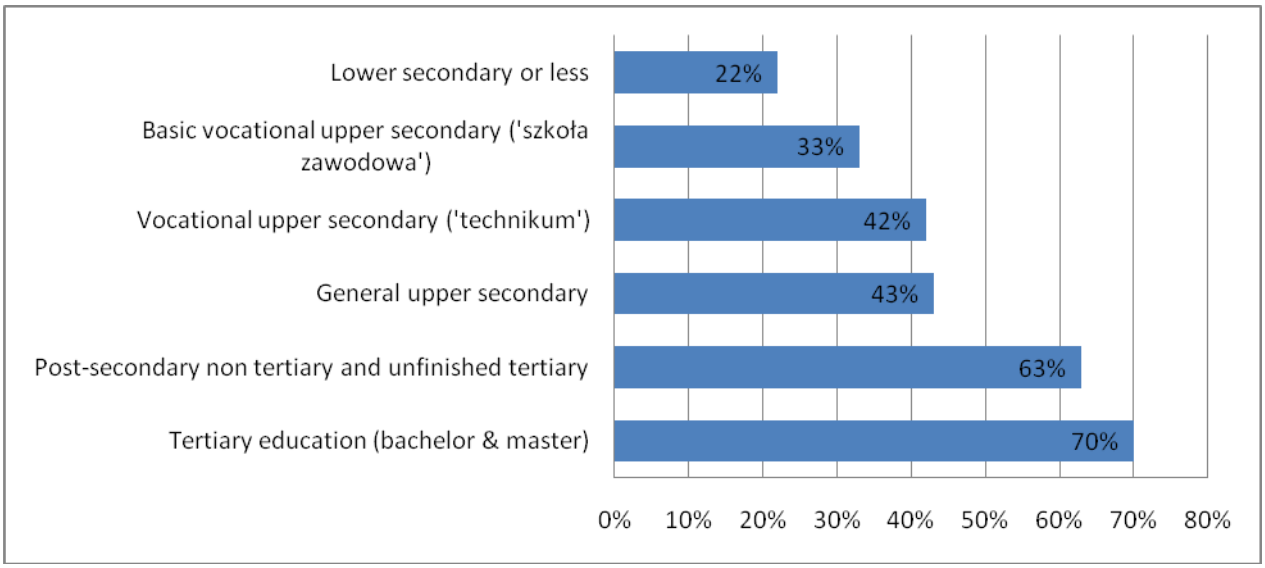
Early childhood education

The accessibility of crèches and kindergartens has deteriorated considerably during first years of economic and political transition in consequence of cost-reducing strategies of both enterprises and *gminas*. Company-nurseries have been closed, while *gminas*, which became responsible for financing early childhood education in the beginning of 90s, were not able to maintain the number of facilities due to financial difficulties. One of the justifications for shutting down crèches and kindergartens was the up-coming period of population decline. In 1990 there were 1,412 crèche (with place for 95,800 children) and 12,308 kindergartens (with place for 896,700 children) (Kłos 1994). During next 2 years the number of crèches was reduced by 49.3%, while the number of places in them dropped by 45.4%. In the same period the number of kindergartens was reduced by 31%. It was to some extent compensated by creation of special departments in schools fulfilling the function of pre-preliminary education (so-called 'zerówki', which means '0 grade classes'), but they were only addressed to children aged 6.

[176] It refers to Polish categories: 'średnie zawodowe' and 'policealne'.

These economic and political decisions revealed to have far-reaching consequences. Poland – in comparison to other European countries – has very low level of participation in early childhood education. In 2007 only 66.8% of children between 4 years of age and the age for starting compulsory primary education were enrolled in education in Poland, compared to 90.7% in EU27 (Hingel, Bjerkestrand et al. 2009: 74). This share is even much lower in age-groups of 3 and 4 years olds: 36.1% (compared to 76.7% for EU27) and 48.1% (compared to 90.1% in EU27) (Eurostat 2008: 3). Moreover, different research results show that participation of children in Polish kindergartens increases with level of education of parents (see graph1) and residence in wealthier self-government units (CBOS; Jakubowski, Topińska, 2006 after: Fedorowicz and Sitek 2011: 102), that creates unequal opportunities at the very start of educational career, by increasing disadvantages of already disadvantaged children from less educated families and poorer territories. In other words, the early childhood education system in Poland reinforces unequal opportunities instead of promoting capabilities.

Graph 1 Participation of children aged 5 in early childhood education according to parents' level of education



Source: (Fedorowicz and Sitek 2011: 103)

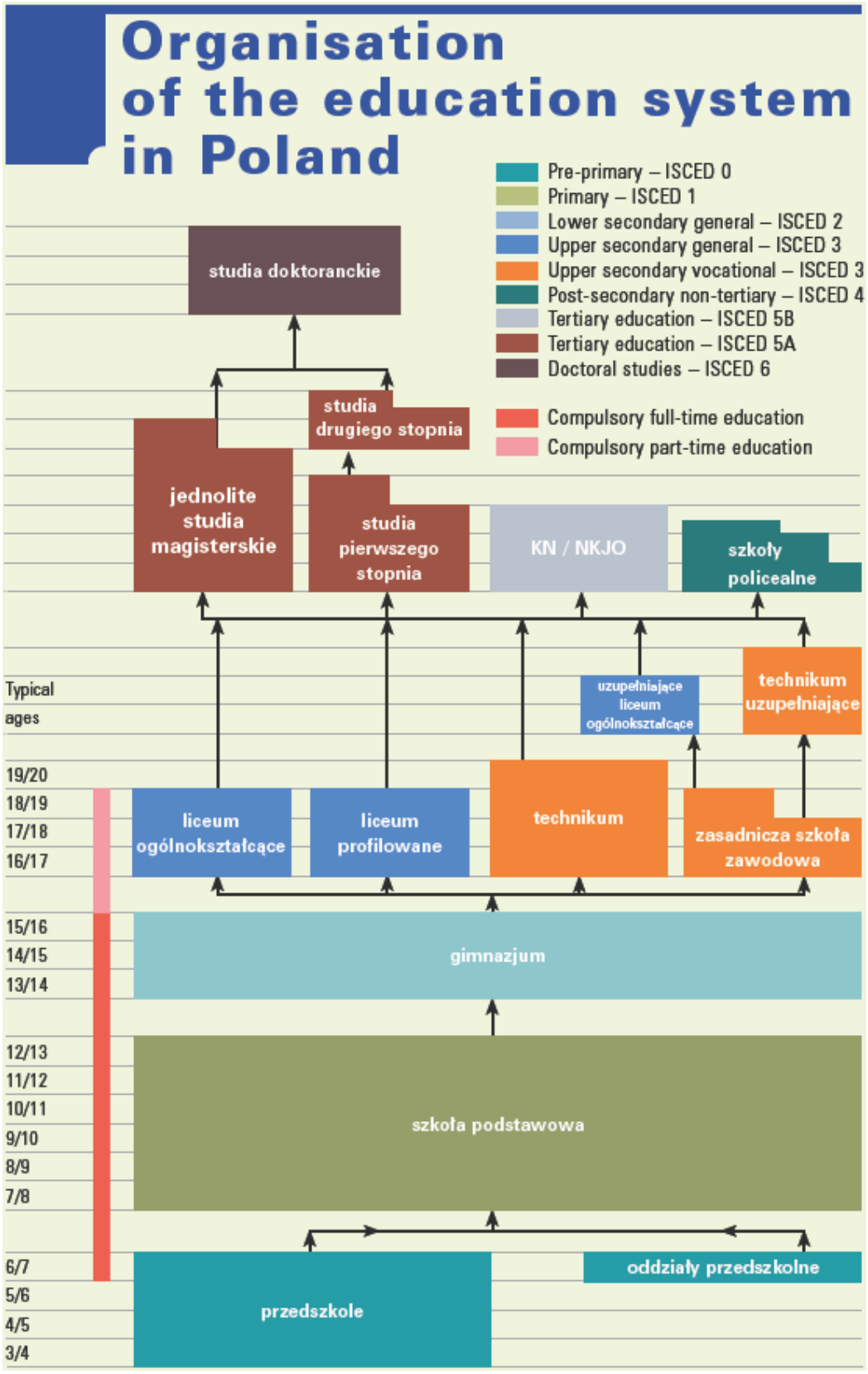
Primary and secondary education

In the end of the 1990s two-stage educational structure of primary and secondary education has been changed into three-stage structure and new types of schools have been introduced (for all stages of current education system, see graph 2). Duration of the primary school was shortened from eight to six years and three-year *gimnazjum* was established as a medium stage between primary school and high school, being equivalent of lower secondary education, i.e. level 2 according to International Standard Classification of Education. New type of high school at the upper secondary level has been created: so called *liceum profilowane* i.e. high-school with specialisation (academic, cultural-artistic, social, agricultural-environmental and technical-technological). Also high schools were – in most cases – reduced from four to three years (or in case of basic vocational schools called *zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa* to 2 or 2,5 yeas).

The idea behind this reform was, first of all, to promote general education, by increasing number of years pupils stay in obligatory general schooling system (from 8 to 9 years). Comparative analysis of PISA test show that results of Polish pupils (as well as results of pupils from Finland, Island, Norway, Sweden, Spain, Denmark, Latvia, Great Britain, Estonia) were less differentiated that results of pupils from countries characterised by early selection system (Fedorowicz and Sitek 2011: 112). It means that reform in this respect was successful[177]. Second of all, creation of high schools with specialisation (*liceum profilowane*) was an attempt to find a cheap and politically acceptable solution to the dropping number of students in vocational education. According to expert interviewee this type of school was supposed – at the same time – to fulfil youth aspirations for general education, to provide them with vocational skills and to secure interests of teaching staff employed in vocational schools in danger of shutting down, but in most cases *liceum profilowane* failed to fulfil successfully its general as well as vocational function and because of that it was not attractive for candidates [EXP1].

[177] Except big cities in which higher differentiation of results is observed.

Graph 2 Organisation of education system in Poland



Source: (EURYDICE 2008: 7)

As previously mentioned, nowadays young Poles after graduating from *gimnazjum* more often choose general than vocational upper secondary education path, i.e. general high schools (*liceum ogólnokształcące*) or high schools with specialisation (*liceum profilowane*). In 2008, 53.8% of students at upper secondary level were participating in general education compared to 46.2% in pre vocational or vocational (Eurostat 2008: 3). However, external exam after lower secondary school (*gimnazjum*) serves as crucial selection step and segregates pupils into different types of schools according to their results. Pupils with very good results continue their education in general high schools (*liceum ogólnokształcące*), pupils with average results go to vocational high schools or high-schools with specialisation, while those with weak results end up in basic vocational schools (Fedorowicz and Sitek 2011: 106).

There are also important differences in choice of type of upper secondary education in terms of gender. In academic year 2009/2010: 47.5% of male graduates went to upper secondary vocational school with final exam giving entry to the university (*technikum)* or high school with specialisation and 17% to basic vocational school, whereas in the case of female graduates it was 34.4% and 8.6% respectively. The proportions are opposite when it comes to the choice of general upper secondary education: 55.2% of female graduates went to *liceum* while the share of male graduates was only 33.4% (Fedorowicz and Sitek 2011: 120). Such big discrepancies between male and female education choices are linked to remaining traditional labour division between genders.

Higher education

Between 1995 and 2009, a number of people with diploma of tertiary education increased from 1 871,000 to 4 469,000 (Siergiejuk 2010). People have massively invested in education. In 1998 there were 1092,000 of students in tertiary institutions, while this number was almost twice as big in 2008 (1927,000) (Fedorowicz and Sitek 2011: 212). Dynamic increase in education attainment rate places Poland high above EU27 average. In 2008, 40.8% of young people aged 20-24 years old were in tertiary education in Poland (except doctoral studies), compared to 28.7% in EU27 (Eurostat 2008: 3). In the academic year 2008/2009, 52% of all students were part-time students and 34% of all students were acquiring tertiary education in private sector (MSHE) (for absolute numbers, see table below).

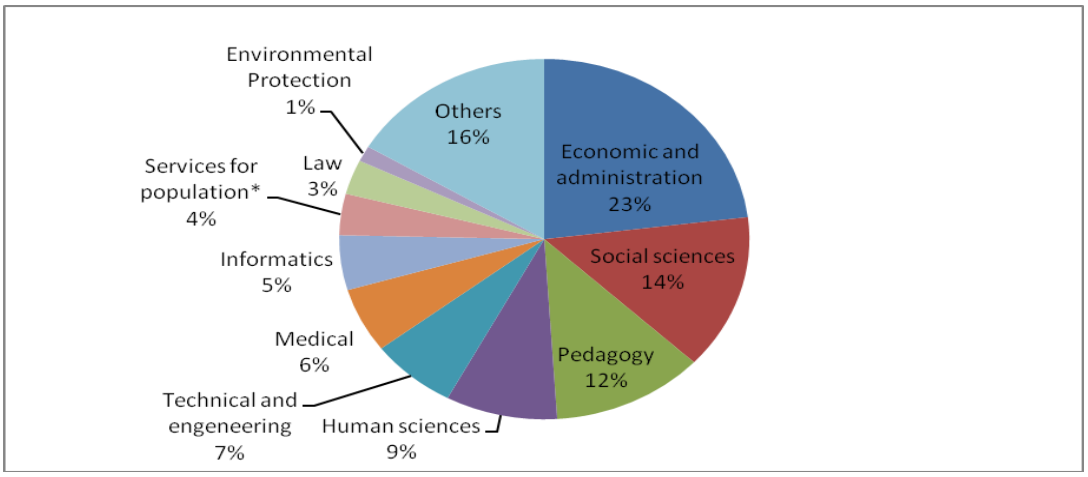
Table 6 Tertiary students in 2008/2009 according to the form of education (full-time vs. part-time, private vs. public)

	Total	Women	Tertiary studies			
			Full-time		Part-time	
			Total	Women	Total	Women
Total	1 927 762	1 098 351	928 133	520 026	999 629	578 325
Public institutions	1 268 366	708 178	807 615	449 039	460 751	259 139
Private institutions	659 396	390 173	120 518	70 987	538 878	319 186

Source: Ministry of Science and Higher Education, http://www.nauka.gov.pl/szkolnictwo-wyzsze/dane-statystyczne-o-szkolnictwie-wyzszym/

The so called educational boom did not influence all disciplines. Between 1994 and 2005 the number of tertiary students increased significantly in disciplines such as business and administration and social sciences, but dropped in case of pedagogy, humanities and technical studies (Sztanderska, Drogosz-Zabłocka et al. 2007). The graph below presents number of students in 2008/2009 in various fields of studies.

Graph 3: Tertiary students in 2008/2009 according to field of studies



Source: Ministry of Science and Higher Education, http://www.nauka.gov.pl/szkolnictwo-wyzsze/dane-statystyczne-o-szkolnictwie-wyzszym/

* 'Usługi dla ludności'

One can remember that provision of education in technical studies is more expensive, which – combined with lower quality of education in science and mathematics on primary and secondary level[178] – resulted in difficulties to attract more students in these fields. However, the trend has been reversing in last couple of years: in 2007 Poland was among the three European countries with the highest annual increase compared to 2000 (+12.2%) when it comes to graduates in Mathematics, Science and Technology (Hingel, Bjerkestrand et al. 2009: 21). Due to lack of systematic monitoring of professional careers of graduates, it is

[178] It is connected with the abolishment of compulsory final exam in mathematics and devaluation of science curriculum at schools. The matter will be discussed in the second part of the report.

extremely difficult to draw general conclusions on the impact of choice of education field (controlling at the same time, the impact of choosing a particular university and the role played by extra-curricular skills).

Unequal capability sets in primary, secondary and higher education

Evidently, the general increase of education level of Polish society is a positive trend. Statistical analysis shows that higher education level means less probability of being unemployed (Grotkowska, Sztanderska et al. 2007: 147). However, this positive influence in terms of securing one's professional career is higher in case of men than women and the actual influence on job prospects depends also on a field of study and extra-curricular skills (ibidem).

The alarming sign is also the extent to which the level of education of young people depends on education of parents, which can be illustrated by the following data (Fedorowicz and Sitek 2011: 101): The majority of adult children (73%) aged 25-34 in case of which at least one of the parents has accomplished tertiary education, have attained this education level as well (GUS 2006). Whereas, among children of this age group from families in which parents have only primary or less than primary education only 7% and 8% has finished tertiary studies. This indicator for adult children whose parents have basic vocational upper secondary education (*szkoła zawodowa*), general upper secondary education and vocational upper secondary education (*technikum*) is at the level of 15%, 34% or 45% respectively[179]. Analyses of results of standardised external exams on every education level (at the end of primary school, at the end of lower secondary school and at the end of upper secondary school) confirm these alarming findings when it comes to the extent of impact of parents education on children educational career[180] (Fedorowicz and Sitek 2011: 103). We can, therefore, conclude that despite many reforms of education system that aimed at equalising opportunities, the capability sets remained highly unequal and that the system, to a great extent, reproduces existing inequalities.

[179] The correlation between education level of parents and their adult children was at the level 0.53. R2 was very high reaching 28%.

[180] In case of external exams at the end of primary school and at the end of lower secondary school, R2 was 15%.

Lifelong learning of adults

In the context of many policy reforms, lifelong learning of adults has never been an important issue on the political agenda in Poland. Standardised indicators used by the European Commission to measure participation of adults (25 to 64 years old) and older workers (50 to74 years old) in lifelong learning during the four weeks preceding the survey are much below the EU27 average (Commission of the European Communities, 2009). Only 4.7% of adults compared to 9.5% in the EU27 participated in lifelong learning (2008). The same was the case of only 1.1% of older workers (2007), while the EU27 average was 4.3%.

Different research results show that situation is slightly better when it comes to lifelong learning opportunities created by employers (EWCS 2000, 2005; Czarzasty 2008; Kryńska 2009). For instance, 26% of workers participated in training paid for or provided by the employer during last 12 months, which is 2% over the EU27 average (EWCS 2005). However, trainings are primarily addressed to already very well qualified, middle-aged, mostly male workers and they are provided more often in large, older companies or in public sector (EWCS 2005; Kryńska 2009).

Instead of creating the system of life-long learning of adults, the political priority was given to develop active labour market policies (including programmes such as trainings and on-the-job trainings) in response to massive unemployment that appeared in 90s. However, due to serious underfunding, weak institutional capacities of Public Employment Services (PES) and a large number of unemployed, ALMP's impact has been so far very limited (Sztandar-Sztanderska 2009) and territorially differentiated – although there has been some improvement since 2005.

Conclusion

Different research results and statistical indicators presented in this subchapter allow us to draw the conclusion that Polish education system fails to promote equal capabilities, since it reproduces the unequal opportunities children have at their starting point, before entering any institutionalised form of education whatsoever. The evident empirical illustration of it is the impact of parents' education level on their children educational career. The main characteristics of educational system responsible for this situation are, probably, the underdevelopment of early childhood education and high diversification of quality of education starting with the upper secondary schools (i.e. at the age of 15/16). After this point it is very hard to catch up and to switch to better quality education path, which to a large extent limits future job prospects and choice possibilities, also because of the mismatch between labour demand and provision of skills. For our case study, it is also important to emphasise that graduates of vocational schools bear consequences of crisis of this segment of education system, i.e. mismatch of centrally planned curricula with employers' requirements, lack of qualified teaching staff and modern equipment. Those of them, whose skills are in shortage and they looked for by employers, will be trained on-the-job and up-date skills or obtain new. However, the other group, which is not in such a favourable position, will have – once again – limited options of improving their competences and skills due to underdeveloped system of life-long learning.

PART II: BASIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE CASE STUDY

3. CASE STUDY SELECTION

In this part of the report we will present basic contextual information concerning the Warsaw agreement on the cooperation for education in professions related to power industry, that has been selected as a case to be studied in the following months of research. It is not a typical programme that is addressed to an already existing[181] disadvantaged group (such as the young unemployed, early school leavers, unemployed graduates of tertiary education etc.). Instead of focusing ona particular group that is to some extent a by-product of educational regime, its aim is to prevent creation of such a group, by overcoming structural problems of this regime in a specific field (i.e. vocational education related to power industry) or at least by reducing their scale. We are referring here to the following structural problems of education regime, described in the previous part of the report: mismatch between labour market demands and education services, separation of vocational schooling system from employers, negative selection of pupils to vocational schools, underfunding and low quality of vocational education, in particular in sectors that demand high investment in equipment and teaching staff in order to keep up with ongoing technological change.

The agreement was selected as an exceptional case in Polish context, since it was initiated by a private actor and it evolved from a local project into an ambitious programme with large-scale objectives concerning both local and national levels, engaging various actors (among others, the Vattenfall Heat Poland SA, the Warsaw University of Technology, the local authorities of Warsaw, professional secondary schools). Moreover, it combines different, non-standard and often expensive instruments, infrastructure, and expertise, necessary to provide young graduates with up-to-date technological competences, which should facilitate transitions of young people from the education system to the labour market and from secondary to tertiary education. The case might provide very interesting evidence on the subject of cooperation of private actors with public authorities at different administrative levels and institutional and organisational barriers encountered by actors, when they undertake actions aiming at establishing closer connections between labour market demand and educational system.

3.1 Characteristics of Warsaw as a context for a case study

Warsaw is the largest self-government in Poland. Definitely, it has significant financial advantages over the majority of self-governments in the country. However, the scale of expenditures and investments it has to make to answer the challenges of modern world (also in the field of vocational education) is incomparable to any other unit of such kind in Poland (including other Polish cities). Second of all, Warsaw is the location of the biggest number of higher education institutions – among them seven major public universities[182]. They are important actors as far as the educational and labour market situation in the city are concerned. Every year they produce numbers of graduates, who look for their place on the local

[181] At least the group has so far not been recognised in administrative documents as a disadvantaged

[182] University of Warsaw, University of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, Warsaw School of Economics, Medical University of Warsaw, Warsaw University of Technology, Józef Piłsudski University of Physical Education, Warsaw University of Life Sciences.

labour market. The curricula they offer influence not only the educational choices of students at the secondary level of education but also decisions of employers looking for a place to situate their firms, which would guarantee them skilled labour force. Finally, Warsaw's largest labour market in Poland allures people from all over the country as well as diverse groups of employers. Therefore, it gives the opportunity to observe problems connected to ill adjustment of qualifications those potential employees have in relation to rapidly changing labour market demand.

For the abovementioned reasons choosing Warsaw as a context for our case study allows us to observe problems connected to vocational education from many angles. It may be compared to "lens" in which we can see many converging processes from different levels and fields.

In this part of the report we will first shortly describe the agreement signed between Vattenfall Heat Poland, Warsaw self-government and Warsaw University of Technology. Its implementation will be studied later on, in the framework of the project. Subsequently, we will explain why actors entered this agreement.

3.2 The Agreement on cooperation for education in professions related to power industry

In March 2008 an agreement between Capital City of Warsaw, Vattenfall Heat Poland and Warsaw University of Technology was signed. Signatories committed themselves to realisation of particular tasks aiming at raising standards of education in occupations connected to power industry. Among them: organisation of practical trainings and vocational trainings for particular groups of students from schools, improvement of technical base of school workshops, transfer of knowledge about newest inventions in power industry, in-service training for teachers from vocational schools, participation of representatives of Vattenfall and Warsaw University of Technology in extra-curricular activities, promotion of vocational education to attract new students to schools, scholarships for best students, support for students in acquiring vocational qualifications and support of Ministry of Economy and Ministry of National Education in creation of vocational specialisation of "power engineer".

The abovementioned agreement is the answer to inefficiency of the systems of education (primary, secondary and tertiary), which created difficulties for all the parties. In other words, all the actors have particular interests in participating in the enterprise. We will now discuss probable reasons for which each of them entered it.

Problems of Warsaw self-government with educational policy

The current regime of the capital city has been established in 2002. Previously, the administrative structure was three-stage: there was Warsaw *poviat*, which consisted of *gminas* divided into city districts. With the reforming act Warsaw became the city with the *poviat* status (*miasto na prawach powiatu*) and previous structure ceased to exist. In other words it acquired two stage structure – as the city divided into districts.

This change had immense influence on the financing of education. The former regime was characterized by major discrepancies in the levels of income between wealthy *Gmina* Centrum (which consisted of seven districts situated in the centre of the city) and the so called "surrounding" gminas (situated on the boarders of the city), which were noticeably poorer. Moreover, huge income differences were also visible between *Gmina* Centrum and Warsaw

poviat, which was in constant struggle for money. In consequences, *Gmina* Centrum could support primary and lower secondary education better than other Warsaw *gminas*, whereas upper secondary education which fell under the competences of Warsaw *poviat* was under-financed.

After the reform the structure has become more centralised at the level of city– the Capital City of Warsaw started to be responsible for dividing money to be spent on education. It is being allotted to particular schools according to algorithm set by the president of the city (who has to gain acceptance of the City Council) which is revised every year. The algorithm consists of four categories: number of students, standards of financing students in this particular type of school (it is higher for vocational schools, sport schools, schools with disabled students etc.), non-standard expenditures (Polish language for foreigners, additional employment, sick leave, rental of buildings etc.) and additional expenditures (scholarships, meals for students at schools, swimming lessons for children etc.). Moreover, city authorities have at disposal also emergency resources, which are being used to eliminate previously created discrepancies between poorer and richer districts.

As we can see from the table beneath, Warsaw spends over 100% more resources on education than it receives from educational part of the subvention.

Table 7 Expenditures on education in Warsaw in euro (millions)

Year	Subvention	Total expenditures
2003	148.57	326.07
2004	175.16	413.92
2005	194.18	478.7
2006	203.75	504.65
2007	234.03	573.67

Source: Educational Policy of the Capital City of Warsaw 2008-2012

When we compare those expenditures with the expenditures of other Polish big cities with the *poviat* status, we will see immense discrepancies, with Warsaw spending over 50% more from its own resources than others.

Table 8 Expenditures on education in selected Polish cities as a % of subvention in 2005

City with the rights of *poviat*	Expenditures on education as a percentage of subvention
Gdańsk	177%
Katowice	172%
Kraków	153%
Poznań	150%
Szczecin	163%
Warszawa	230%
Wrocław	166%

Source: Warsaw Bureau of Education

As one of the city officials states although Warsaw has the highest incomes from all self-governments in Poland, expenditures on education are still a burden for the city, since currently it has also had very expensive investments (the debt of the city in 2009 equalled 39,8% of its budget): *Warsaw has off course better financial situation than most of self-governments – but not as good as it is assumed – especially recently.(…) But decisions have to be made – and those are decisions requiring very complicated financial logistics. For example, last year we issued city bonds, which gave us the opportunity to spread the payment out to twenty years.* (LA1).

As we can see the city had to come out with the idea of issuing bonds to cover the costs of planned investments. Moreover, even though Warsaw spends an important part of its budget to finance education (about 18%[183]) it is still not enough to create efficient and modernised school network. One of the main struggles is vocational education. The city inherited very limited network of vocational secondary schools with outdated technical base from abolished Warsaw *poviat*, which due to financial austerity limited the number of vocational schools. The main reason for it was the significantly higher cost of maintenance and management of those units in comparison to general secondary schools. The other reason was lower interest in this educational path among pupils caused by the widely spread conviction that it is less valuable than general education leading straight to university degree.

When the lack of specialists in many vocations became an important problem of the Warsaw labour market, the authorities of the city put modernisation and popularisation of vocational education among goals of their educational policy. As we read in the document "Educational Policy for years 2008-2012": *In Warsaw the choice of vocational schools is not always perceived as valuable choice, Therefore steps will be taken to indicate positive sides of vocational education and to increase the interest of students and their parents in it. (…) Vocational consultancy will be conducted in all types of schools in Warsaw at each stage of making choices referring to the type of school, specialisation and vocation (…). The role of information technology in vocational life has increased – especially in the case of young people.*

[183] Data from the Department of Finance and Educational Infrastructure, which is a part of the Bureau of Education in the Capital City of Warsaw.

Good knowledge of technologies helps in achieving success on the labour market. Therefore we will be developing modern module curricula[184] *taking advantage of modern technologies* (Educational Policy in years 2008-2012, p. 57).

Achievement of goals such as – promotion of vocational education, vocational consultancy, and modernisation of curricula requires considerable financial outlay. As we can observe, the expenditures per student in vocational schools have been constantly growing: starting from the lower level than general secondary schools to reach visibly higher level in 2006 and 2007[185]:

Table 9 Expenditures per student on secondary vocational education and secondary general education (in euro)

Year	Expenditures per student in vocational secondary schools	Expenditures per student in general secondary schools
2003	878.74	882.98
2004	1 170.14	1 113.51
2005	1 304.21	1 250.32
2006	1 469.77	1 370.33
2007	1 746.79	1 551.09

Source: Bureau of Education, The Capital City of Warsaw 2008

The costs of modernisation, popularisation and adjustment of vocational education to the requirements of the labour market cannot be covered by the city itself. Therefore it seeks alternative sources (mostly European Social Fund) and partners (employers and universities), who can engage their own resources (human, financial, knowledge) to facilitate achievement of those goals. The agreement with Vattenfall and Warsaw University of Technology gives Warsaw self-government the opportunity to do it at least in one of the areas of vocational education.

Warsaw University of Technology and negative selection of students

The significant increase of number of students in tertiary education has not concerned technical universities as much as other. First of all, as it has already been discussed in the previous parts, this type of higher education generates higher expenses, therefore private investors preferred establishing "cheaper" economic or liberal arts schools (they anticipated that population is not willing to invest as much in education as it would be needed in case of most of technical specialisations). Second of all, the level of mathematical education has been declining over the years in result of abolishment of the compulsory final exam in this subject after upper secondary school[186]. As one of our interlocutor claims: *Compulsory final*

[184] This is a quite recent idea – lessons in vocational schools would be divided into those specific to particular specialization and those common for all the students.

[185] Authorities of the city changed after the elections in 2006, which could have had influence on approach towards vocational education.

[186] The compulsory final exam has been abolished in 1980s. There were attempts to restore it throughout the last two decades: it was restored for a short time in the beginnings of 2000s and then again in 2010.

exam in mathematics has been abolished and the curriculum has systematically been reduced. There was no exam pressure on the school – no one has been checking the competences in that subject – unlike polish language competences (EXP1).

Thus, schools have been giving more attention to the subjects, which were compulsory during final exam than to subjects which have not been required from all the students since the former had more influence on the evaluation of the school. Finally, also the level of technical education on the upper secondary level has been declining due to the policy of reducing costs exercised by *poviats*, which resulted in constant underfunding of these schools.

All those factors had influence on technical higher education. If we compare the number of students in the end of the 1990s and in the end of 2000s, we will see significant discrepancy between technical universities and universities. In the case of the latter it has increased by nearly 40%, while in the case of the former by 25% between 1997 and 2009 (see tables 10 and 11).

Table 10 Number of students at Technical Universities and Universities in years 2004-2009

Year	Number of students at Technical Universities	Number of students at Universities
2009	317 468	535 576
2008	322 111	526 381
2007	310 555	538 208
2006	318 905	550 494
2005	331 052	563 062
2004	339 485	551 249

Source: Source: "Higher Education Institutions and their Finances in 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009" Central Statistical Office

Table 11 Number of students at Technical Universities and Universities in years 1997-1999

Year	Number of students in Technical Universities	Number of students in Universities
1999	288 721	407 884
1998	269 940	354 845
1997	240 375	331 750

Source: "Higher Education Institutions and their Finances in 1997,1998,1999" Central Statistical Office

Meanwhile, when we make the same comparison with Warsaw University of Technology and University of Warsaw, we will see no such discrepancy – the number of students in 2009 is 23% higher in reference to the year 1997 in case of the former and 19% higher in case of the latter (see tables 12 and 13). It may be due to the fact that Warsaw University of Technology is an undisputed ranking leader among technical schools and it is first choice for great number of people deciding on this educational path. It is also because the Warsaw University of

Technology also opened studies in not-technical fields of studies, such as economics, administration and social science, to attract more candidates and improve its financial situation.

Table 12 Number of students at Warsaw University of Technology and University of Warsaw in years 2004-2009

Year	Number of students at Warsaw University of Technology	Number of students at University of Warsaw
2009	31 900	55 387
2008	31 101	55 973
2007	29 978	55 515
2006	29 847	56 633
2005	30 631	56 858
2004	30 801	55 203

Source: Source: "Higher Education Institutions and their Finances in 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009" Central Statistical Office

Table 13 Number of students at Warsaw University of Technology and University of Warsaw in years 1997-1998

Year[a]	Number of students at Warsaw University of Technology	Number of students at University of Warsaw
1998	26 585	46 752
1997	24 402	44 872

[a] There are no comparable data available for 1999 – due to the administrative reform the system of reporting has not been fully developed yet.
Source: "Higher Education Institutions and their Finances in 1997, 1998" Central Statistical Office

Yet , if we compare the number of students accepted for the first year at both schools and the number of graduates we will see difference. The number of new students in relation to graduates has been between 17% to 28% higher in the case of University of Warsaw and between 33% to 51% higher in the case of Warsaw University of Technology in years 2004-2009 (see table 14).

Table 14 Number of first year students and graduates at Warsaw University of Technology and University of Warsaw in years 2004-2009

Year	Number of students at Warsaw University of Technology		Number of students at University of Warsaw	
	Students	Graduates	Students	Graduates
2009	8248	4584	12546	9222
2008	8376	4093	11685	8555
2007	7543	4628	11157	8726
2006	6938	4474	11630	8477
2005	7250	4830	11765	8412
2004	7234	4694	11080	9198

Source: "Higher Education Institutions and their Finances in 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009" Central Statistical Office

The fact that more people graduate from University of Warsaw than from Warsaw University of Technology in comparison to number of first year students is probably related to the fact that entry to technical studies is easier than its completion – in comparison to university studies in general. This may be connected to not sufficient level of preparation of those students to meet the requirements of studies or – the other way round – quality of teaching, which does not enable student to catch up with the curricula.[187].

If we take into consideration the already mentioned devaluation of mathematical and technical education visible in more than a decade, we may assume that investment in future candidates – their level of preparation before entering studies – has to be profitable for Warsaw University of Technology. The agreement with Vattenfall and Warsaw self-government gives it the opportunity to influence the curricula as well as practical skills students acquire – which may – in result – give them candidates better suiting their ideal profile.

Vattenfall and struggle for new human capital

Vattenfall – as well as every other company operating in the field of power engineering in Poland – fell victim of systemic short-sightedness. As a result of collective bargaining after 1989 all the privatised firms from the power sector have been obliged to keep the so called "social pacts". According to those pacts none from the power engineers could have been laid off after privatisation of an enterprise. The employers were forced to either support excess levels of employment and wait until employees reach retirement age or negotiate dismissal by mutual agreement of parties (with high redundancy payment). In result, there was no demand for new power engineers and vocational schools closed this educational path (it has been eliminated from the list of vocational specialisations). However in 2000s the demand

[187] One may also argument that the number of graduates of technical studies is lower, since they find secure and well paid employment before graduation more often than university students and have no more initiative to get their diploma.

occurred again, since many middle-rank employees have reached retirement age – but the qualified human resources came out to be scarce.

Vattenfall – together with Polish Confederation of Private Employers – engaged itself in lobbying for restoring "power engineer" as a specialization in the system of vocational education. As one of the interviewed experts claims, employers were forced to literally write the curriculum for this educational path, because there was no educational institution interested in preparing such program: *They have [representatives of Vattenfall] basically written the curriculum, because there was no educational institution showing interest in establishing such specialisation in the system of public education. And this is a gigantic barrier, because the structure is rigid and creating new vocational specialisation requires huge engagement from some group of employers (…). So, in consequence the burden rests on the shoulders of the employers* (EXP1).

Agreement with Warsaw self-government and Warsaw University of Technology was a good opportunity for Vattenfall to gain important stakeholders, which could put additional pressure on government institutions to restore the specialisation. Moreover, they tried to make sure, that some students would gain skills required from power engineers, even though such specialisation did not exist officially.

The employers finally succeeded with their strive for new specialization in April 2010, when the Minister of National Education signed the amendment to the directive on classification of specializations in vocational education. Nevertheless, schools teaching that specialisation are so far scarce. Therefore, the engagement of Vattenfall in Warsaw may be considered an investment in the firm, since it may guarantee itself future employees, which will be prepared for the job the way it expects them to be[188].

[188] Interestingly enough, the vocational school in Warsaw, which was taken under Vatenfall's wing decided not to open this specialisation this year.

Beneficiaries of the Agreement

Potential beneficiaries of the Agreement are the students and teachers from vocational schools in Warsaw. The former are to acquire certain skills and gain better employment perspectives thanks to extracurricular trainings provided by the enterprise (including practical training), lessons conducted by the employees of Warsaw University of Technology, scholarships for best student granted by employer, job positions for best students. The latter are to actualise their knowledge (also practical) thanks to trainings.

Up until now, only one of such institutions has been participating in activities connected to the Agreement discussed above[189]. Our research will focus on the actions, which have so far been taken in that school.

3.3 The case study and the capability approach

As long as we perceive the problems of vocational education which are being answered in the Agreement from the perspective of its signatories, it remains reduced to the question of mismatch/match with the labour market demand/ requirements of further educational path. In CA terms we could say that it is being limited to issue of access to commodities/quality of commodities. We would like to broaden this view and look also at the 'other side of the coin' – namely the aspect of choice the 'beneficiaries' have (mostly students themselves). This means concentrating on two main aspects: selection of educational path and the possibility of changing it.

In the first case, earlier educational path of the students has to be problematised: becoming a student of a vocational school was an effect of choice or was it an effect of negative selection? To answer this question, we need more information on all stages of their educational path and their social background (for instance, education and professional situation of parents, housing conditions, etc.). We will also analyse what information about educational possibilities did they have and from what sources (counselling, peers, family etc.).

In the case of the second, choice available in the framework of the programme is of the essence: Is it possible to influence it (ex. the curriculum, the rules of participation); What are the sanctions for deviations? Are any capabilities for changing the path being provided (ex. 'learning how to learn')?

[189] Lately, the other one has expressed its interest.

CONCLUSION

Soon after 1989, Poles have started to experience rapid socio-economic changes. The immense reformatory steps, which have been taken to make Polish economy adjusted to functioning in globalised world produced also numerous negative side-effects. Poles had to face massive unemployment and precarious employment, consequences of which are still clearly visible. Job loss and long-term unemployment hit not only people whose qualifications on the labour market were no longer demanded or outdated. Also many young people found themselves unemployed straight after school because, on the one hand, in many cases the skills they acquired in education process came out to be redundant and, on the one hand, older workers in sectors with traditionally strong trade unions had succeeded to secure their core interest to disadvantage of periphery workers.

In reaction to the threat of unemployment, Poles have invested in education. However, the system of education has only partially succeeded to respond to the challenges of transformation and modernisation. On the one hand, it came out to be ill-adjusted to the labour market requirements. For years it has been producing graduates in popular fields (such as management, finances and banking, social sciences) in which provision of education was cheap, but their graduates were not necessarily looked for by employers. Also the underdeveloped system of life-long learning could not alleviate the consequences of this mismatch in any significant way. Despite the fact that these problems have been observed and named by researchers, they have not been corrected, mainly because the only monitoring inscribed in the system was set on controlling the process of education not its effects. Moreover, the decentralisation, which strongly influenced the management and financing of education, has completely neglected the systemic coordination (confusing it with hierarchical control). This came out to be the final nail in the coffin for secondary vocational education.

The reforms of the education system have sustained – and maybe even increased – inequalities. First of all, although the reformers succeeded in reducing discrepancies in the competences children gain at the primary and lower-secondary level thanks to prolonging the duration of compulsory general schooling, they failed to assure similarly high quality of teaching on the upper secondary level. This is the moment when educational paths start to be highly differentiated – the choice of school type at upper secondary level determines significantly the further path (it is very hard to catch-up, when one wants to revise the initial choice). What is more, choices made at that point reveal reproduction of traditional gender patterns (more young males go to vocational schools) – which in turn influences the distribution of gender at the level of tertiary education. Second of all, the designed system of financing early childhood, primary and secondary education contributes to the reproduction and creation of new regional inequalities, since some of the self-governments invest in it more from their own resources than others. Finally, Polish education system sustains the strong relation between parents' level of education and children's educational achievements.

Local initiatives to overcome barriers created by the inefficiencies of the education system became even more important in the light of the problems discussed above. Therefore, we have chosen for our case study one of such initiatives. The Capital City of Warsaw, the Warsaw University of Technology and Vattenfall Heat Poland entered into an agreement aiming at bridging the gap, which occurred in the area of vocational education of power engineers. In this initial step of the research, we wanted to shed light on the particular motivation each actor might have had to engage in this agreement. The authorities of the city have to deal

with the consequence of decomposition of secondary vocational education and bear the costs of “rebooting” the system. The Warsaw University of Technology has to face the problem of devaluation of mathematical and technical skills in the earlier stages of education, which produces students, who are not prepared enough to meet the requirements of the study. Whereas, Vattenfall struggles with the consequences of long lasting excess employment in power engineering which resulted in disappearance of this specialisation from the list of taught vocations. Therefore, this case may be treated as the laboratory in which numerous inefficiencies of the education system and the attempts to overcome them may be studied. The next step will be to see whether and how the ambitious goals indicated in the agreement are being pursued.

Moreover, our aim was also to go beyond the issue of mismatch between the labour supply and labour demand, by referring to the perspective of potential beneficiaries of the above-mentioned cooperation, i.e. students in vocational education. Therefore, we included the question of choice or lack of choice in their previous stages of education (if their educational path is a matter of choice or negative selection) and at the current stage (whether they are able to influence their further path).

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