

D 3.3 - Policy Performance and Evaluation: Synthesis of Country Reports

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- i) to 'advance the knowledge base that underpins the formulation and implementation of relevant policies in Europe with the aim of enhancing the employment of young people and their transition to economic and social independence', and
- ii) to engage with 'relevant communities, stakeholders and practitioners in the research with a view to supporting employment policies in Europe.' Contributions to a dialogue about these results can be made through the project website www.style-research.eu, or by following us on Twitter @STYLEEU.

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1. Executive Summary

Werner Eichhorst, Kari Hadjivassiliou and Florian Wozny

This report is an overview of Task 3 (Quantitative, Case Study-Based Analysis of Performance and Policies) of Work Package 3. It summarises eight independent but comparative country reports (the full version of which is available at: <http://www.style-research.eu/publications/working-papers/>) for Estonia, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the UK which assess the structure of country-specific, youth-related policies using a common systematic framework. Besides descriptive parts detailing education and training, including vocational training, systems, based often on desk research, local experts (comparable groups of policy makers and policy implementing organisations) have been asked to give their appraisal of national systems and how these can be improved – or have been improved – by recent policy innovations.

Establishing a comparative overview of different youth labour markets in Europe is valuable for several reasons. First, the heterogeneity between educational systems that we see in Europe enables mutual learning. In combination with quantitative findings from task one (Youth unemployment in the EU: A Quantitative Analysis of Country Performances and Impact in Policies (Hadjivassiliou, Kirchner Sala and Speckesser (2015)) and two (The Effectiveness of Policies to combat Youth unemployment (Gonzalez Carreras, Kirchner Sala and Speckesser (2015))¹ of this work package, the descriptive country reports – with appraisals from local experts – provide details on potential best practices that can possibly be used to formulate policy recommendations which are part of task five (Policy synthesis and integrative report (forthcoming)).

In order to provide a better understanding of how institutions have been studied in every country report, the governance structure sets the starting point of the country studies. This is because a decent understanding of decision-making structures is important to understand the larger institutional environment and assess administrative capacities and limitations. This is followed by a precise description of each educational path concerning its structure and importance.

The transition from education to the labour market is another important aspect of Task 3. In addition to exploring the education system together with various forms of vocational training, which works to close the gap between the education and the labour market, several youth-related labour market policies are discussed. These consist of active labour market policies (ALMPs) which support young people in finding a job and, on the other hand, legislation that hampers employment by increasing the costs of labour or creating unintended incentives. Thus, country specific employment protection and working hour legislation, minimum wage legislation, welfare benefits and labour taxation are all discussed.

A precise overview of youth related policies for every country builds the groundwork for Task 4, which provides a comparative policy overview of school-to-work transitions and youth labour market dynamics, performance and effectiveness.

¹ These reports are available <http://www.style-research.eu/publications/working-papers/>

Before giving a short executive summary of the main findings for all eight countries, it is necessary to point out that differences in labour market statistics between countries are partly driven by the recent crisis and, thus, are the result of a lack in labour demand. Youth-related policies, however, focus (mostly) on the supply side of labour, like human capital, for example. Therefore, interpreting good labour market statistics as good youth labour policy can be misleading, which is why the country reports represent only one segment of task five. Furthermore, macroeconomic environments drive the focus of policies, making skill mismatches a topic discussed more in countries like Germany or the Netherlands and the distribution of jobs to be of particular importance in a country like Spain.²

Nevertheless, institutions shape the youth labour market despite labour demand shocks; thus, analysing these institutional arrangements is an important aspect of this task. An in-depth examination of youth-related institutional frameworks must recognise differentiation between heterogeneous groups of young people. These differences range from youths who passed through the educational system and became directly employed afterwards without any assistance to youths who are (long-term) unemployed without any formal school-leaving qualification. Even within these extreme cases there are several differences concerning family background, ethnicity, nationality or sex, for example. By having a look at youth-related policy innovations³ and discussions about this topic, we can see that this insight has started to reach the political level in every country covered in our reports.

While there are many differences in the educational and vocational schemes across countries, there are some similarities, at least within certain groups of countries. In comparison to labour market policies, educational legislation is more centralised in all countries observed. This ranges from high levels of centralization, like in Turkey, where the basic structure of education is planned and operated by the state, to intermediate levels, like in Estonia or Spain, where planning takes place at the state level and operation happens at the local level, and to low levels of centralization, like in Germany or Sweden, where planning and operating is realised at the state and local level.

The basic structure of schooling is also similar between countries. Every country offers primary, secondary, vocational and tertiary education with compulsory schooling parts. However, there are country specific differences in the emphasis of each educational part. Whereas, for example, vocational education is traditionally important in Germany and the Netherlands, the opposite is true in the case of the UK. Such factors explain differences in the levels of highest educational attainment and differences in the types of problematic situations in each country. In the case of Estonia, Germany and the Netherlands, high dropout rates became an issue in tertiary or vocational education, while early school leaving is especially an issue in the UK. Despite these differences, the Netherlands and the UK share similar concerns have started a discussion of whether the educational systems generate skill mismatches at the labour market.

² see also McGuinness, Bergin and Whelan (2015) A Comparative Time Series Analysis of Overeducation in Europe: Is there a common policy approach? <http://www.style-research.eu/publications/working-papers>

³ see also Petmesidou and González-Menéndez (eds.)(2015) Barriers to and triggers of innovation and knowledge transfer <http://www.style-research.eu/publications/working-papers>

In every country of this report, labour legislation is usually universal rather than youth specific, especially in case of dismissal protection. Nevertheless, certain forms of employment are youth related, like fixed-term contracts, for example, due to their overrepresentation. In general, atypical forms of employment or unemployment are overrepresented among youths. It is thus not surprising that youth-related labour market policies are considered relevant in every country, although such policies are something new in Turkey, Poland and Estonia.

Involving social partners in decision-making processes could facilitate efficiency and acceptance of youth-specific legislations. However, such an involvement is self-evident by having a look at countries like Poland and Turkey where social partners are not sufficiently integrated in legislative decisions. In countries like Estonia, Germany, the Netherlands or Spain, involving social partners is much more common. A positive impact of social partner involvement is not only limited to legislation but also to educational adaptations or active labour market policies.

Youth-related active labour market policies focus on the transition between education and the labour market, especially for the disadvantaged. If such policies are in place, they are often complex and fragmented, for example, as in Germany and the UK. This is related to the fact that active labour market policies are often decentralized. Unfortunately, little effort has been undertaken in evaluating these policies, hence the value of the work being conducted in work package three (<http://www.style-research.eu/project/work-packages/wp3-policy-performance>). The contribution of this report is to provide a brief summary of the main issues discussed in each of the national reports available on the project website.

2. Germany

Werner Eichhorst, Florian Wozny and Michael Cox

- The German youth unemployment rate is traditionally low in comparison to other European countries. It decreased steadily in the last years, even within the recent crisis, and has become the lowest in the European Union.
- The level of responsibility in matters of education is interlaced between the various levels of government and social partners in Germany. On the one hand, federal states have legislative authority in education policy and arrange the administration. On the other hand, the federal government is responsible for extracurricular vocational training and further training, training grants and promotion of scientific research. Traditionally, trade unions and employers' associations play a crucial role in the context of education responsibility, not least due to importance of dual vocational training in Germany.
- The federal structure of education in Germany leads to a heterogeneous system. However, this does not mean that every single federal state has unique regulations. Often, differences occur between clusters with similar regulations. What is common between all federal states is the loosely defined structure of the schooling system. At the age of six compulsory schooling starts. After finishing compulsory schooling, children are separated into different educational paths depending on their abilities. From a legal point of view, freedom to choose between educational paths ensures access to tertiary education, independent of the selected school type after finishing compulsory schooling. In the case of dual vocational education, there is no legal minimum requirement with regard to chosen school type.
- However, the freedom to choose between educational paths, especially between tertiary and vocational education is part of recent discussions. There is wide consensus between labour market experts, public institutions and social partners that the mobility between vocational and tertiary education has to increase, not least due to the on-going trend of 'academisation'. Although dual vocational education is still very important, the amount of new students was already higher in 2011 than the amount of new apprentices. Improvements in recognition and accreditation of educational achievements facilitate upward and downward mobility, leading to better labour market matches. However, recent improvements within this area only act as models.
- Besides rather highly educated individuals, disadvantaged young people have also come into focus recently. Similar to the case of potential academics, they face difficulties in receiving further education. These obstacles refer to issues that relate to the educational and social system which frustrates rather than promotes disadvantaged young people and to employers that feel unable to train these people. There is wide consensus among German stakeholders that improving transparency of educational schemes and centralising support for

disadvantaged young people will help to tackle these obstacles. However, again similar to the case of potential academics, improvements within this area can only act as models.

- In general, several measures are implemented to support the connection between the education system and the labour market. Unfortunately, little effort has been undertaken to evaluate all these different types of active labour market policies for youth in Germany. However, existing evidence reveal positive long and short run employment effects from measures that focus on job assistance and training, while public job creation has counter-productive effects. Furthermore, subsidies might trigger negative indirect crowding-out effects that counteract their positive direct impact on youth labour markets.
- Despite the minimum wage, with its exceptions that mostly affect young people, there are no major differences in the German employment law for young compared to older people. This is why there is no general difference in the employment protection or unemployment assistance legislation with regard to age. However, by taking a closer look at fixed-term contracts among young people, it becomes clear that this group is more affected by temporary employment than older age cohorts.
- Social assistance differs for young people. As long as benefit recipients live in their parents' house, they receive a lower amount of social assistance. Furthermore, if a benefit recipient under 25 years old wants to move out, he/she needs the approval of local authorities so that he/she may obtain the benefits to finance his/her own flat.
- Currently, the generally favourable situation of the German labour market enables policy makers to focus more on rather specific subgroups, such as disadvantaged youth or potential academics, instead of youth in general. Independently of the question of whether the dual vocational scheme is responsible for low levels of youth unemployment, the current situation in Germany enables policy makers to avoid dealing with one of its main drawbacks, namely, the freedom to choose between educational paths.

A full outline is provided in Eichhorst, Wozny and Cox (2015) *Policy Performance and Evaluation: Germany*, [STYLE Working Paper WP3.3 Performance Germany](#)

3. Estonia

Raul Eamets and Katrin Humal

In Estonia, youth-related policies are designed and youth work is coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Research (MER). However, several stakeholders are involved in policy design and implementation – the Ministry of Social Affairs (MSA), the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, representatives of employers, etc. Policy implementation on local levels is coordinated through county and municipality governments. Youth work itself is executed through a number of institutions run by municipalities or NGOs, e.g. local youth centres, youth unions, youth camps, information and counselling centres, hobby education schools etc. The link between these institutions and the MER is the Estonian Youth Work centre, which is a national organisation working to implement, develop and promote youth policies and youth work.

Compulsory education in Estonia includes basic education which starts at the age of 7 and lasts for 9 years or until the student turns 17. After basic education, a choice can be made between general secondary education and vocational education (either vocational secondary education or vocational education based on basic education). In practice about 70% choose secondary education, after which they can continue with higher education, either in a university or a professional higher education institution. But vocational education based on secondary education can be chosen as well – about 43% of all students in vocational education are enrolled in those programmes. In addition, some vocational education programmes have no education requirements and can therefore be attended by those who have not completed basic school. Vocational education in the form of apprenticeships is not very common, including only about 2% of students. Work experience placements (internships) are a crucial part of vocational and professional higher education, but also some university programmes (such as medicine and teaching).

The number of school-aged children has been decreasing for more than a decade, inducing a need to restructure the general education system. Schools have been and will be (partially) closed, especially on the secondary level, to enable offering high-quality education. In addition, the national curricula for basic and secondary schools were updated in 2011 to separate the two levels of schooling more clearly and to encourage using active learning methods, integrating different subject fields and bringing subjects 'closer to life'. Extra attention has been paid to increasing individual approaches to students with special educational needs. A number of initiatives have been started by the MER to involve different stakeholders – schools, parents, communities, vocational and higher education institutions, and employers – in improving the quality of general education.

Vocational education is generally free and more often offered by public rather than private institutions. The reputation of vocational education has improved in recent years and cooperation has increased with employers regarding the contents of the programmes as well as the vocational standards system. The legislation introduced in 2013 presented a shift from input-based to outcome-based vocational education where the knowledge, skills and attitudes of graduates are related to vocational qualification standards. Special attention is paid to improving the quality of practical learning and

internships. Vocational students are entitled to results-based study grants, but there are special grants for those facing economic difficulties and those who do not live close to the school.

Higher education programmes taught in Estonian are free in public institutions, but the student is required to study full-time – otherwise he/she will be transferred to part-time studies and the institution has a right (although no obligation) to charge a tuition fee. The tuition fee is determined by the university although there are national limits. Such a system is the result of recent reforms, as before 2013/14 most programmes had both state-funded study places and study places where the student had to pay a tuition fee. In addition, the financing system of higher education institutions shifted from quantity-based to quality-based; i.e. considering other indicators than merely the number of students (as opposed to before the reforms). Altogether, even though the number of students has been decreasing, the number of state-financed study places and the magnitude of financing were increased during the reform. The grant system for higher education was changed at the same time – from results-based to need-based. The current system still includes state scholarships for students with the best results and in fields that the state is prioritising, as well as for students with special needs and students that come from a foster home/family.

A very worrying aspect of the education system is high drop-out rates in vocational education – on average every fifth student quits. The situation is worse in programmes based on basic education where every fourth quits and in programmes with no educational requirements where every third quits. Basic school graduates (15–16 years old) are often not mature enough socially to make informed educational decisions, especially in as career counselling as well as psychological and pedagogical counselling are not available in most schools. Even though they are available centrally in each county, this might not be enough for providing the necessary help at the right time to prevent dropping out of the education system early. This contributes to a situation where the NEET rate in Estonia has been slightly below the EU average during economically better times (13.8% among 15–29-year-olds in 2014), but during the crisis was considerably above it (e.g. 18.3% in 2009). At the same time there has not yet been a system to observe and target NEET youth.

OECD employment protection legislation (EPL) indicators show that permanent workers in Estonia have somewhat lower protection against individual dismissals compared to the OECD average, while protection against collective dismissals is at the average level. At the same time the regulations for temporary employment forms are notably stronger than the OECD average. For instance, regulations regarding how a fixed-term employment contract will under certain conditions automatically change to permanent have led to a situation where the share of temporary contracts is very low (about 5%). Notification times for dismissal are related to job tenure, which is why in practice shorter notification times can be expected for young people.

The Employment Contracts Act underwent significant reforms in 2009 with the aim to increase both labour market flexibility and social security. Notification times for redundancies were shortened, as was the duration of the severance pay from the employer (the total time remained the same but the rest of the pay now comes from the UIF). Severance pay for premature termination of temporary contracts was increased. Unemployment insurance benefits were planned to be increased as well, but due to the crisis this was cancelled, causing the whole reform to be disapproved of by the Estonian Trade Union Confederation.

All regulations regarding employment apply regardless of the employee's age or type of employment (regular employment, apprenticeships, work experience placements, internships and traineeships).

This includes minimum wage, welfare benefits (i.e. unemployment and child benefits) and labour taxation. The only age-related exception is that there are restrictions on daily and weekly working times for underage employees and they are forbidden to work overtime.

The system of financial support for the unemployed is a mix of universal and contribution-based systems. Young people are entitled to at least the fixed unemployment benefit, even if they have not worked before. But the unemployment insurance benefit that they receive is usually lower and paid for a shorter period compared to older age groups, as its size is related to previous average wage and job tenure. Similarly, maternity/parental benefits are related to previous income, while child allowance is related to the number and age of children. Child allowances increased significantly in 2015.

A characteristic of the Estonian labour taxation system is that there is a lower limit for social security contributions. Therefore, employers have little motivation to hire part-time employees to low-wage jobs (where the monthly wage would be less than the limit that the minimum contribution is based on). In addition, this means the tax wedge is the lowest (about 36%) at a wage that equals this limit, and increasing both when wage gets higher (up to about 43%) and when it gets lower (e.g. around 41% for someone working half-time for the minimum wage). The minimum contribution underwent a significant increase in 2009, thus increasing those effects even more during the crisis.

Until 2015 there were no youth-specific national ALMP measures, while now the 'My first job' service provides partial remuneration of wage and training costs to employers who hire the target group – young people with little or no experience and no specialised education. Young people, if they have registered as unemployed, can use all the services offered by the UIF – the most common measures among youth are labour market trainings and career counselling, workshops on finding a job, work practice and employment subsidies. Participants in trainings, work practice, internships or volunteer work are entitled to a daily scholarship and remuneration of travel costs and costs related to caretaking responsibilities. As for the employment subsidy, it is usually available for those who have been unemployed for more than 12 months, but only 6 months for 16–24-year-olds. The UIF also offers a start-up grant for those who want to become entrepreneurs.⁴ There are also start-up incubators, competitions and events organised by other organisations (incl. universities). Similarly, other organisations have run EU-funded projects that provide young unemployed people with trainings, counselling, practical experience etc.

New national ALMP measures will be introduced in 2015 as a part of the European Commission's Youth Guarantee initiative. Responsibility for the implementation lies on the MER and the MSA, while stakeholders like youth organisations, employers and governmental offices will be actively included. The measures include workshops to introduce the labour market and working life to students in grades 8–12; supporting youth in entering and staying at the labour market through youth work; and integrating NEET youth to the labour market or back to education by offering individual support.

As a result of the educational policies, decreases are expected in the share of 18–24-year-olds with a low level of education who are not studying; the share of adults (25–64-year-olds) with no

⁴ see Masso and Paes (2015) Business Start-Ups and Youth Self-Employment in Estonia <http://www.style-research.eu/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/STYLE-Working-Paper-WP7.1-Estonia-.pdf>

specialisation; the drop-out rate from vocational education; NEET rates; and the youth unemployment rate (15–24-year-olds). Increases are expected in the share of basic education graduates who have received career counselling; the share of secondary and vocational education graduates with at least basic ICT skills; and the employment rate of 20–34-year-olds who have graduated 1–3 years ago.

Due to the ageing of population, Estonia is about to face a serious labour shortage. This is magnified by the increased labour mobility both within the country and to abroad. 15–24-year-olds have become increasingly interested in going abroad, but fortunately their emigration plans have generally a more temporary nature compared to older age groups. Also, they are much more often driven by opportunities to see the world and develop professionally rather than high unemployment or disappointment in career opportunities in Estonia. Therefore, young people can be expected to return after some time and benefit Estonia with the knowledge and experience gained abroad.

A full outline is provided in Eamets and Humal (2015) *Policy Performance and Evaluation: Estonia*, [STYLE Working Paper WP3.3 Performance Estonia](#)

4. Spain

M. C. González-Menéndez, F.J. Mato, R. Gutiérrez, A. M. Guillén, B. Cueto and A. Tejero

The economic recession has placed under extreme strain the youth labour market and the school to work transition system in Spain. The report, in a three-part format, presents and analyses the background to and recent developments in youth labour market performance, institutions and policies in Spain. The first part focuses on institutional arrangements; the second part focuses on the most recent policy and legal framework innovations; the third, concluding part, provides an assessment of the most likely effects of policy changes and continuities on different youth groups.

It is important to consider the sub-national regional government level in analyses of labour market and education policies in Spain. Employment and labour relations norms are nationally defined, while youth active labour market policies fall under the responsibility of regional governments. Even if educational policies are more restricted by national legislation than employment policies, regional governments have competences over education too. Social partners are officially involved in youth-related policies to a large extent, their level of influence varying by area, governance level and region, and their co-operation may have intensified in the crisis.

The most important overall policy innovations targeting young people have been educational reforms and activation policies. The specific policies most singled out by social actors in the training sphere are the development of skills certification and their EU transferability and the Dual Training at VET. Other important innovations, such as changes in labour contracts and wage formation through collective bargaining, not specifically targeting young people, have impacted the youth labour market. However, these innovations, implemented in an era of severe economic recession and austerity, have had weak effects, and the traditional imbalances of the Spanish youth labour market are still profound.⁵ Young people with intermediate educational level may have been the main beneficiaries but no substantial changes in levels of employment, transitions from temporary to permanent employment, long-term unemployment and skills mismatches, and unemployed people participation in training programmes have been observed yet.

Differential dismissal costs by contract explain the prevalence of the second tier (temporary contracts) among young workers, since legal limits to temporary employment are not enforced, and there are no differential criteria by age for applying the national minimum wage. Individual working time reductions are since 2012 subsidised, which could benefit the young. Since 2009 the employment of young

⁵ see González-Menéndez, Guillén, Cueto, Gutiérrez, Mato and Tejero (2015) Barriers to and triggers for innovation and knowledge transfer in Spain <http://www.style-research.eu/publications/working-papers/>

workers part-time is partly subsidised in terms of the employer social security contribution, which helps to explain the rise of this type of contracts in recent years, even during the crisis. In general, welfare benefits do not differ for young people, with the exception of disability. The labour tax burden in terms of income tax, and employer and employee social security contributions is comparatively high in Spain, especially for households with children.

A new activation strategy was set-up in 2013 and 2014, linking the allocation of funding from central government to regional results, encouraging the systematic use of profiling by regionally-run agencies, creating a single nationwide portal for job-search, and foreseeing the involvement of private providers in delivering job-search assistance. It is too early to assess the strategy's impact, but the introduction of new agents (private businesses) in job intermediation services is likely to provide a greater dynamism in job placements. However, the management of unemployment benefits on a regional basis still likely impairs geographical mobility across Spanish regions. In general, most recent changes to youth employment policies are not innovations, but small changes in policies that were already underway.

Wage formation and educational reforms may render positive results as to youth employment by reducing wages in the short-term, and by reducing the portion of under qualified youth in the long-term. In any case, a substantial proportion of low-qualified youth suffering very long-term unemployment during the crisis is in an increasingly chronic situation and should be urgently targeted by policies. In order to address the skill gap, an increase in the proportion of STEM graduates could be underscored as one of the main objectives in the medium term.

Finally, considering the role played by families in dealing with the risks the young in transition face, the level of access to tertiary education, and the level of unemployment protection, the characterisation in comparative research of the Spanish case as 'sub-protective' is found inadequate, even if access to and the quality of opportunities for training and life-long learning are a weakness. A more finely grained comparative analysis is deemed necessary. The different possible variants of labour market dualism observed in the EU context is the starting point proposed. If so considered, the Spanish case would fall under a category of 'longitudinal dualism'.

A full outline is provided in González-Menéndez, Mato, Gutiérrez, Guillén, Cueto and Tejero (2015) *Policy Performance and Evaluation: Spain*,
[STYLE Working Paper WP3.3 Performance Spain](#)

5. The Netherlands

Bekker, S., M. van de Meer, R. Muffels & A. Wilthagen

I. Institutional arrangements:

Education: transitions from school to work

- The Dutch education system is a mixed system of general education at primary (5-12 years), secondary (HAVO/VWO 12-18 years) and tertiary level (University, 19-22 years) and vocational education and training at secondary (MBO, 12-16 years) and tertiary level (HBO, 17-20 years). The Dutch education system resembles very much a so-called 'general skills' regime (Hall & Soskice 2001). The level of generic skills of Dutch youngsters is therefore rather high compared to youngsters in other countries of the OECD.
- The Dutch training system is a dual system in which students may choose between the work-based route (BBL) and the school-based route (BOL). As of 2014, new regulations demand that schools at secondary and tertiary vocation level offer obligatory traineeships to every new student. If there is no traineeship found for the student by the school or the student him/herself the student is not admitted to the school.
- There appears a shortage of traineeships, internships and apprenticeships offered by employers for the large number of students. Because admittance to these types of education is dependent on a traineeship the shortage in supply means that youngsters lack education opportunities and become NEETs (not in employment, education or training).
- There is a strong debate in the Netherlands on the mismatch between the offered skills that students acquire at school and the required skills for executing the tasks at the workplace. The substance of the debate is on how the gap between offered and demanded skills can and need to be closed to improve the job match notably at entry into the labour market. The proposed reforms in the so-called national qualification infrastructure resemble this debate.
- There is an on-going debate on the return to investments in tertiary education, HBO as well as University, because of the high dropout rate in the first year of the education period and the low yield after four years. The dropout rate in HBO is about 30 to 40% either for students coming from secondary vocational or from general training.

Labour market, social security and welfare: transitions from unemployment to work

- The Dutch youth unemployment rate is traditionally low in comparison to other European countries even though it is on average two times as high as the overall unemployment rate. Youth unemployment rose strongly during the crisis, as did the overall unemployment rate, from 7% in 2008 to about 14% in 2013. From 2014 on youth unemployment is declining again and is now 12% in the beginning of 2015.
- The governance structure with respect to youth policies reflects the features of the Dutch welfare state, highly centralised in terms of law making and policy formation but with decentralised responsibilities for the execution of specific policies notably in the domain of labour market, social security and welfare.
- Regional (the provinces) and local authorities have discretionary power and operate with a certain degree of autonomy, but they are expected to cooperate to reduce unequal treatment across regions and municipalities. First responsible for the provision of unemployment benefits is the implementation office of the unemployment act (UWV), which also acts as the public employment office (Dutch PES). Before, January 1, 2015 the UWV was also responsible for the execution of the youth disability scheme (WAJONG).
- The municipality implements the social assistance scheme that renders people a minimum income in the case no other means of subsistence are available. The level of the social minimum income depends on the age and the household composition of the beneficiary. For 18, 19 and 20 years old the minimum assistance is lower than for 21 years old who get the adult minimum income. As of January 1, 2015 the municipalities became also responsible for the so-called Participation Act, that is a wage-subsidy scheme for the employer to warrant employment of vulnerable groups on the labour market including the young disabled.
- Due to austerity measures during the crisis the time and effort put into mediation of the short-term UIB recipients have been diminished. The focus has therefore been shifted to e-coaching and e-matching to reduce the time needed for guidance and mediation and to focus on the most vulnerable group of people who need intensive mediation.
- The Act on Work and Welfare (WWB) contains a waiting period for those below 27 years of age. However, social assistance is denied when the youngster returns after 4 weeks and a return to state-supported education is possible. There is no evaluative research conducted yet on the impact of this rule, but there is some evidence from seven municipalities that 30% to 48% of youth does not return after the 4 weeks waiting period (Ministry Social Affairs and Employment, 2013).
- The Netherlands are characterised by a preventive and dual system of employment protection legislation. Employers have to submit a request for dissolution of the employment contract from the lower courts or ask for a dismissal permit from the Dutch PES (UWV), before they can dismiss an employee. Half of the cases are now brought to court. At the same time the Netherlands has a liberal system for non-standard employment meaning that whereas the EPL for permanent workers is fairly high (2.8 according to most recent OECD figures), the EPL for flexible workforces is fairly low (1.2).

- Dutch youth is increasingly and to a high extent employed in temporary contracts and the chances of making a transition into an open-ended employment contract have declined.

II. Policy Innovations: facilitating transitions into work

Education: transitions from school to work

- There is a commonly felt need to improve the match between the education system and the labour market. A reform of the national qualification infrastructure is in preparation, entailing the reduction of the number of education programmes and the creation of a clearly defined set of labour market-oriented career profiles. This restructuring will also facilitate schools in catering more to the needs of regional labour markets by developing tailor-made courses.
- One of the major policy efforts was to reduce the number of early school-leavers or drop-outs. The policy was very successful and the dropout rate has been reduced from 5,5% in 2002 to 2.7% in 2012. Part of the success is the integrated and concerted approach, in which schools were involved, but also social work institutions and local communities.
- Since the establishment of the Knowledge and Innovation Agenda in the early 200s and the Technology Pact in May 2013 the most important policy innovations concern the public-private initiatives of the Centres of Craftmanship in secondary vocational training (MBO) and the Centres of Excellence in higher vocational training (HBO). In addition, for the period 2014-2017 the government invest 100 million euros in the creation of a regional investment fund for the setup of dual learning-work programmes that can improve the qualitative match between MBO and work practice.

Labour Market, Social Security and Welfare: transitions from unemployment into work

- Changes in EPL for both open-ended and temporary employment contracts will be implemented in the course of 2015, building on the 2013 Social Accord that was concluded among the social partners at the national level and which was subsequently translated into new legislation, such as the Act on Work and Security.
- The social accord in 2013 altered the court formula for calculating severance pay (from one month for each year of service to 1/3 month) to make dismissal cheaper for employers. For older people (50+) another formula will be used. In addition a ceiling is set for severance pay of 75,000 EUR that is transformed into a transition budget. The EPL protection of temporary workers will change as well. The regulation of fixed-term contract will be adjusted, changing the 3*3*3 rule (a maximum of 3 consecutive temporary contracts for a maximum of 3 years with 3 months period in between two chains) into a 2*2*6 rule (maximum of 2 consecutive contracts for the duration of 2 years and an interval of 6 months between two chains).
- An innovative local scheme to help young people bridging the gap between unemployment or welfare and the first job is the "Youth Starter's Grant". About 150 of the 400 Dutch municipalities have launched this scheme. School-leavers who are unable to find a job are stimulated and facilitated with finding a traineeship at a company or institution that matches

both their level and type of education. The employer pays at least 100 euro per month to the young person and the municipality pays in addition 400 euro (using ESF funding), creating a total grant of 500 euro per month. The grant is given for a maximum period of 6 months and cannot be prolonged.

- A second innovative scheme concerns the sector plans launched in 2014 by the government. The social partners are invited to develop sector plans that may or may not be focused on youth transitions, which are then co-financed by the government (600 million euro). Viewing the 72 plans that have been approved so far they entail work-to-work transitions for redundant workers and training and education. A first evaluation shows that only 9% are targeted to youngsters of which only minor attention is paid to youth transitions within employment.

III. Assessment of impact

- There is hardly any evidence in the Netherlands showing the effect of policies and/or institutions on the employment of youngsters. The Netherlands has no tradition in policy making to conduct ex ante evaluation research of the proposed policy change nor to conduct any form of 'impact assessment'. Therefore, policy evaluation and impact assessment must be based on plausibility reasoning or contextual evidence.
- There is not much evidence on the effect of the age-differentiated level of the minimum wages on youth employment. There is reason to argue that notably in the recent crisis in particular sectors which are sensitive to the business cycle such as the retail sector, the hotel, catering - and restaurant sector some crowding-out and substitution has taken place not only of older youngsters with higher minimum wages by cheaper youngsters but also of low-educated (temporary or permanent) youngsters with skilled student workers mostly working on temporary contracts.
- Strong employment protection has on average no impact on overall employment, but it has a strong negative impact on the employment of youngsters. This seems especially caused by a strong negative impact of the strictness of the regulation of temporary contracts. The stricter the regulation of temporary work is, the more adversely the employment of youngsters is affected. Employers are apparently then reluctant to hire temporary but also regular workers. That might explain the low unemployment rate of youngsters in the Netherlands who are employed in temp jobs instead of becoming unemployed.
- The share of youngsters in temporary jobs has increased strongly during the crisis from 48% in 2008 to 63% in 2012. This appears associated with the strict employment protection of regular and the lean protection of temporary workers. Youngsters face more employment and income insecurity because the annual transition rates from flex contracts into open-ended contracts is declining over time and wages are low in temp jobs. There is concern for the position of NEET youngsters (Not in Employment, Education or Training), and the re-insertion of young handicapped persons back into the labour market (Participation Act).

A full outline is provided in Bekker, van de Meer, Muffels and Wilthagen (2015) *Policy Performance and Evaluation: Netherlands*,

[STYLE Working Paper WP3.3 Performance Netherlands](#)

6. Poland

Ewa Ślezak and Bogumiła Szopa

- The labour market situation for young people in Poland is neither good nor bad. In fact, in comparison with other EU member states the unemployment rate is simply average, which is confirmed not only by statistics but also in opinions of the interviewed stakeholders. Statistics for 2002 – 2004 painted a much worse picture.
- Young people who enter labour market are a very heterogeneous group, varying in qualifications, experience and expectations. Therefore, though there is no single pattern of transition from the education system to the labour market, those who have better qualifications fare much better.
- Those with higher education less frequently end up as unemployed than those with vocational training or lower education. There is a paradox observed, fewer pupils decide to take up vocational training, yet percentage-wise more of them end up in unemployment and experience longer spells of unemployment.
- The latter is of course related to the structural problems that adversely affect this transition, i.e. dispersion of responsibility between education and labour market, a very complex structure of institutions dealing with the young, mismatch between education and the labour market needs, long educational cycles which make immediate reactions to the changes in the labour market almost impossible, limited discussion and cooperation between governing institutions and social partners to name just a few.
- The regulatory framework governing school to work transitions is very complex. A wide range of policy tools exist to address unemployment alongside new solutions to address emerging problems. Detailed and complex initiatives relating to allowances, benefits and reimbursements entail a complex degree of conditionality.
- The majority of regulations and actions address the unemployed in general, rather than young people specifically. Nevertheless, targeting youth has become increasingly important since the crisis and economic slowdown. Specific programmes designed for those under 30 years old as well as for specific sub-groups of juvenile and disabled youth have become more evident as attempts to develop innovative practises.
- In the implemented policies and programmes there is a change of thinking presented by the policymakers i.e. the Ministry gives the opportunity, a metaphor of a bait, while an individual has to catch the fish. Sadly, in most of cases, the regulatory framework in all other areas, from education to the labour market, proves the old type of perception – activation of various actors is set in the context of giving and reimbursing.
- There is a wide division of responsibility between various actors both in regulations and in actions: horizontal responsibility between the Ministries responsible for education and

employment with clear demarcation lines hamper some actions, as is also the case with vertical responsibility between central and local government. Further analysis of the effects of potential coordinated actions across the governing institutions is required.

- Cooperation problems exist between educational providers and employers. Some dialogue is evident of educational institutions responding to employers needs through the inclusion of internships and placements into curricula. Limited dialogue results in limited change or improvements, with a very variegated pattern of private sector and the NGOs involvement and desire to implement effective change. Attempts to re-profile the system have been on-going for a number of years.
- In spite of some success, more coordinated actions, linking and engaging all stakeholders, to support Polish youth integration in employment are still needed.

A full outline is provided in Ślezak and Szopa (2015) *Policy Performance and Evaluation: Poland*, [STYLE Working Paper WP3.3 Performance Poland](#)

7. Sweden

Eskil Wadensjö

- Swedish youth policy is handled mainly by the state and the municipalities. The state is in charge of the legal regulation and a number of state authorities are involved in labour market policy programmes and tertiary education. The municipalities are responsible for education at the primary and secondary levels. Up to the end of 2007 municipalities also were responsible for unemployed youth under the age of 25. That changed with the introduction of the Youth Job Programme in December 2007 that is managed by the Swedish Public Employment Service. Still, it is rather common that municipalities provide their own labour market policies for unemployed youth, especially for those under the age of 20, where municipalities have an obligation to help (“informations- och uppföljningsansvar”). The state and the municipalities are to an increasing extent buying services from private companies.
- The primary school is comprehensive and lasts for nine years. The general school starting age is seven but there is a pre-school year for those aged six. Tertiary education is divided into three cycles. Most universities are financed and run by the state. There are no fees in the Swedish school system besides for students in tertiary education coming from countries outside EU/EES and Switzerland.
- Sweden has no minimum wage legislation but there are minimum wages clauses in the collective agreements. Since the mid-1970s, there have been laws regulating the labour market. The most important one is The Law on Job Security (LAS). It means that those who already have a job have a protected position. The working hours for those below 18 are strictly regulated in Sweden.
- There is a long history of labour market policy that aims to improve the situation of young people. The names of the measures have changed over time as well as the organisation of the business. The state has had and still has an important role in this policy, but also the municipalities have been active in the area. It is difficult to get an overall picture, as the municipalities do not have the same standardised and comprehensive statistics as the state has through the Public Employment Service. A main impression is that the policy is fragmented at various levels and that there is uncertainty as to its effectiveness.
- The economic crisis that emerged in 2008 has been shorter than and not as severe as in many other European countries. But there have been worries also in Sweden for those who neither work nor are in education (the NEETs). The policy has been mainly the same as before the crisis: trying to get as many as possible to complete secondary education and in other cases to place the unemployed and those with special problems in labour market policy programmes, to a high extent in programmes especially designed for young people.

A full outline is provided in Wadensjö (2015) *Policy Performance and Evaluation: Sweden*, [STYLE Working Paper WP3.3 Performance Sweden](#)

8. Turkey

**Fatoş Gökşen, Deniz Yüksek, Sinem Kuz,
İbrahim Öker**

The concept of youth-related policy is fairly a new phenomenon in Turkey. Governance of youth policies is remarkably centralised, yet fragmented. The involvement of social partners such as trade unions, employer associations or other NGOs remains ineffective. The most significant development in recent years regarding youth is the foundation of the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MYS) which aims to improve the quality of youth policies and involvement of youth to the policy-making processes. The basic structure of education is planned, operated, managed and financed by the state under the Ministry of National Education (MoNE). Ministry of Labour and Social Security has recently taken up issues of regional minimum wage, unregistered work, severance pay and flexible work into its agenda related to youth employment. Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) serves as a portal to mediate between employers and jobseekers. İŞKUR also aims to increase labour market participation and the employability of the active population in Turkey. As part of its ALMPs, İŞKUR conducts annual labour market analyses in all cities and organises routine training programmes on employment and entrepreneurship.

Due to a relatively long compulsory education period Turkey records high rates of schooling ratios; schooling ratios for 2013-2014 academic year are as follows: 99.6% for primary education, 94.5% for elementary education, and 76.7% for high schools. Secondary education in Turkey is highly fragmented, i.e. it has a multi-tracked nature at the secondary level and this further increases when it comes to the vocational and technical secondary education. Nineteen different kinds of vocational schools providing training in more than 130 occupations are present in Turkey. Despite a growth of vocational enrolment at secondary education level, the lack of prestige and lower quality associated with this sector means few students opt voluntarily for VET as an alternative to general education. For many young people vocational high school is a “second” option after they fail to enrol in general education giving high schools. Likewise, higher vocational schools (MYO) are a second option for those who cannot get into 4-year degree programmes in universities. Nominally free tertiary education is planned, managed and financed by the Council of Higher Education (CoHE). There are currently 178 universities, and more than 800 vocational schools of higher education.

Turkey has the strictest employment legislation and the tax rate on labour is among the highest in the OECD for low-wage workers and those with families. This tax burden creates disincentives for employers to hire labour and for these workers to seek employment, especially in the formal sector. Because young people are overrepresented in the low-wage sector, they are particularly affected by the tax wedge. In 2008, a minimum living allowance for personal income tax was introduced which reduced the tax wedge by between 2.5 and 6 percentage points depending on the family status and income level of the worker. Furthermore, social security contributions for employers were reduced which further reduced the average tax wedge. Most importantly, Labour Law is only applied to formal

labour force which includes white-collar public-sector employees, self-employed and agricultural workers, whereas the informal employment which is around approximately 38% is left out. In this respect, while legal structure of labour can be viewed as highly fragmented, one of the recent improvements about the minimum wage is a progressive step in terms of young people's rights. The level of minimum wage difference between young employees and regular employees were recently eliminated. Tax exemptions for the companies, in the case of hiring interns and apprentices, are another financial support mechanism for young people.

Flexible forms of employment have created grounds for part-time work, temporary work and over-work for the first time. The implementation of flexible types of employment has so far been relatively limited. The activities of private employment agencies are strictly regulated.

Turkey allocated a considerable amount of financial resources to active labour market policies. Expenditures on ALMPs grew considerably, to 4% of public expenditures in 2012. Expenditures on unemployment benefits rose to 4% of total non-interest expenditures during the crisis. İŞKUR increased coverage of the unemployed and the number of participants in active labour market programmes after 2008. The government's policies included the expansion of active labour market programmes to all registered unemployed. Since 2008, İŞKUR has increased vocational training, introduced Job and Vocation Counselling and, recently, linked social assistance beneficiaries to registration with İŞKUR.

Although not targeting specifically the youth as does the education or labour policies, the social insurance system aims at providing insurance to society at large, mainly in the form of health care services and pensions, with the principle of self-financing, whereas the social assistance seeks to alleviate poverty and provide social care for needy persons and groups. In this regard, a system of Universal Health Insurance (GSS) is currently being implemented in Turkey. Individuals below 18 are eligible for health insurance in any case and if the young people are enrolled to tertiary education they can benefit from the GSS till the age of 25.

In terms of welfare policies, the family still represents the core supporting mechanism for the young employed. Families are still expected to protect youth from the risk of unemployment and to facilitate their STW transition by providing financial support. Despite this situation, some policy reforms have direct or indirect benefits for youth. Since healthcare became universal in 2012, it has decreased the destructive effects of unemployment. Another policy measure that has an indirect impact on disadvantaged youth is social assistance programmes for alleviating poverty. Conditional cash transfers for poor households have played a role in encouraging the school enrolment of girls and boys.

Turkey reduced the overall tax wedge and waived social security contributions for unemployed youth and women. These measures may have contributed to greater female and youth employment rates. At the same time, lower payroll taxes and improved enforcement have helped lower informality from 34% in 2005 to 25% in 2012. Still there is need to tackle labour market rigidities, resulting from disincentives against part time work and high hiring and firing costs. Greater labour market flexibility, through part-time work and a reform of severance pay arrangements, as well as targeted measures to help women combine work and family are the policy priorities in dealing with the youth unemployment.

What seems to be lacking in Turkey is a comprehensive youth policy approach which takes youth's needs and prospects as a focal issue and creates and coordinates policies and institutions in a

coherent way toward this goal in different relevant areas from education to employment, budget allocations, regional policy and social security. The institutional and policy framework concerning youth lacks coherence, scope and effectiveness. Youth-related projects are often defined according to urgent needs in an ad hoc way, without much institutionalisation or planning. Active labour market policies (ALMPs) and measures alone may fail to make a sufficient impact, given the high level of informal activity in the labour market and the low level of education.

Turkey's entire prospective development path toward 2023 (the centennial of the Republic) aiming at such targets as very high levels of competitiveness, higher employment, sustainability of growth, greater equity and gender equality makes the need for effective policy focus on youth all the more important. Turkey needs to go beyond its present rather problem-based, sectorial approach to youth with a comprehensive youth policy.

A full outline is provided in Gökşen, Yüksekler, Kuz and Öker (2015) *Policy Performance and Evaluation: Turkey*, [STYLE Working Paper WP3.3 Performance Turkey](#)

9. The UK

Kari P Hadjivassiliou, Arianna Tassinari, Stefan Speckesser, Sam Swift, and Christine Bertram

Youth unemployment in the UK presently stands at 16.1%, which compares favourably with the EU-28 average of 21.5%. Moreover, the UK's youth unemployment has been consistently below the EU average. Yet, this relatively better performance masks structural and institutional characteristics which have an adverse impact on young people's school-to-work (STW) transitions. Compared to other Member States, the UK is characterised by **fast but unstable STW transitions**. The vast majority (80%) of young people flow off Jobseeker's Allowance within six months, but take longer to move to permanent employment. Indeed, STW transitions in the UK have become lengthier and more uncertain.

A key feature has been the tendency of young people to stay in education as opposed to entering employment at an earlier age. The number of people aged 16-24 in full-time education has more than doubled over the last 30 years. The UK performs well above the EU average with regard to both tertiary attainment and completion rates.

Compared to other Member States, qualifications and skills are more critical for smooth labour market entry, with the unemployment rate of low-skilled 15-24 year-olds being 37.2% (vs. a 30.3% EU average). Conversely, the employment rate of recent graduates from at least upper secondary education is well above the EU average. However, both **horizontal and vertical skills mismatch** is rather high even for recent graduates. As a result, there is **significant underemployment among young people**.

Indeed, a recurring criticism of the UK's education and training system is that it equips young people with **inappropriate or insufficient skills**. Despite recent progress, a significant minority continue to leave secondary education without the necessary skills and qualifications to compete in the labour market (European Commission, 2013a and 2014a). The UK has **too little vocational provision at post-secondary level** and, the UK's VET policy has been criticised as being **too focused on basic skills and relatively low-level qualifications**.

Employers and employer associations have repeatedly voiced concern that the **UK's education system provides inappropriate or insufficient skills to young people**. Linked to this is the limited role for employer involvement and engagement, with a consistent trend of few employers (6%) recruiting young people directly from school.

This lack of employer engagement is linked with the dominant feature of the UK's labour market: **flexibility**. The UK has one of the **lowest employment protection legislation (EPL) scores** in the OECD. High labour market flexibility means that young people move more frequently between jobs and into and out of education.

Internships constitute a key STW transition mechanism, particularly for graduates, but are often

associated with questionable employer practices and poor working conditions. Growing numbers of young people are caught in endless series of internships which act more as a 'dead end' than a 'stepping stone' to stable employment.

Another key characteristic of STW transitions is the large number of young people in **precarious part-time or temporary jobs**. A major recent development is the growth of '**zero hours contracts**': of those employed on such contracts, 37% are 16 to 24 year olds. The UK has a relatively **low proportion of young people in temporary employment** (13.5% vs. an EU average of 55.5%), due to its low EPL score. However, there is a **high incidence of involuntary temporary employment**, with nearly 50% of temporary workers aged 16-24 being unable to find a permanent position.

Changing (youth) labour market structure and greater difficulty in accessing entry-level jobs poses another challenge for young people. The well-documented decline of sectors such as manufacturing and the **progressive polarisation and hollowing out of the labour market** has resulted in fewer jobs for the low and mid-qualified, exacerbated by the reduction of intermediate level jobs, which results in fewer progression opportunities. Young people face intense competition from more experienced workers and migrants, especially in the UK's expanding low wage service economy.

The **persistently high number of early school leavers (12.4%) and NEETs (13.3%)** is another key characteristic of the UK's youth labour market, reflecting a critical structural problem. There is a correlation between NEET rates and low qualification levels, with **prior education attainment being the most important predictor of NEET status**. The persistent inter-generational cycle of disadvantage, low skills and unemployment has a disproportionate detrimental effect on young people from families that are workless or have lower incomes.

The UK's approach to tackling youth unemployment can be characterised as (i) light touch labour market regulation; (ii) state investment in education and training coupled with reforms such as raising the participation age and VET, including apprenticeships, reform (supply-led policies); and (iii) strong labour market activation. The key aims are to **raise educational attainment** through:

1. Raising **participation age** (RPA) in education or training;
2. The **Pupil Premium**, aimed at improving the educational attainment of disadvantaged pupils;
3. Wide-ranging **school structural and curriculum reforms**;
4. Promoting **access to independent and impartial careers advice** which also highlights VET options;
5. Improving **availability, quality, and image of VET**, especially in view of its relatively low take-up among young people;
6. **Expansion of apprenticeships and VET**;
7. **Expansion of higher education**, aimed at helping achieve a 50% participation rate.

Employment policies targeted at young people focus on active labour market policies. Two main programmes are the **Youth Contract** and the **Innovation Fund**. The **Youth Contract**, introduced in April 2012, aims to support unemployed 16-24 year olds with a £1 billion government funded programme over three-years. It seeks to keep young people connected to work and/or education through apprenticeships, traineeships and work experience placements, as well as wage incentives for recruiting young people. The **Innovation Fund (IF) Pilot Initiative**, launched in 2011, is aimed at supporting disadvantaged 14 year olds through using Social Investment models (**Social Impact Bonds/SIBs**). These require young people to achieve specific outcomes including employment, improved behaviour and attendance at school, and qualifications.

The government is focusing funding on low-skilled young people (those with English and maths skills below Level 2) and the unemployed. The new **Traineeship Programme**, launched in 2013, is aimed at those aged 16-23 wishing to start an apprenticeship or job but lacking the basic skills or work experience to secure one.

The wider institutional framework in the UK relies on **market mechanisms** and a **voluntaristic approach**. Indeed, employment and training-related services for young people in the UK are **complex and fragmented**, with unclear pathways and a confusing environment for employers who wish to engage. A major problem has been **patchy and inconsistent service provision** together with a **tendency to divide skills and employment programmes**. This means young people are largely left alone to navigate the STW transition **alone**, while the support they receive varies wildly across different families, communities and employers.

Moreover, there has been a plethora of overlapping or even contradictory services, policies and programmes, which can act as barriers to implementation. This is accompanied by **multiple funding streams** of varying degrees of complexity and administrative burden. **Greater policy co-ordination, streamlining and simplification** would be beneficial, not least because the current institutional and policy framework is deemed too confusing and cumbersome by employers.

Another impeding factor is the austerity-induced **severe spending cuts** implemented since 2010. For example, cuts to the UK's National Careers Service (NCS) and its weak links with schools have been identified as a major barrier to providing high quality career advice to young people.

Finally, **devolution** creates its own opportunities and challenges. England, Wales, Northern Ireland, and Scotland have their own policies on education and training, whilst the UK government retains responsibility for England, and this contributes to an overall fragmented governance structure.

A full outline of these developments is provided in Hadjivassiliou, Tassinari, Speckesser, Swift and Bertram (2015) *Policy Performance and Evaluation: United Kingdom*,

[STYLE Working Paper WP3.3 Performance UK](#)

10. Conclusions and directions for future research

The summary reports show clearly the great plurality and diversity that exists across the EU in relation to institutional, policy and cultural contexts; welfare systems; education and training systems, including VET (school-based vs. dual training); labour markets policies, including ALMPs; youth labour market structures and dynamics as well as performance; the focus, structure and quality of STW transition. The full account of these differences are available in the national reports on the project website. (www.style-research.eu/publications/working-papers)

This great heterogeneity will be further analysed in Task 4 (Comparative Policy Overview of STW Transitions and Youth Labour Markets Dynamics, Performance and Effectiveness), which will provide a comparative analysis based on the Walther and Pohl's (2005) typology, according to which STW transitions can be:

- *universalistic* (Finland, Sweden, Denmark);
- *employment-centred* which can be primarily based on
 - *dual training* (Germany, Austria)
 - or *school-based* (France)
 - or *mixed* (the Netherlands);
- *liberal* (the UK, Ireland);
- *sub-protective* (Italy, Spain, Greece, Portugal, Cyprus);
- and *post-socialist mixed liberal and employment centred* (e.g., Baltic States, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia).

This in-depth comparative overview will involve at least one Member State representing each of these STW patterns, i.e. in total, the eight Member States which have been the focus of the case studies of Task 3 presented in this summary report of the national studies.

In terms of policy responses, our comparative analysis will be based on the typology of policies, programmes and measures proposed by Eurofound (2012) focusing on policies:

- (i) facilitating the STW transition⁶;
- (ii) developing relevant labour market skills⁷;

⁶ Programmes/Policies/Measures aimed at facilitating school-to-work transitions such as information, advice and guidance (IAG) services; support for closer cooperation between educational institutions and employers; youth guarantees; job search assistance, e.g. through public employment services (PES); the promotion of self-employment and/or entrepreneurship; etc.

⁷ Programmes/Policies/Measures focusing on closing a real or perceived gap in basic skills (literacy, numeracy, ICTs) as well as a lack in transversal/'soft' skills (team working, communication, etc.) through apprenticeships, traineeships/internships or training/re-training courses, including remedial training. Programmes focusing on reforming the institutional framework in order to forge closer and more effective links between education and industry. Preventative and re-

- (iii) supporting a first work experience⁸;
- (iv) and improving access to the labour market/first job, especially for NEETs.⁹

This part of the analysis will also focus on policy priorities in relation to young people, including NEETs in the selected Member States and on any future policy changes/trends foreseen at present. An important element of this Task will also be a focus on innovative policies aimed at reducing the vulnerability of new labour market entrants.

We will use a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, including secondary analysis of the country reports generated from Task 3, policy and academic/research documentary review at both EU and Member State levels; monitoring and evaluation data; collection, where appropriate, of primary data from interviews with key stakeholders and informants; etc.

The output of Task 4 will be a Comparative Overview Synthesis Report, which will also build on the work from the INSPIRES project (<http://inspires-research.eu/>). At the same time, information collected as part of the national reports for Tasks 3 and the work for task 4 of this Work Package (3) on Performance and Evaluation will feed into the database inventory that will be compiled as part of Task 4 of Work Package 4 that focuses on Policy Transfer.

integration measures aimed at tackling early school leaving and/or the issue of young people leaving education with no or low level of skills.

⁸ Programmes/Policies/Measures such as wage subsidies and/or social security contribution subsidies/reductions or other tax breaks aimed at providing employers with a strong incentive to hire a young person or provide a training or apprenticeship placement. Ideally, the overall outcome should be a permanent contract, a stable position with the company, or at least, a young person's improved chances in the labour market.

⁹ Programmes/Policies/Measures targeted at specific populations within the NEET group, e.g. people with disabilities, migrants or lone parents and/or broader measures not solely targeted at the NEET population. These programmes seek to address specific, including practical, barriers faced by NEETs such as problems with accessing training courses, language difficulties or logistical obstacles such as transport or childcare. They, therefore, include measures such as e-learning courses, language courses, multi-lingual IAG, transport and living subsidies, or childcare subsidies.

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European Youth Forum

www.youthforum.org

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

www.eurofound.europa.eu

ILO: International Labour Office

www.ilo.org

OECD: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

www.oecd.org

OSE: Observatoire Sociale Européen

www.ose.be

SOLIDAR: European network of NGOs working to advance social justice in Europe

www.solidar.org

EurActiv

www.euractiv.com

European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1036>

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