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**Youth Unemployment and
Social Exclusion: Objective
Dimensions, Subjective
Experiences, and Institutional
Responses in Six European
Countries (YUSEDER)**

Final Report

Compiled by
T. Kieselbach, G. Beelmann & U. Traiser

Project supported by the European
Commission – DG Research in the 4th
Framework Programme under the
Targeted Socio-Economic Research
Programme (TSER)
(1998 – 2000)

University of Bremen
2006 (revised version)

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The national “Integration of results” are structured as follows:

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Youth unemployment and health
- 3 Youth unemployment and social exclusion
- 4 Long-term unemployed youth and the risk of social exclusion
- 5 Institutional responses to youth unemployment and the risk of social exclusion
- 6 Conclusions

1 Executive Summary

The project

The research project "Youth Unemployment and Social Exclusion: Objective Dimensions, Subjective Experiences, and Innovative Institutional Responses in Six European Countries" (YUSEDER) within the Targeted Socio-Economic Research Programme (TSER) of the 4th Framework Programme tries to answer some crucial questions with regard to the risk of social exclusion associated with long-term youth unemployment. The first research question asks for key mechanisms linking the experience of long-term youth unemployment to various dimensions of social disintegration, conceived of in the theoretical framework of social exclusion. In this context, not only the mechanisms exacerbating the stress of unemployment (vulnerability factors) but also the protective mechanisms preventing or reducing the risk of social exclusion have to be taken into consideration. The second research question relates to new options of institutional and political intervention and counteraction in different national contexts. These analyses have been undertaken in three Northern European countries (Sweden, Belgium, Germany) and three Southern European countries (Spain, Italy, Greece).

Development of youth unemployment

Between the mid-70s and mid-90s, increasing numbers in total unemployment could be observed in all countries of the EU. This development was deeply influenced by the world-wide economic collapse in the mid-70s (the oil crisis) and the early 80s. At this time a considerable amount of basic unemployment had been reached in most European countries. Since the end of the 80s, also the increasing globalisation, flexibilisation, and world-wide economic competition are important factors influencing the rise of the unemployment rates. Since the end of the 90s a (slight) decrease of unemployment rates can be observed in all YUSEDER countries (with the exception of Belgium). This concerns general unemployment rates as well as youth unemployment rates (OECD Employment Outlook, 2000).

At the time of the YUSEDER study, the extent of youth unemployment in comparison to the total unemployment rates was significantly higher in all partner countries (with the exception of Germany). Because of the dual education system and the associated longer periods of training in *Germany*, the rates of young unemployed people were similar to that of the adult unemployed. The lack of such an educational system in the partner countries was reflected especially in the unemployment rates among the 15- to 19-year-olds. Following the Eurostat Data (1998) each partner country showed a considerably higher unemployment rate in this age group than in older young people. However, despite the similar developments of young and older unemployed persons, the German labour market was and is still characterised by a high disparity between the West and East German youth. Especially the young unemployed between the ages of 20-24 years in East Germany are extremely affected by unemployment.

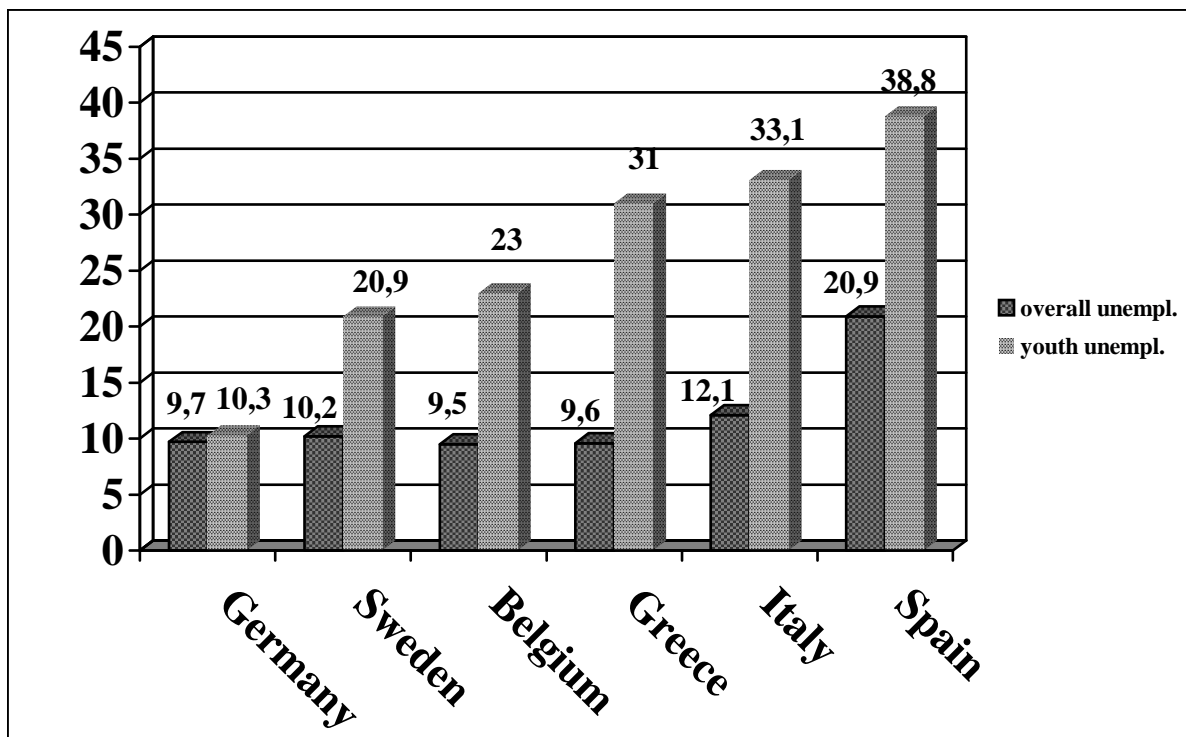
In *Belgium*, the development of youth unemployment rates has been similar to the total rates. At the time of the YUSEDER study, a stabilisation, or even a small improvement could be observed. However, the rates are still two to three times higher than the overall rates with female unemployment rates being especially high. An extreme situation could be found in the region Wallonia where over 40% of all females under 25 have been unemployed. Parallel to the increase in total unemployment in the early 90s, in *Sweden*, youth unemployment increased rapidly and equally strong for the 16- to 19-year-olds and the 20- to 24-year-olds. After a slight decrease in the mid-90s (a process that continued during the end of the 90s), both age groups rates were at about 15% and thus twice as high as the overall unemployment rate. As opposed to

the Belgian situation, the gender differences in Sweden have been opposite: the rates were higher among men than among women (1995: 16.6% vs. 14.0%).

Youth unemployment figures in *Greece* were also considerably higher than those for adults. Well over a third of young people between 15 and 19 years of age were unemployed in 1995. Rates among young women have been especially high. In 1995 the rate for young women between 15-24 years amounted to 37.7% as compared to that for men which was 19.4%. In *Italy*, the proportion of young unemployed people constituted two-thirds of the total number of unemployed people with lower numbers for young men (1997: 29%) than young women (1997: 37.7%). The amount of young persons who have been looking for a job for more than 12 months was exceptionally high in this country (approximately two-thirds of the young unemployed). Among the partner countries, *Spain* showed the highest rate of youth unemployment. In addition to a continuous rise in the 70s, unemployment figures rose in the late 70s and early 80s to a peak value of nearly 40%. Especially among the 16- to 19-year-olds, the rate sometimes exceeded 50%. However, since the end of the 90s youth unemployment rates decreased clearly.

To allow for an easy comparison of the overall unemployment rates with the youth unemployment rates for persons less than 25 years of age, the following figure provides an overview for the year 1997.

Figure 1: Overall unemployment rates vs. youth unemployment rates (>25 years of age) for six European countries in 1997.



Source: Eurostat 1998.

The concept of social exclusion

In general, the term social exclusion has only recently been introduced in all countries participating in this research project on a public, political and/or scientific level. Despite the increasing number of international experts, and also the interest from the European Commission in processes of social exclusion (for an overview see Silver, 1994, 1998, Starrin et. al., 2000),

the meaning of this concept is still rather diffuse (see Castel, 1994, Paugam, 1996). Up to now, unemployment and disadvantaged living situations have been tackled mainly by poverty research, which has focussed almost exclusively on monetary aspects. Societal problems have already called for a broader focus which takes non-monetary factors and more subjective dimensions into account. Considering the definition of social exclusion from Kronauer (1998) – which has been adopted as the baseline for this research project – this requirement of comprehensiveness is met, at least on a theoretical level.

Kronauer (1998) described a comprehensive theoretical definition of social exclusion based upon the use of the term in France and the concept of underclass in the USA. Kronauer developed his understanding of social exclusion in light of the current employment crisis which especially affects low qualified manufacturing workers. In his opinion, the ever increasing unemployment rates are becoming a permanent social reality with the consequence that more and more people cannot lead a life which fits the societal standards for material and social well-being. This new quality within the cycle of unemployment and poverty implies a terminology which takes into consideration both monetary and non-monetary aspects of living, and the characteristics of the individual and the society. This broader understanding seems to have also become increasingly important with regard to young persons facing unemployment (Kieselbach, 1997). In all countries participating in this research project, social exclusion is understood as a dynamic, multidimensional process which incorporates social and economic (monetary and non-monetary) aspects of living, subjective experiences and objective situations, and which depends upon available personal and social resources.

Using the term social exclusion easily evokes the image of a definite result which stands in opposition to social inclusion. But social exclusion can only be understood when focussing not only on what it means to be excluded vs. included, but also on those factors enlarging or diminishing the vulnerability of the individual.

Kronauer (1998) outlines that social exclusion is always linked with unemployment – although unemployment does not have to be the starting point for social exclusion – and that it is only given if at least both a marginal economic position and social isolation are experienced at the same time. However, it must be stressed that this concept can only be understood by considering its multidimensionality. This means that although unemployment seems to be a central indicator for increasing social exclusion, all possible interactions and sequences between the following six dimensions for social exclusion must taken into account equally.

Exclusion from the Labour Market (1) describes the situation of facing external barriers to (re-)enter the labour market combined with a retreat of the affected person leading to resignation regarding the own (re-)employment. The second dimension, *economic exclusion* (2) is usually referred to as poverty and includes the financial dependency upon the welfare state or a socially unacceptable income, and the loss of ability to financially support oneself or the own family. *Institutional exclusion* (3) can occur from the side of the educational system (in both schools and further qualification and training institutions), institutions dealing with unemployment and poverty, and public and private service institutions (such as banks and insurance agencies). Besides the lack of support both before and during phases of unemployment, two other factors come into play: the experience of feelings of institutional dependency leading to shame and passivity, and the possible counterproductive effect of state support in the sense of exclusion of unemployed persons through their inclusion into a stable system. The fourth and fifth dimensions are closely linked with each other. *Exclusion through social isolation* (4) describes either a retreat of the social network or one's own retreat which can lead to a reduction of contacts to only one specific group of people or even a general isolation of the

affected person. On a societal level, *cultural exclusion* (5) refers to the inability to live according to the socially accepted norms and values with the possible consequence of an identification with deviant norms and behaviours. Stigmatisation and sanctions from the social surroundings are also subsumed within this dimension. The last dimension describes *spatial exclusion* (6) which manifests itself in the objective spatial concentration of persons with limited financial possibilities often coming from a similar social and/or cultural background and in feelings of isolation due to a missing infrastructure within the own residential area (e.g., lack of transportation, shops, but also cultural events, etc.).

Youth unemployment and health

Despite the criticism from most countries with regard to the limited amount of studies and also their level of empirical evidence (mainly cross-sectional data), the analysis of the national reports revealed rather homogenous results on the link between youth unemployment and ill health. In general, it was reported that as compared to their employed peers, young unemployed persons have a distinctly higher risk for health-related problems. This is especially true for mental health and psychosocial problems leading to an increase in depression and a poorer quality of life, but also for objective health indicators especially when considering the higher risk for suicidal behaviour among the unemployed youth. This is also reflected in the health behaviour of young unemployed persons especially with regard to alcohol and cigarette consumption depending on the employment status.

Both in the northern and southern European countries work plays a central role in the developmental process of young people. The denial of an access to the labour market implies foremost financial limitations meaning that for young persons the dependency on the family and because of this, the overall juvenile phase becomes prolonged. Although family support is an important buffer, this protection might also hinder the development of the young person to become an independent adult.

This phenomenon is much more important in Southern European countries, where young people are scarcely entitled to transfer payments. In Belgium, Germany, Spain, and Sweden exist different benefit systems: some are earnings-related, and apply to those who were once integrated into the labour market. In case that young people do not fulfil the requirements to obtain such a transfer payment they have to apply for social security benefits which are not earnings-related. In contrast, in Southern European countries young persons who have never entered the labour market are in most cases totally excluded from any type of state support. For young people this means that the family has to take on the responsibility to economically support their children.

The lack of work is not only linked with economic strains but also with limitations in central living dimensions caused by economic strains. Work also has an important intrinsic value which, when missing, can have detrimental effects for the personality of the unemployed young person. Feelings of general vulnerability, inferiority, worthlessness and uselessness, and depression among this group could be found which lead in the long run to a decrease in self-esteem and a higher dissatisfaction with the own life. Stigmatisation processes from the social environment add to this situation. This interaction between financial and social conditions is reflected specifically in the Swedish research dealing with financial hardship and shaming experiences. Unemployed persons who felt devalued and belittled exhibited more ill health than their employed peers.

Due to the higher expectations on men to fulfil the role of the breadwinner in the family, young men seem to be under more pressure than women when being unemployed. Although women seem to adapt more easily to their situation this solution has to be seen rather critically because it gives way to a further discrimination of women on the labour market and a re-traditionalisation of gender roles. In addition, the length of unemployment is an important mediator for the health effects of unemployment at least in the Northern European countries. With the increasing length of time, the unemployed person suffers more from his or her situation – an aspect which implies that both the possible positive and negative influence of other factors diminishes over time.

Preventive aspects were also highlighted within the country reports. Especially social support – both from the side of family and friends – is an important social resource for the affected youth. In addition, a very powerful personal resource has to be seen in the level of education of young people. Not only is the employability increased with a better qualification, but also persons from higher educational levels are more capable in dealing with institutions and also with their own financial situation.

The strong and complex interlinkage between youth unemployment and different health-related aspects calls for innovative and multifaceted answers to the emerging problems of today (see also Viney, 1983, Warr, 1984, Jackson & Warr, 1984, Olafsson & Svensson, 1986, Spruit & Sevensson, 1987, Kieselbach, 1988, Winefield et. al., 1993). To deal with the large amount of low qualified unemployed youngsters, institutions of all kinds are called to support the affected youth and also their families and the wider social surrounding.

Youth unemployment and social exclusion

In all participating countries the situation of eight different disadvantaged groups of young persons has been discussed: Long-term unemployed young people, unemployed school leavers, dropouts, and young persons with low qualification, unemployed and marginally employed young people in economically or structurally weak regions, young unemployed single mothers, (juvenile) unemployed immigrants, young unemployed persons with physical disabilities, young unemployed people facing homelessness and poverty and young unemployed criminals.

From the analysis of the material presented in the six national reports it becomes obvious that the main focus regarding a specifically high risk for social exclusion among young people has been on unemployment and its economic effects. This result supports the assumption that work is one of the main mechanisms for an overall societal integration. The inability to enter the labour market in the first place must be understood as a central factor for deciding about the further development of young persons. It might even be justified to say that, in the long run, having versus not having work sets the agenda for the integration into or exclusion from society.

One of the main reasons for an exclusion from the labour market is seen in either missing, generally low, or not-matching job qualifications. Without vocational training in line with the (future) requirements on the labour market, a lasting inclusion into work seems to be rather impossible. It is therefore not surprising that job qualification schemes are understood, on the one hand, as the most effective measures against unemployment and social exclusion. However, on the other hand, the more or less exclusive focus of interventions on this type of institutional answer is slightly irritating when considering other institutions and their possible preventive influence on adolescents. In this regard, it has to be questioned what better roles could

schools and other public and private institutions play in preparing young persons for their future job situation and in counterbalancing and preventing social exclusion. In Greece, Italy and Spain two factors come into play which are even more important with regard to the prevention of social exclusion: the family and the submerged economy.

The main aspects preceding the exclusion of youth from the labour market are described to an increasing degree also of spatial processes of exclusion. A missing or low qualification level is often found among those young persons who have already grown up in a situation of relative poverty in deprived areas leading to multiple socialisation deficiencies. In this regard, economic exclusion is often also linked with low qualification possibilities through spatial segregation.

As can be seen from the six national reports the question of *key mechanisms* linking unemployment and social exclusion has not been dealt with, neither on a scientific nor on a public or political level. When excluding mechanisms are named, reference is primarily made to aspects fostering exclusion from the labour market, in other words, an in-depth examination of the excluding dimensions that lead to youth unemployment. Processes linking labour market exclusion with social exclusion have not been given priority until now.

It can be assumed that the systematic incorporation of both monetary and nonmonetary, objective, and subjective factors in further research on this matter will allow for insights into the more subtle processes of societal inclusion and exclusion of the young unemployed in society. Through this, it should be possible to find new innovative answers to this growing problem.

Empirical analyses on long-term youth unemployment

Sample and Method

Three hundred interviews were conducted with the target group of long-term unemployed young people between 20-25 years of age (50 interviews in each country). Common selection criteria (age, duration of unemployment, gender, qualification level) ensured the comparability of the sample. Because of strong regional disparities within most countries, the groups in the study contain young people from two different regions (an exception being only Sweden).

The concept of social exclusion, which forms the basis for the qualitative data evaluation of the YUSEDER project, uses a definition by M. Kronauer (1998). The qualitative interviews with long-term unemployed young people were conducted according to the method of the problem-focused interview (PFI) (Witzel, 1989, 1996). An interview plan with seven themes was developed based upon Kronauer's (1998) aspects of social exclusion, focussing on psycho-social stress due to unemployment. In addition, questions about the submerged economy were added.

After a first inspection of all interviews in each country and a preliminary classification of the cases into meaningful groups, each country selected three of the six aspects which put the unemployed young people predominantly at risk of social exclusion. Finally, the following *three aspects* were laid down as the *most important* for all countries: labour market exclusion, economic exclusion, and social isolation. Based on preliminary results, formal definitions of the types were developed for all countries.

The individual cases were assigned to three groups at risk of social exclusion: long-term unemployed young people at high risk of social exclusion, increased risk of social exclusion, or only low risk of social exclusion. The group of long-term unemployed young people at *high risk of social exclusion* is made up of cases which display at least three aspects of social ex-

clusion. Among them, at least two of the three categories defined as most important must apply, i.e., labour market exclusion, economic exclusion, and social isolation. The group of long-term unemployed young people at *increased risk of social exclusion* is defined according to the following criteria: if two main aspects but no other criterion apply. Second, this type includes cases which show exclusion tendencies in not more than one of the main categories and in any number of not so important aspects. The group of long-term unemployed young people at *low risk of social exclusion* is made up of cases displaying exclusion tendencies in no more than one area which may not be one of the main categories.

In generating the typology, the project intended to combine two aims: on the one hand, to meet the requirements of a common basis for a comparative study, and, on the other hand, to ensure that each country might set up its own priorities for the establishment of the different types.

Most important of all, the project clarified the causes and the extent to which the exclusion factors are of importance within the studies in the respective countries.

Results: Social exclusion

Labour market exclusion: As might be expected in all the studies, the segment of long-term unemployed young people at high risk of labour market exclusion is considerable. In the majority of cases in each country, the low level of qualification, both educational and vocational, contributes to increasing the risk of exclusion from the primary labour market. The low demand on the labour market and the frequent lack of job experience among young people prevents entry into a job career for many of those surveyed. For young people who have finished job training, the extended length of their unemployment leads to loss of their qualifications. However, unemployed young people may be classified as excluded from the wage-earning system only when they are not only confronted with structural barriers to entry but also view themselves as being without chances and therefore withdraw from this system.

The submerged economy: In the long run, irregular work places young people with especially low qualifications at high risk of further social decline or social exclusion. However, for the majority of those interviewed, work in the submerged economy represents the only possible income security in their present situation. The submerged economy functions therefore as a trap keeping young people out of the primary labour market in the long run, but also as a buffer, counterbalancing other factors of social exclusion. Because of the tense labour market in the southern European countries in particular, we must assume that the establishment of sanctions would only force individuals to find ways to get around them.

Economic exclusion: An unexpected outcome in a European-wide comparison of exclusion factors is that fewer young people in Greece, Italy and Spain display a risk of economic exclusion than those in the three northern countries. First, this can be attributed to the amount of family cohesion and support in the three southern European countries and, second, to the fact that many of those interviewed in southern European countries earn their income from the submerged economy. Whereas the Greek, Italian and Spanish young people can make as good as no claims toward benefits from a social security system, the Belgian, German and Swedish studies show, in contrast, that the widespread network of government support benefits seems to favour feelings of poverty and economic exclusion.

Institutional exclusion: Whereas young people in the northern European countries (primarily Belgium and Germany) generally assess government institutions in a negative sense as “coun-

terproductive” agencies, the main problem in the three southern European countries is the lack of offers of government support for unemployed young people. Therefore, those surveyed do not expect to receive support from government institutions and report little about feelings of institutional exclusion. Thus, a seemingly paradox finding of the YUSEDER study is that institutional exclusion hardly plays a role in Greece, Italy and Spain. For the most part, the family seems to be the only institution which supports young people in coping with their unemployment. To relieve the burden on the family, government must assume a greater responsibility. However, even in the northern European countries, labour offices can offer relatively few possibilities of support in many cases. Therefore, many of the interviewed young people have to rely primarily on social welfare services for financial benefits. But contact with the office of social services can also be a problem if the young people feel they are not taken seriously and are monitored by the social worker or even discriminated against (in Germany particularly).

Exclusion through social isolation: The long-term unemployed young people in Greece, Italy and Spain, but also in Sweden, are less at risk of social isolation than those in Belgium and Germany. Here, again, the comparably stronger family ties of the young people interviewed (in the three southern European countries as well as in Sweden) serve as a decisive protective factor. It is true that the relatively high rate of unemployment among young people in the six countries has led to an acceptance within society that unemployment among the young is a normal stage in life, an acceptance which helps minimise social isolation tendencies. Nevertheless, with the increasing length of the unemployment, the danger grows of a reduction in social contacts or a withdrawal of those affected into a homogenous group (others also unemployed). Belonging to a certain group means social integration but also exclusion from the larger social community because of the one-sidedness of the contacts.

Cultural exclusion: Most of the young people in the studies felt the risk of cultural exclusion great when their standard of living did not equal that of their peers. It follows that cultural participation or exclusion depends in large measure on the finances of the unemployed young people. Only those in Belgium and Germany reported general feelings of cultural exclusion in the form of social stigmatisation and the impression of being treated as an outsider. Compared to those in other countries, many of the young people in Belgium and Germany as well showed less interest in participating in cultural and political events.

Spatial exclusion: We must differentiate between spatial exclusion in larger cities from that of rural areas. The first form refers to city districts with poor housing quality, a large portion of socially disadvantaged groups, a high rate of criminality and the corresponding feelings of insecurity by the residents (so-called “ghettos”). In all countries studied, this form of exclusion has the least relevance. Spatial exclusion in rural areas manifests itself primarily in an insufficient infrastructure such as a lack of job qualifications, absence of job opportunities, cultural activities and a lack of public transportation. This problem plays a central role in the rural areas of Greece but less of one in Italy.

Summing up, it becomes obvious that in southern European countries (Italy, Greece and Spain) the question of having vs. not having support from the family seems to be crucial. The ability of the family to financially support their unemployed children strongly determines whether economic exclusion and, as a result, cultural exclusion occur. Furthermore, many of those surveyed display strong family bonds and are therefore much more protected from the negative consequences of being unemployed. This was also discovered to be true in Sweden as well. In Belgium and Germany, the emergence of feelings of being socially excluded or included rather depends on the acceptance and level of support the unemployed young people

receive from their circle of friends. Although the social security system in northern Europe offers many more possibilities to young people, the current structure of institutional support seems to produce an increased risk of overall social exclusion for those concerned as well as a withdrawal from state institutions (particularly in Belgium and Germany).

Results: Vulnerability factors and protective factors of social exclusion

The main research question of the YUSEDER project asks for key mechanisms linking the experience of long-term unemployed young people to various factors of social disintegration, factors developed in the theory of social exclusion. Therefore, the empirical analyses mainly focussed on the presence of the mechanisms leading from unemployment to social exclusion among young people not integrated into the labour market. The study has taken into consideration mechanisms exacerbating the stress of unemployment (vulnerability factors) as well as protective mechanisms preventing or reducing the risk of social exclusion.

Above all, *low qualifications* contribute to the development of a high risk of social exclusion, by which the chances of integration into the primary labour market are greatly reduced. When another factor, *passivity toward the labour market* is added, (a high risk of) exclusion from the labour market results. Passivity refers to job search behaviour as well as to endeavours to raise qualification levels. Only the group of unemployed young people “at high risk of social exclusion” displays the combination of these two vulnerability factors – few realistic integration chances and general personal withdrawal from the labour market.

In contrast, young people with *a high level of educational qualification and vocational training* are at low risk of social exclusion. Training is thus a main protective factor which opens not only chances for integration into the labour market but also possibilities for social integration. The young people can draw on this potential, however, only when they actively make an effort toward labour market integration. Therefore, *active job search behaviour* is essential. Young people at “low risk of social exclusion” and, in general, the type at “increased risk of social exclusion” actively look for jobs. Many of these two groups are active on a social level as well. Most of them are continually occupied with activities of personal interest. They also participate actively in associations and organised groups. *Socio-cultural activities* represent therefore a further protective factor against social exclusion.

A precarious financial situation represents another vulnerability factor. Young people from the high risk group as well as a few at increased risk have financial problems. In southern Europe, it is young people whose families cannot sufficiently support them financially, but, in northern Europe, the low level of government financial support is the decisive factor. Moreover, debts or poor money management aggravate the precarious financial situation in many cases. In contrast, a *secure financial situation* contributes to lessening the risk of social exclusion.

The factor *low social support* plays a crucial role in the development of a high risk of social exclusion. It is only cases from the group at high risk that experience little or no social support. In the other two groups, a strong link to the social surroundings (friends or family) counteracts the risk of social exclusion. The factor *social support* thus protects these young people from a high risk of exclusion. Family ties (Greece, Italy, Spain) have not only positive aspects, however: the attendant economic dependence on the family can not only negatively affect the psychological well-being and the self-esteem of the young people but also severely limit their ability to make themselves independent.

In all the studies, *low institutional support* had a two-fold effect in regard to risk of social exclusion: first, insufficient monetary support leads to uncertain finances for those concerned. Whereas in southern Europe institutional exclusion caused by structural deficiencies in the social security system does not allow the age group surveyed to make claims on government financial support, young people in northern Europe are normally caught in the lowest net of social security, welfare income support. Second, insufficient institutional support toward the search for training and job positions contributes to exclusion from the labour market. Here, the causes are the lack of offers targeted at specific problem groups and the insufficient effectiveness of existing programmes.

In contrast, adequate *institutional support* means that long-term unemployed young people are satisfactorily counselled and supported financially but also assisted in integrating into the labour market or in improving their chances of integration through better qualifications.

Finally, it was observed in all countries that *personality-related factors* such as low self-esteem and poor mental health can increase the risk of social exclusion. In contrast, *protective personality features* such as a high level of self-esteem and good communication skills counteract the risk of social exclusion, as these young people develop a better ability to help themselves.

Altogether, the following vulnerability factors contribute to increasing the risk of exclusion in long-term unemployed young people: low qualifications, passivity on the labour market, precarious financial situation, no or only low social support, insufficient or non-existent institutional support, low self-esteem as well as, in some cases, drug dependency and deviant behaviour. In contrast, the following *protective factors* reduce the risk of social exclusion: high qualifications, active behaviour on the labour market, secure financial situation, social support, institutional support, high level of socio-cultural activities, high level of self-esteem and good communication skills.

Table ES-1: Key factors of social exclusion in six European countries

Vulnerability factors	Countries
Low qualification	All
Passive job search behaviour	All
Precarious financial situation	All
Low social support	all (except GER)
Low institutional support	B, GER, S
Deviant behaviour	GER, S, SP
Low self esteem	All
Protective factors	Countries
High qualifications (educational and vocational)	All
Active job search	All
Economic support	All
Social support	All
- <i>Northern Europe</i> : integration into social networks	
- <i>Southern Europe</i> : family support	
Institutional support	All
Socio-cultural activities	All
High self-esteem	All

Which socio-demographic features besides the above-mentioned protective and vulnerability factors contribute to the risk of social exclusion? Vulnerability increases with the length of the long-term unemployment and the lack of educational and vocational qualifications of young people. That means that young people at high risk of exclusion have been unemployed much longer and are less qualified than the group at low risk of exclusion. Financial or social problems in their families as well as belonging to a lower social class can increase the risk of social exclusion. Young people at high risk generally stem from lower social class families or from ones with social problems and have therefore been disadvantaged from childhood on.

Results: Effects of social exclusion on the health of unemployed young people

Psycho-social stress: All the national studies found that a high risk of social exclusion is linked to a multitude of psycho-social stress factors directly resulting from unemployment. Among these are a perceived lack of opportunities, passivity, apathy and a sense of resignation. A comparison between the northern and southern European studies shows that the diversity of psycho-social stress is greater in Belgium, Germany and Sweden. The main stress factor of financial problems influences the health of those at high risk of social exclusion as well as those at increased risk. Other factors include a fear of the future, a lack of prospects for the future and feelings of dependency. In contrast, for young people at increased risk of exclusion in southern Europe, the family (monetary) support operates as a protective factor. Young people in these countries, who hardly experience financial stress, report only the stress of lack of control over their situations and a lack of structure in their everyday lives.

Health-related behaviour: Findings in four of the six national studies (Sweden, Belgium, Germany and Spain) showed that only those at high risk of social exclusion display negative effects of unemployment on their health-related behaviour (tobacco and alcohol consumption, abuse of drugs and medicine and a lack of physical activity).

Self-esteem: Again, it was only those at high risk of social exclusion whose self-esteem suffered from unemployment. Low *self-esteem* or *low self-confidence* was observed in these young people in nearly all countries.

Protective factors: Social support, financial protection (especially in southern Europe), higher qualifications, an optimistic orientation towards the future (especially in northern Europe) and, in some cases, a view of unemployment as a deliberate choice represent protective factors which ensure that negative effects on health from unemployment and the risk of social exclusion remain at a low level.

Unemployed young people in northern Europe generally display a higher degree of psycho-social vulnerability; whereas the young people in southern Europe have available to them the protective factors social support and economic protection. In Greece, Italy and Spain, young people at increased and at low risk of social exclusion are normally supported socially and financially, but only those at low risk of social exclusion in northern Europe profit from social and economic support as protective factors. Although those at higher risk surveyed in northern Europe display higher qualifications and a positive orientation towards the future as protective factors, these factors do not seem to have a positive effect on physical health to the degree that those in southern Europe do.

Innovative institutional responses

The third phase of the YUSEDER research project concentrates on the institutional solutions to the problem of youth unemployment and social exclusion in the participating countries. The focus was placed on innovative approaches to combating youth unemployment and processes of social exclusion. Finally, perspectives for future European efforts against youth unemployment and social exclusion will be described.

In the comparison of measures against youth unemployment and social exclusion, all of the countries display a large government influence, but with different levels of emphasis. In Sweden, the activities are confined almost exclusively to government institutions where a series of approaches is directly aimed at combating youth unemployment. Very important in Sweden is the legal agreement by which every young person who has been out of work for at least 100 days is eligible to receive an offer of employment, training or another form of work. In contrast, in Belgium, concrete actions against youth unemployment and social exclusion are to be found primarily on the regional level.

To be emphasized is the German government's Instant Programme to combat youth unemployment; in addition to the funds for regular labour market programmes, it provides for one thousand million Euro for projects which are to promote young people's integration into the labour market and to minimize the risk of social exclusion. In contrast, less government influence could be found in Spain, Italy and Greece. Many projects and initiatives there are supported by the European Social Fund.

Many experts point out that training and qualification are decisive for a long-term integration into the labour market. But that is also not enough to prevent processes of exclusion in a long-lasting way for long-term unemployed young people. In Sweden, the improvement in the levels of training as well as of competency of unemployed young people is viewed as an approach of basic importance. In Sweden, projects and initiatives emphasise individual counselling and supervision for the unemployed young people. Those affected are to be introduced to work by practical work experience. In Belgium, it is emphasised that personal support during an initiative is viewed as the most effective method for the success of a project. As in Sweden, Germany points to three main features which are being undertaken to combat youth unemployment and social exclusion: 1) training and qualification, 2) cooperation and networking of the various mediators and organisations and 3) individual psychosocial stabilization and personality development of those affected. Here, we must especially point out projects and programmes which attempt to set up training and work positions with the help of placement agencies mediating between businesses and the unemployed young people. In such cases, it is of decisive importance that an individual developmental plan be designed in conjunction with the young people themselves which is carried out with monitoring and supportive supervision. The experts from Spain point out that projects concentrating merely on training unemployed young people fall short. They formulate as their goal institutional measures, projects and initiatives in which, on the one hand, elemental capabilities and qualifications are taught and, on the other hand, young people are encouraged to achieve more independence and self-assurance in structuring their vocational future.

In general, innovative approaches toward avoiding youth unemployment and the risks of social exclusion take into account that training and qualification alone are not enough to guarantee a longer-term integration of unemployed young people. Measures are required in which the young people first receive help with respect to their personal life situation and emotional development. Only after a phase of personality stabilisation and improvement in their social

situation do efforts toward integration into the labour market seem meaningful. Further innovative aspects are as follows:

- qualification of young people in the area of information technologies
- networking different mediators
- utilising placement agencies
- city district-oriented projects toward promoting social integration
- strengthening personal responsibility (empowerment approach)
- target group-oriented action
- qualification through skilled-labour activities in concrete projects which benefit the community.

Conclusions

1. Unemployment is a central risk factor for young people, which in the long-term threatens the overall integration of young people into society.

2. The most important vulnerability factors that contribute to an increase of the risk of social exclusion for young unemployed people in the long-term are in all countries low qualification, passivity at the labour market, a precarious financial situation, low or missing social support and insufficient or non-existent institutional support.

3. The most important protective factor for unemployed youth is social support. While integration into social networks is of great importance for youth from northern Europe, in southern Europe the family is more important. Especially due to the high level of family support, the number of youth at high risk of social exclusion in general is lower in southern Europe compared to northern Europe.

4. Individualization processes in southern European countries might weaken this buffer effect of family support. In these countries institutional support should be improved to counterbalance the effects of modernization.

5. The normalization of youth unemployment and the prolongation of the youth period - although not meeting central developmental demands of maturing young people - as well as a widely accepted submerged economy strongly influence the individual experience. Predominantly in southern European countries these factors moderate tendencies of blaming oneself, considerably lower the risk of social exclusion and concomitantly reduce ill-health effects associated with long-term unemployment and social exclusion.

6. Social origin can be a protective factor for the youth as well as a decisive vulnerability factor: Poverty and other social problems in the family can increase the risk of social exclusion for the youth. This can be interpreted in the sense that the effects of social origin are reinforced by the experience of long-term unemployment of young people.

7. The higher involvement of young people in the southern European countries in irregular work (81% vs. 24%) acts as a buffer and as a trap (Borghi & Kieselbach, 2000). Bridges out of irregular work into the labour market should be searched that reduce the stigmatising impact of the submerged economy.

8. To reduce the risk of social exclusion and to enhance controllability of the future for young unemployed people a concept like the Swedish '100 days guarantee' seems to be innovative and exemplary. This includes the offer of employment or training from the side of institutions at the latest after 100 days of being out of work.

2 Introduction¹

2.1 Object and organisation of the study

The research project "Youth Unemployment and Social Exclusion: Objective Dimensions, Subjective Experiences, and Innovative Institutional Responses in Six European Countries" (YUSEDER) was supported by the Research Directorate General of the European Commission (DG Research) within the Targeted Socio-Economic Research Programme (TSER) of the 4th Framework Programme.

The European Commission launched a call for proposals looking for new knowledge of the key mechanisms linking the experience of long-term youth unemployment to various dimensions of social disintegration, conceived of in the theoretical framework of social exclusion. In this context, not only the mechanisms exacerbating the stress of unemployment (vulnerability factors) but also the protective mechanisms preventing or reducing the risk of social exclusion have to be taken into consideration. The second research question relates to new options of institutional and political intervention and counteraction in different national contexts. These analyses have been undertaken in three Northern European countries (Sweden, Belgium, Germany) and three Southern European countries (Spain, Italy, Greece).

The consortium of the research project was coordinated by Thomas Kieselbach (University of Bremen, Germany)² and was composed of the following national partners: Prof. Dr. Kees van Heeringen (University of Gent, Belgium)³, Prof. Dr. Michele La Rosa (University of Bologna, Italy)⁴, Prof. Dr. Louis Lemkow (Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain)⁵, Katerina Sokou, M.A. (Greek Network of Health Promoting Schools and Institute for Child Health Athens, Greece)⁶ and Prof. Dr. Bengt Starrin (University of Karlstad, Sweden)⁷. Additional contacts have been established to researchers in Argentina and China, who are currently conducting a parallel YUSEDER study which is going to be compared with the European results. These associated partners of YUSEDER are Prof. Dr. Enrique Grote (University of Rio Cuarto, Argentina) and Dipl. Psych. Rainer Nathow (Social Psychiatric Services, Wuhan, China).⁸

The empirical research in the six countries was, on the one hand, dedicated to different national problems of youth unemployment, and on the other hand followed different scientific orientations and methodologies, namely sociological, psychological, psychiatric, and cultural.

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³ Members of the Belgian research team: Kees van Heeringen, Wouter Vanderplasschen, Tine Willems, Gwendolyn Portzky

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⁵ Members of the Spanish research team: Louis Lemkow, Josep Espluga, Josep Baltierrez

⁶ Members of the Greek research team: Katerina Sokou, Demetra Bayetakou, Valentine Papantoniou, Katerina Christofi

⁷ Members of the Swedish research team: Bengt Starrin, Erik Forsberg, Marina Kalander Blomqvist, Ulla Ranta-keisu

⁸ The Argentinian partners were able to finalize their project in 2005 (see chapter 5.5), the Chinese project could not be finished due to administrative difficulties.

The research project was organised around three work packages:

Workpackage 1:

- empirical evidence on youth unemployment and health in each country
- clarification of the concept of social exclusion
- description of social exclusion of different groups of young people at risk

Workpackage 2:

- qualitative analysis of 50 long-term unemployed young people in each country with regard to
 - antecedent variables facilitating long-term unemployment among young people,
 - the main factors contributing to social exclusion / inclusion (vulnerability factors and protective factors), and
 - the health effects associated with social exclusion.

Workpackage 3:

- innovative institutional responses on a local, regional and national level in various societal sectors to counteract the risk of social exclusion as a consequence of long-term unemployment.

The EU has developed a European Employment Strategy defined in the Presidency Conclusions at the European Council Meeting on Employment in Luxembourg in November 1997. As a result of this summit, the 1998 Employment Guidelines formulated recommendations to be followed by the Member States in which it is stated that "Member States will ensure that every unemployed young person is offered a new start before reaching six months of unemployment, in the form of training, retraining, work practice, a job or other employability measure." (European Commission, 1998).

The Employment Guidelines would nearly abolish the group of long-term unemployed young people when strictly put into practice. Nevertheless, at the time of the research study (1998-2000), the national research groups had generally no difficulties in finding members of the target group. The results of this research provides a relevant contribution to the formulation of European as well as national employment policies by bringing together the experiences from different European countries that vary considerably with respect to

- the labour market conditions for young people,
- the transitions from school to work,
- and the support (economic and noneconomic) available for young people trying to find their entrance into the labour market,
- as well as the temporary or (continuous) alternative options of work in the submerged economy.

2.2 The social and scientific background of YUSEDER

Mass unemployment will clearly be an issue of major political relevance in the future, and European governments will be assessed in terms of how they propose and actually succeed in solving labour market problems. Since the beginning of the 80s, increases of unemployment rates have reached an even higher plateau after each economic recovery despite a general increase in the number of employees. On the other hand we find tendencies of deregulation and flexibilisation in many countries which lead to a widespread precarisation of the labour market (Kieselbach & Svensson, 1988). During the second half of the 90s we also find, however,

a considerable reduction of unemployment rates in various European countries like the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Denmark. This can be explained partly by demographic changes, but also by innovative labour market policies, the creation of a low-income sector, the extension of part-time work, and last but not least, by a general economic recovery. Despite these trends which are slackening the labour market, the problem of long-term unemployment has not yet been resolved in most EU countries. This means that long-term unemployed people normally have not profited primarily from the amelioration of the economy.

The starting point of our research is the factual normalisation of temporary exclusion from paid work for an increasing number of people capable and willing to work. Occupational transitions (passing from one occupational position to the other) have already increased and will do so even more in future. They tend to replace the normative perspective of a lifelong relationship to a certain company or profession against a patchwork biography of different phases within, between and out of employment. Many voices claim that we are at a time of change between a declining industrial society and something new. This new (or incipiently new) society has been variously referred to as the information society, the service society, the knowledge society, the risk society or simply the post-industrial society. Unfortunately, the difficulties of assigning a name to this "new" society arise from the fact that it is in an empirical vacuum of which we have no experience.

We cannot, of course, say much about what awaits us in the future. Opinions diverge, with some believing in a victory for common sense and the welfare society, with others forecasting the breakdown of societal links. It is common among debators and intellectuals to stress that we are on the threshold of a divided society. The kind of society they are talking about has got the name of the 2/3 society. The 2/3 society refers to a society consisting of two groups. A majority (two-thirds) will live in good financial, social and health conditions. Economic development will mean that their conditions will steadily improve. However, a minority (one-third) will be living under difficult conditions, with increasingly severe financial, social and health problems. In such a society, societal cohesion will have broken down.

The apprehensions of a coming 2/3 society will probably increase the forces leading to social exclusion. In such a society greater and greater numbers will encounter serious problems in meeting their needs. Furthermore a divided society increases polarisation and class differences between groups. In the scenario the welfare state will face severe tensions because in the scenario social security systems have been strongly weakened, and the safety nets that are supposed to catch those in need no longer break the falls of those in financial difficulty as well as they used to. In future, the social aspects will become increasingly serious, causing problems that will have to be solved.

Prognoses of the development of the European labour markets expect a further aggravation of the difficulties especially for the young generation. Therefore it seems to be important to find out

- the longer lasting effects of the exclusion from the labour market, that is, the exclusion from social participation within personal relationships, groups and social institutions,
- the key mechanisms which link labour market exclusion and social exclusion,
- the most vulnerable groups exposed to these processes,
- the contribution of social institutions to counteract tendencies of segregation and marginalisation,
- the lessons to be learned from innovative interventions in other member states.

In many Western countries youth unemployment is presently characterised by a transition from unemployment of a predominantly temporary kind to consolidation and structuralisation. In the member states of the European Community, there are more than five million unemployed young people between 15 and 25 years of age. Of these, about one third must be counted among the long-term unemployed (i.e., those unemployed for longer than one year). The average rate of youth unemployment has been in recent years twice as high as the overall rate.

Significant research on youth unemployment comes mainly from Great Britain and Australia and, to a lesser degree, from the FRG. Besides Italy and Spain, Australia and Great Britain were among those Western countries with an exceptionally high rate of youth unemployment. Astonishingly little research on the impact of youth unemployment has been done in the USA. This may possibly be explained by a different type of transition, as compared with other countries like the FRG, between the educational system and employment, which leads to temporary unemployment (interrupted by several short-time, low-paid jobs) being regarded as quite ordinary for a young person's biography. That particular stage, which lasts up to the age of about 22, has been named "floundering period" (Hamilton, 1987).

A number of contributions have raised the question of a specific vulnerability of young people to the experience of unemployment (Roberts, 1984; Schwefel, 1986; Spruit & Svensson, 1987; Warr, 1984, Kieselbach, 1988). This means asking, on the one hand, which age group suffers more from psychosocial stress associated with unemployment and, on the other, whether there are age-dependent qualitative differences. A few arguments will, in the following, be put forward in order to elucidate the particular features of psychosocial stress with juveniles, emphasising possible long-term effects (cf. Roberts, 1984):

Whether young people or adults suffer more badly from the condition of unemployment cannot, considering the existing body of research, be stated unequivocally. Although there are indications that affliction with psychiatric symptoms is correlated with age in a nearly curvilinear way, that is, that affliction is strongest for the unemployed of medium age, weaker for the young and weakest for the older unemployed (Jackson & Warr, 1984), merely to ask for the most vulnerable group does not make sense. The purpose behind a question like this is to identify one group among the unemployed which is particularly vulnerable to psychosocial damage. By trying to grasp and to compare effects one-dimensionally only, however, the question is too short-sighted.

A lower vulnerability of young people with regard to psychiatric morbidity contrasts with higher ratings in other dimensions of stress. In a content analysis of qualitative data Viney (1983) found significantly higher rates for young unemployed below 20 years of age with regard to anxiousness, anger, helplessness, guilt and shame than for older ones. Schober (1978), concludes from a comparison of stress profiles that unemployed juveniles suffer considerably more from domestic tensions and attributions of blame, whereas adults more intensively perceive social isolation and stigmatisation induced by unemployment. So we are obviously more precise in talking of age-dependent differential stress profiles.

Young people experience unemployment as a frustration of expectations which, in their previous educational career, they had been made to regard as crucial goals and orientations and which had been a major motivational basis for scholastic achievements. Being unemployed, to them, does not mean losing the positive concomitants of having a job. Furthermore, school leavers may indeed, initially, welcome unemployment as a relief from the exactions of the final stage of their school career (Winefield, Tiggemann, Winefield & Goldney, 1993).

One of the important results is that we find a widening developmental gap opening between unemployed and employed young people. This gap is determined, on the part of the unemployed, by stagnation and regression as a consequence of not being allowed to work as well as by the experience of unemployment as a cumulation of "daily hassles" and, on the other hand, by the effects of working (like greater independence, acquisition and utilisation of skills, etc.) on employed juveniles.

When comparing the health hazards of unemployment for adults and young people we must take into account the good state of health of juveniles which may mitigate immediate negative health consequences of a critical life event such as unemployment. However, a riskier health behaviour on the part of unemployed juveniles (with regard to eating and sleeping habits, alcohol and tobacco consumption, personal hygiene, and sporting activities) may well lead to delayed damage to their health, the extent of which cannot, at present, easily be estimated (Olafsson & Svensson, 1986). Finnish researchers who did find differences in the health behaviour of unemployed and employed 19-year old males expressed the belief that the unemployed young people of today are likely to be the sick middle-aged men of tomorrow because they differ in precisely those health behavioural aspects that we already know to have a major impact on future health (Kannas & Hietarharju, 1979; quoted in Janlert, 1985).

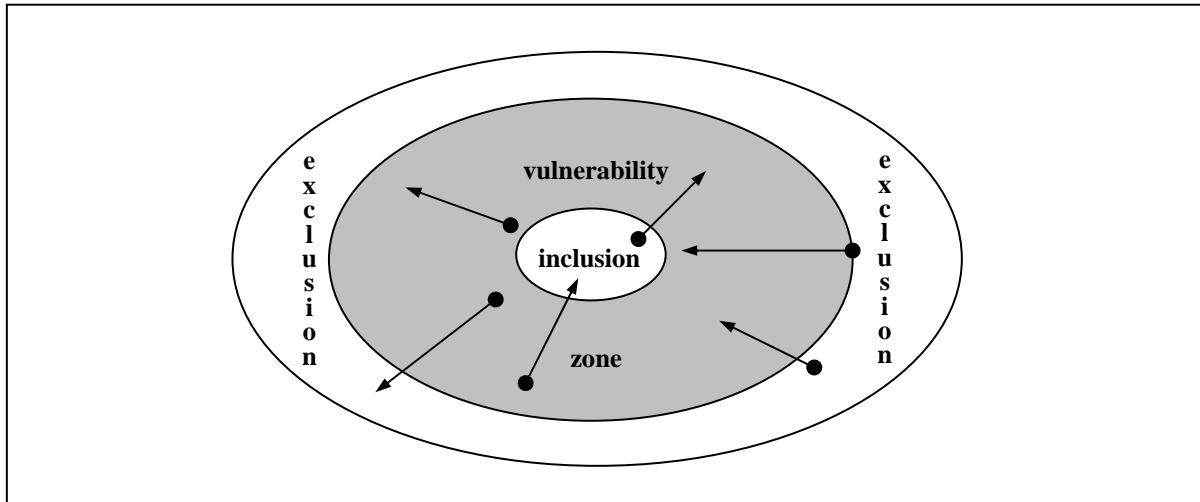
Furthermore we are justified in assuming that empirical data on unemployed young people are somewhat marred by a conservative (under-)estimation of psychosocial stress because of a stronger selection of samples within that group (due to disappearance or refusal in cases of very bad affliction).

YUSEDER research aimed at identifying central mechanisms linking unemployment and social exclusion. In general, the term social exclusion has only recently been introduced in all countries participating in this research project on a public, political and/or scientific level. Despite the increasing number of international experts, and also the interest from the European Commission in processes of social exclusion (for an overview see Silver, 1994, 1998, Starrin et. al., 2000), the meaning of this concept is still rather diffuse (see Castel, 1994, Paugam, 1996). Up to now, unemployment and disadvantaged living situations have been tackled mainly by poverty research, which has focussed almost exclusively on monetary aspects. Societal problems have already called for a broader focus which takes non-monetary factors and more subjective dimensions into account. Considering the definition of social exclusion from Kronauer (1998) – which has been adopted as the baseline for this research project – this requirement of comprehensiveness is met, at least on a theoretical level.

Kronauer (1998) described a comprehensive theoretical definition of social exclusion based upon the use of the term in France and the concept of underclass in the USA. Kronauer developed his understanding of social exclusion in light of the current employment crisis which especially affects low qualified manufacturing workers. In his opinion, the ever increasing unemployment rates are becoming a permanent social reality with the consequence that more and more people cannot lead a life which fits the societal standards for material and social well-being. This new quality within the cycle of unemployment and poverty implies a terminology which takes into consideration both monetary and non-monetary aspects of living, and the characteristics of the individual and the society. This broader understanding seems to have also become increasingly important with regard to young persons facing unemployment (Kieselbach, 1997). In all countries participating in this research project, social exclusion is understood as a dynamic, multidimensional process which incorporates social and economic (monetary and non-monetary) aspects of living, subjective experiences and objective situations, and which depends upon available personal and social resources.

Using the term social exclusion easily evokes the image of a definite result which stands in opposition to social inclusion. But social exclusion can only be understood when focussing not only on what it means to be excluded vs. included, but also on those factors enlarging or diminishing the vulnerability of the individual. The following figure 1 depicts this inclusion-exclusion paradigm. The arrows stand for different hypothetical "movements" of persons within this continuum.

Figure IN-1: The exclusion-inclusion paradigm



Kronauer (1998) outlines that social exclusion is always linked with unemployment – although unemployment does not have to be the starting point for social exclusion – and that it is only given if at least both a marginal economic position and social isolation are experienced at the same time. However, it must be stressed that this concept can only be understood by considering its multidimensionality. This means that although unemployment seems to be a central indicator for increasing social exclusion, all possible interactions and sequences between the following six dimensions for social exclusion must taken into account equally.

Exclusion from the Labour Market (1) describes the situation of facing external barriers to (re-)enter the labour market combined with a retreat of the affected person leading to resignation regarding the own (re-)employment. The second dimension, *economic exclusion* (2) is usually referred to as poverty and includes the financial dependency upon the welfare state or a socially unacceptable income, and the loss of ability to financially support oneself or the own family. *Institutional exclusion* (3) can occur from the side of the educational system (in both schools and further qualification and training institutions), institutions dealing with unemployment and poverty, and public and private service institutions (such as banks and insurance agencies). Besides the lack of support both before and during phases of unemployment, two other factors come into play: the experience of feelings of institutional dependency leading to shame and passivity, and the possible counterproductive effect of state support in the sense of exclusion of unemployed persons through their inclusion into a stable system. The fourth and fifth dimensions are closely linked with each other. *Exclusion through social isolation* (4) describes either a retreat of the social network or one's own retreat which can lead to a reduction of contacts to only one specific group of people or even a general isolation of the affected person. On a societal level, *cultural exclusion* (5) refers to the inability to live according to the socially accepted norms and values with the possible consequence of an identification with deviant norms and behaviours. Stigmatisation and sanctions from the social surroundings are also subsumed within this dimension. The last dimension describes *spatial ex-*

clusion (6) which manifests itself in the objective spatial concentration of persons with limited financial possibilities often coming from a similar social and/or cultural background and in feelings of isolation due to a missing infrastructure within the own residential area (e.g., lack of transportation, shops, but also cultural events, etc.).

The recommendations derived from the results of the research activities in every partner country of the consortium will allow policy makers to develop specific targeted measures to counteract social exclusion in order to harmonise the development of different countries within the EC. This can form a relevant contribution to facilitate the achievement of the goal of the European Commission of a simultaneous economic and social progress in all member states. The innovative policies necessary to cope with high rates of unemployment, especially of youth unemployment, require a deeper understanding of these processes of victimisation and of highly vulnerable groups being driven out of the social fabric into the margins of society, thereby also weakening the resources to reenter the mainstream of society. The development of a support framework for people in occupational transitions and outside the labour market will reduce the risk of being socially excluded by: concepts of social guidance and counselling for those being in occupational transitions, individualised concepts of facilitating the entrance into the labour market, innovative concepts of unemployment as a psychosocial moratorium related to the acquisition and exertion of qualifications, personality features and interests.

2.3 Qualitative method of the project

2.3.1 Description of the sample

To enable a broad view on the specific situation of young unemployed persons, 50 interviews with the target group were conducted in each country. The comparability of the sample – taking into account different schooling, qualification and welfare support systems within the six countries participating in the project – was ensured through the definition of the following five common selection criteria:

1. age: between 20-24 years of age⁹
2. unemployment: long-term unemployment (at least twelve months)
3. registration: officially registered unemployed young person
4. gender: distribution according to the proportion of men vs. women among long-term unemployed persons within the country
5. qualification level: distribution according to the proportion of low vs. higher qualified persons among long-term unemployed persons within the country;
 - *lower qualification*: drop-outs / early school-leavers / no further (vocational) training
 - *higher qualification*: high school / full vocational training

It was decided not to include immigrants in the study as this would have heightened the diversity of the sample. In addition, language barriers might have made it difficult to conduct the interviews. Due to strong regional disparities regarding unemployment rates of young persons within most countries (an exception being only Sweden), partners were asked to select the

⁹ This selection criterion could not be achieved from all countries. In four national studies (Greece, Italy, Sweden and Belgium) persons 25 years of age have also been included.

interviewees from more than one area. The following table 1 gives an overview of the respective approaches taken:

Table IN-1: Regional sample selection within the countries participating in the project

Country	Regional Focus
Belgium	in two regions of the Flemish part of Belgium with different unemployment rates
Germany	East – West Germany: both in cities with declining ship-building and steel industry and high unemployment rates
Sweden	only in one region
Greece	greater Athens area (major urban centre) vs. semi-urban cities including surrounding rural areas
Italy	Northern Italy: Emilia Romagna (low unemployment rates) vs. Southern Italy: Campagna (high unemployment rates)
Spain	Northern Spain: Catalonia (low unemployment rates) vs. Southern Spain: Andalusia (high unemployment rates)

The six national studies were carried out between November 1998 and May 1999. Significant changes with regard to labour market policies aiming at young unemployed persons occurred especially in *Germany*, where the new government implemented a programme against youth unemployment for persons below 25 years of age. This has led to a decrease in young long-term unemployed persons with the consequence that it was more difficult for the German research team to find young persons belonging to the target group. A similar decrease in unemployed young persons has been reported in *Sweden*, which attributed this result to the active labour market policies implemented already in May 1998. With regard to young people especially, the so-called "Development Guarantee Programme" (in which no young person shall be without work more than 100 days) has allowed many young persons to (re-) enter the labour market. As could be expected, this policy made it necessary for the Swedish team to adapt the sample criteria with regard to the question of long-term unemployment: included were also young people who had taken part in qualification schemes within the last twelve months. In *Belgium*, new policies were introduced only recently with the change of the national government in July 1999. Now an active investment in employment and education is planned – explicitly to counteract unemployment and social exclusion. However, these policies were not in effect in Belgium during the time of the sample selection.

In the southern European countries these types of policy influences could not be detected. In *Greece*, only recently more attention has been given to young unemployed persons. Their registration is increasingly encouraged not only because knowledge regarding the real extent of young unemployed persons in Greece is needed, but also because EU-sponsored programmes for this group have been offered since the beginning of 1999. Following up on the Luxembourg Summit in 1997, the *Spanish* government is currently designing its Employment Plan. Although young unemployed persons are seen as a priority group for intervention, the first steps to be taken are focussing on unemployed persons in general, and especially on the improvement of part-time contracts. In *Italy*, the strong cleavage between the northern and southern regions has to be stressed – a situation which has become more pronounced within the last years in the sense that unemployment rates in the North have decreased while they are still increasing in southern Italy. As a consequence, young people especially are "emigrating"

to northern Italy. Measures to counterbalance this situation have been implemented only recently (flexibilisation of working contracts, temporary employment, etc.) with the consequence that no data are available regarding their effectiveness.

In each country study, the distribution of the sample was oriented as closely as possible along the gender and qualification level of the overall number of long-term unemployed young persons within the respective region. It should be stressed that even if each national study group has a similar distribution regarding gender and qualification as exists in the overall number of long-term unemployed within respective countries, the study group should not be regarded as a representative of a larger population of long-term unemployed young people.

Table IN-2.1: Gender in respective national study population distributed by region

	region A		region B		Total	
	male	female	male	Female	male	female
S	interviews conducted only in one region				20	29
B	11	14	9	16	20	30
GER	14	12	9	15	23	27
GR	10	22	7	11	17	33
I	7	13	14	16	21	29
SP	13	21	6	10	19	31
				Total	120	179

In all study populations women are more exposed to unemployment than their male peers. This distribution largely coincides with the statistics concerning long-term unemployed young people. The study populations also largely coincide with the statistics concerning qualification level of unemployed youths in the respective country: In the Belgian, the German, and the Swedish studies, primarily young persons with lower qualification levels have difficulties in accessing the labour market. In the Greek, the Italian and the Spanish studies the same is true for young persons with a higher educational background. In the Swedish study 49 instead of 50 are included in the analysis: one individual dropped out at a fairly late stage of the analysis when closer inspection showed that a central selection criterion was not filled.

Table IN-2.2: Qualification level in respective national study population distributed by region

	Region A		region B		Total	
	higher	lower	higher	lower	higher	lower
S	Interviews conducted only in one region				38	11
B	11	14	10	15	21	29
GER	10	16	15	9	25	25
GR	26	6	17	1	43	7
I	15	5	25	5	40	10
SP	24	10	10	6	33	17
				Total	200	99

2.3.2 Data analysis

The method chosen within the YUSEDER consortium for carrying out the qualitative study with long-term unemployed youth is the Problem-focused Interview (PFI) which was developed at the University of Bremen in the 80s (Witzel, 1989, 1996). Since then, the PFI has

been applied to a multitude of different research settings leading to further elaboration and adaptation of the method.

An interview schedule was developed based upon Kronauers' (1998) six dimensions of social exclusion, and also focussing on psychosocial strains due to unemployment. Within these seven fields, questions about feelings of victimisation, shame, financial hardship, and submerged economy have also been added. With regard to the latter aspect, the partners from the southern European countries – Greece, Italy and Spain - have used a more detailed interview schedule.

The main focus within six of seven thematic fields of the interview schedule has been on key mechanisms linking unemployment with social exclusion in the sense of heightening vs. diminishing the vulnerability of the unemployed young person. Also, coping mechanisms of the interviewee which hinder or foster inclusion / exclusion are of high importance – in this regard specifically feelings of worry and shame, but also the general attitude towards one's own future come into play. In addition, within the thematic fields, one question was added which explores the interlink of the respective field with the other thematic areas.

Each thematic field consisted of one key question (KQ), additional questions, and a certain amount of short remarks (in the form of bulletpoints). The KQs were always asked exactly in the way they had been formulated when introducing a new thematic field. They served as the general framework and orientation for the interview. As opposed to the use of the KQs, the formulation and the time the additional questions were introduced depended upon the individual interview process. This combination of a rather formal introduction of each thematic field through the KQs, the flexible use of additional questions, and the possibility to integrate new themes into the interview shows how account is given to the perspective of both the interviewee and the interviewer, and the required openness of the interview process.

The first thematic field focuses on the *Labour Market Situation* of the young person. It deals with all aspects related to the concrete experience of (long-term) unemployment; specifically the inability to enter the labour market after school (structural barriers to getting a job; forms of self-exclusion/resignation). The second thematic field deals with all aspects related to the *Economic Situation* of the interviewee, and the resulting restraints. In this regard, the aspect of exclusion (*Economic Exclusion*) describes a situation of poverty – usually resulting from exclusion from the labour market. In case of irregular work, it is also asked for the effects of such a job. For the southern European countries additional questions regarding *submerged economy* have been developed assessing the situation within their countries more in depth.

Within the third thematic field a variety of different aspects related to *psychosocial strains* occurring out of the unemployment situation are subsumed. The fourth thematic field concentrates on positive/negative *Experiences with Institutions* such as schools, further qualification and training institutions, unemployment and social security offices, public and private service institutions (lack of support/institutional dependency leading to shame and passivity/etc.). In this regard, exclusion (*Institutional Exclusion*) can be described as lack of support both before and during phases of unemployment, but also institutional dependency leading to shame and passivity. The fifth thematic field tackles the aspect of *Social Relations*, both with regard to the scope as well as the quality of social relationships of the interviewee (family, partner, friends). Aspects of exclusion (*Exclusion through Social Isolation*) are either a retreat from the wider social network or a retreat in the sense of personal isolation.

The sixth thematic field focuses on *Cultural Norms and Socio-political Experiences* of the interviewee. In this regard, aspects of exclusion (*Cultural Exclusion*) refer to a situation where a person – usually as an effect of labour market and / or economic exclusion – is unable to live according to the socially accepted norms and values, and to take part in the dominant patterns of behaviour (consumption). The last thematic field deals with the *Spatial Environment* the interviewee is living in both on a structural level (housing situation, residential area), and the level of personal experiences such as feelings of being at home / feelings of security. Aspects of exclusion (*Spatial Exclusion*) can arise through the spatial concentration of persons with restricted financial possibilities. These residential areas often lack an adequate infrastructure (e.g., lack of transport, shops, schools, recreational facilities, health and other services, but also cultural events) leading to or reinforcing poor qualification level, health status, community integration, etc.

For a detailed interpretation of the interviews, the tape-recorded material has been transcribed word-by-word, and analysed with the help of a specific software for qualitative data analysis, the software programme winMAX. Based upon these first steps, three different steps of analysis have been developed for each interview; namely (1) a descriptive case analysis, (2) a case interpretation, and (3) a case chart.

The *descriptive analysis* of the cases is done along the codes. In the beginning of the text a short summary is given of the socio-demographic data of the interviewee based upon the personal data sheet. Important information about the interview situation from the postscript are also included. The above named codes are summarised on a descriptive level in the form of bulletpoints. Comments are added indicating the most important quotations from the original interview.

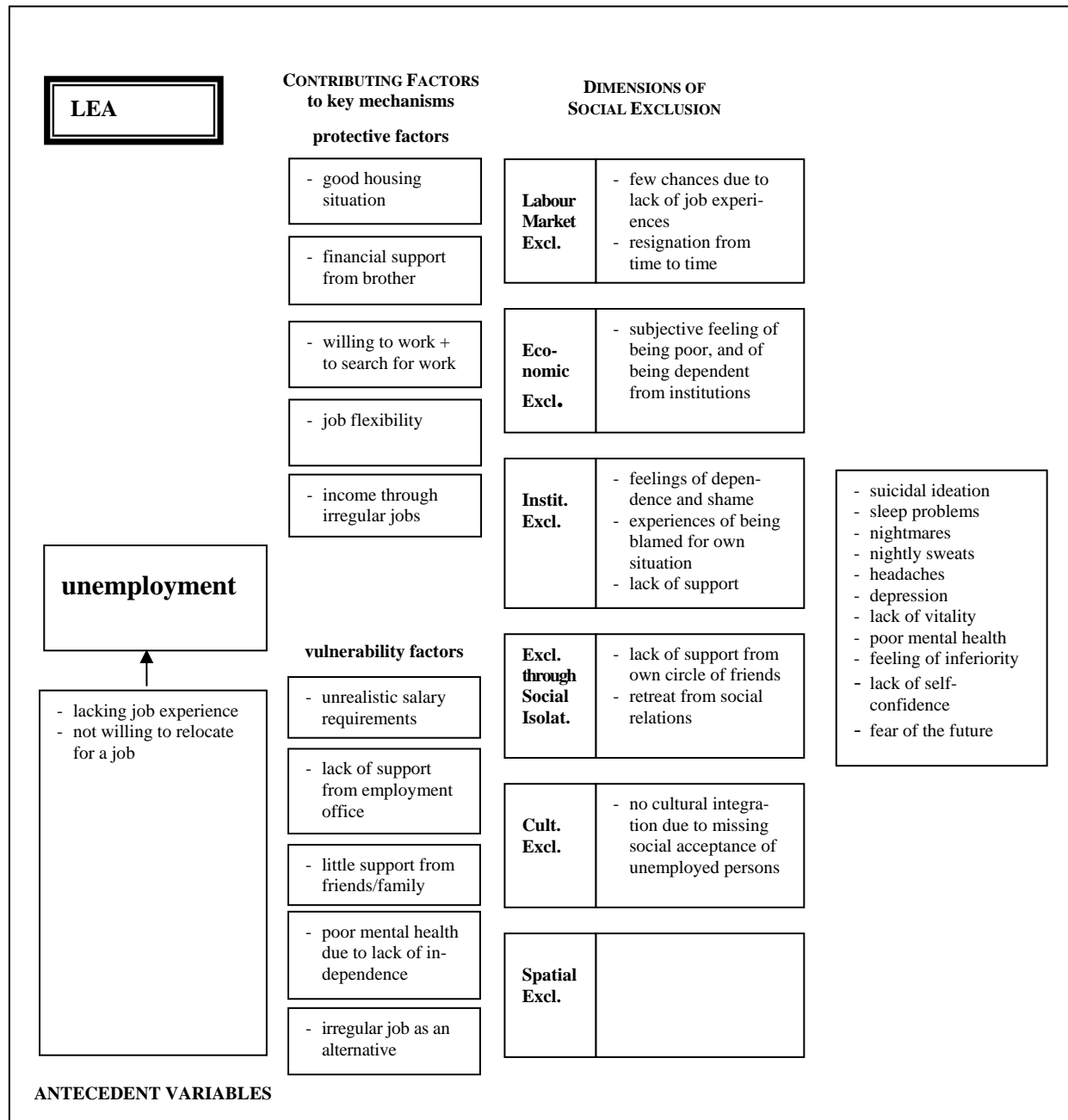
Based upon the descriptive analysis, a short *case interpretation* is developed. This document has eight different paragraphs dealing with: (1) antecedent variables leading to unemployment; (2) labour market exclusion (including submerged economy); (3) economic exclusion; (4) institutional exclusion; (5) exclusion through social isolation; (6) cultural exclusion; (7) spatial exclusion; and (8) health effects due to unemployment. In the interpretation of each dimension of social exclusion (no. 2-7) special attention is given to a) effects of the respective social exclusion-dimension on ill-health / well-being; b) crucial turning points in the occupational biography; c) key mechanisms leading from unemployment to social exclusion (protective and vulnerability factors). The last paragraph (no. 8) focuses on the description of the interviewee as belonging to one of the three risk groups: *high, increased or low risk of social exclusion*.

As a third step, *case charts* are developed for each interview allowing an easy graphical comparison of the interviews conducted within one country. Similar to the written case interpretation, the case charts take up the above-mentioned thematic areas; however, they are organised in a slightly different way. Only four columns are distinguished, with some of them including several themes: (1) antecedent variables to unemployment; (2) contributing factors (protective and vulnerability factors) to key mechanisms; (3) social exclusion with its six different dimensions; and (4) health effects distinguished for the high vs. low risk group. The main focus of the overall research project, and therefore of the analysis of the interviews, is on the indication of key mechanisms (both protective and vulnerability factors) which link youth unemployment and social exclusion. As a first step, in each case chart so-called "contributing factors to key mechanisms" (protective and vulnerability factors) are described for each interview on a rather concrete level (for an example see figure 2). These factors are mainly concrete aspects (attitudes, events, etc.) within the biography which have had a strong influence

on the interviewee. Based upon these concrete factors, generalisations are made following three different steps:

1. contributing factors are listed for the whole sample (separate for protective vs. vulnerability factors), and organised in meaningful groups;
2. for these sub-groups, more abstract terms are formulated (= key mechanisms);
3. because the number of key mechanisms is rather small, contributing factors which appear only once or twice are excluded (they are relevant only for the single case, but not for the overall sample);

Figure IN-2: Example of a case chart of German interviewee at high risk of social exclusion



The process of generating a typology of social exclusion

Considering the aim of the YUSEDER research project – to increase the understanding of processes of social exclusion among young unemployed persons, to analyse the material a common definition had to be found with regard to:

1. how cases can be categorised along the social inclusion-exclusion paradigm; and
2. the way key mechanisms (both protective and vulnerability factors) linking youth unemployment and social exclusion can be extracted from the interviews.

The concept which has been developed as a common basis for analysing the material in all countries is based upon the preliminary definitions the project partners were asked to give after the first data analysis. The results of this process can be summarised as follows:

Despite the fact that the first data analysis made within the participating research groups revealed that a clear cut dichotomous distinction between the two different categories high vs. low social exclusion could not be made, this analysis showed a similar tendency within all six country studies regarding the most relevant factors for the determination of social exclusion. These are the three central social exclusion-dimensions: labour market exclusion, economic exclusion, and exclusion through social isolation. Only in the analysis made by the Greek researchers was the dimension of spatial exclusion named as also being of central importance.

To give account to the character inherent in the overall concept of social exclusion, the terminology has been changed to 'risk of social exclusion' (indicating a process) instead of 'social exclusion' per se (as a final state). In this sense, the "high risk group" describes those people who have the highest risk of social exclusion, whereas among the "group at low risk", those persons are included who due to many protective factors have the lowest risk of social exclusion. Together with the high risk group, these young people are of specific interest for the analysis of institutional answers to youth unemployment and social exclusion to be done in a later stage of the YUSEDER project because:

- being at high risk of social exclusion (most vulnerable group) might give insights with regard to innovative answers counteracting social exclusion, whereas
- having a low risk of social exclusion might give important hints regarding interventions aiming at strengthening such protective factors.

On the basis of these considerations, we could finally adopt a *typology* which consists of three groups; namely high risk, increased risk of social exclusion and low risk of social exclusion.

high risk of social exclusion: cases are assigned to the group when at least three dimensions of social exclusion are given; among them at least *two of the three central social exclusion-dimensions* (labour market exclusion, economic exclusion, and exclusion through social isolation) have to be present;

increased risk of social exclusion: First, an increased risk of social exclusion can be assumed if two central but no other dimensions apply. Second, this type includes cases which show exclusion tendencies in not more than one of the central areas and in any number of non-central dimensions.

low risk of social exclusion: all those cases are assigned to this group which show only a few or even no signs of exclusion in any of the dimensions due to many protective factors; consequently an assignment is done when – at maximum – *only one dimension of social exclusion* is given; this dimension should not be one of the three central social exclusion-dimensions;

This definition gives the basis for a comparability of the results within the partner countries allowing a flexible adaptation to their specific situation at the same time.

The *key mechanisms* are described separately for each of the three groups at high, increased and low risk of social exclusion. As can be expected, for the group at high risk of social exclusion, vulnerability key mechanisms are dominant, whereas for those persons with low risk of social exclusion the protective key mechanisms are dominant; the group at increased risk of social exclusion shows a mixture of protective and vulnerability key mechanisms.

Within the national reports, interviewees are presented as *prototypical cases*. These prototypical cases are selected to illustrate the following groupings in the typology: high risk of social exclusion and increased risk of social exclusion. The focus of cases at high risk of social exclusion among the description of prototypical cases is explained by the general goal of the YUSEDER research project to analysing the determinants of vulnerability in long-term unemployed youths and the key mechanisms which intensify their risk of social exclusion.

3 Integration of results

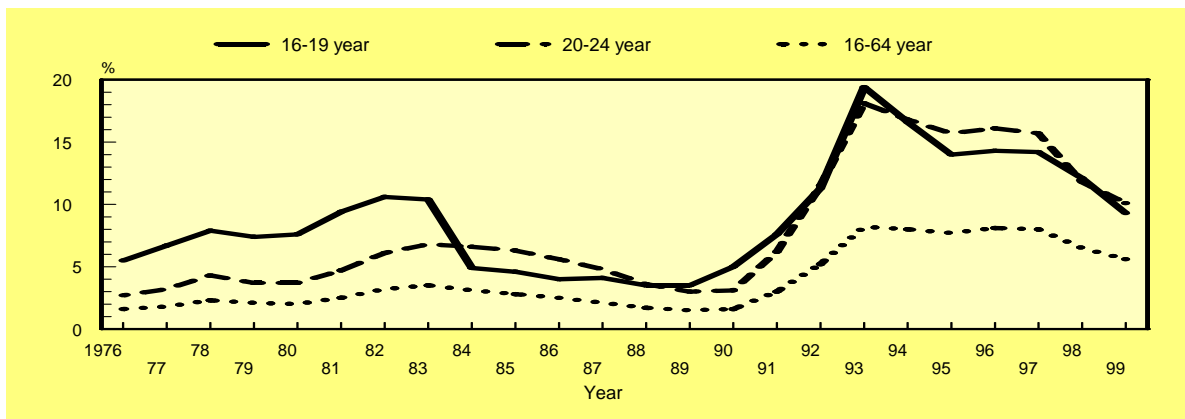
3.1 Sweden¹⁰

1 Introduction

For many years, full employment was a feature of the Swedish labour market, unemployment having been very low since the end of the Second World War. However, this situation changed rapidly during early 1990s. During the first three years of the decade, almost half a million jobs disappeared. In 1990, the national figure for total unemployment was about 3% (open unemployment, including those in special relief projects provided by the authorities to tackle local unemployment). Total unemployment then proceeded to rise very rapidly, reaching about 12% in 1993. The rapid downturn in the economy hit some groups harder than others. In a class perspective, it was primarily industrial workers who lost their jobs. Between 1990 and 1993, over 200,000 jobs in manufacturing industry and about 80,000 jobs in the building sector disappeared. In an ethnic perspective, it was immigrants and refugees who were the major losers, while in a generational perspective it was young persons who drew the shortest straw (Vogel, 1994).

In figure 1, the development of unemployment in Sweden between 1976 and 1999 for different age groups is shown. It can be seen that unemployment among young persons has been considerably higher than for the entire population (the 16-64 age group). This gap widened during the first three years of the 1990s. During the last years of the 1990s, the gap has decreased especially between the entire population and the 20-24 age group. It can also be seen from the figure that youth unemployment in the two younger age groups increased very substantially during the first three years of the 1990s with a peak in 1993. As is also shown, the unemployment rate for the age group 20-24 years has strongly decreased during the last years of the 1990s. In 1999, the open unemployment rate for the age group 20-24 years was 10.1%. There are certain noteworthy differences between the sexes, although these are not shown in the figure. In 1991, unemployment among men in the 20-24 age group was 7.2%, while that for women was 5.1%. In 1993, the corresponding figures were 21.7% and 14.2% respectively. In 1999 the figures were 10.4% and 9.6% respectively.

Figure S-1: Unemployment in Sweden, 1976-1999, by age groups



Source: Statistics Sweden.

¹⁰ Erik Forsberg, Ulla Rantakeisu, Bengt Starrin & Marina Kalander-Blomqvist

Trends in labour market policy concerning youth

Employment policies have played an extremely important role in Swedish politics since the 1960s. Full employment has been the over-arching political goal, involving active measures to fight unemployment and following the principle that everyone who wants to work and can shall be given this opportunity. The importance of work in Sweden can be illustrated by the participation of women in the labour force, which is high in comparison with countries outside the Nordic region.

Sweden relies much more than other countries on active measures to counteract problems in the labour market (Nordenmark, 1999). The welfare state creates alternatives to unemployment or exclusion. Despite the increase in unemployment during the 1990s, the Swedish labour market policy has retained much of its special character even though there have been changes through differentiation, individualisation and a shift in responsibility to municipalities: the number of different types of measures increased dramatically while special measures came to be focused on certain groups, such as long-term unemployed young people and so on. The municipalities have received responsibility from the state for certain intervention schemes, among other groups also for young people.

In the “Swedish Action Plan for Employment” (Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications, 1999) there are four pillars: Pillar I – improving employability, Pillar II – developing entrepreneurship, Pillar III – encouraging adaptability of business and their employees and Pillar IV – strengthening equal opportunity policies for women and men. To realise Pillar I, which is most relevant to the YUSEDER project, there are five priorities: tackling youth unemployment and preventing long-term unemployment, transition from passive measures to active measures, encouraging a partnership approach, easing the transition from school to work and promoting a labour market open to all.

Unemployed youth constitute a priority group, and a goal has been set that no young person shall be without work for more than 100 days. This initiative resulted in a significant reduction in the number of long-term unemployed youth during the later end of the 1990s.

2 Youth unemployment and health

On the whole, there has been very little Swedish research into the relationship between unemployment and ill-health. One of the first surveys that was carried out studied what happened in the wake of a factory closure in the beginning of the 1970s (Backlund, 1973). During the early 1980s, this working area was picked again by researchers in the field of social medicine. The crisis in the labour market in the beginning of the 1990s increased researchers' interest in the health consequences of unemployment (Janlert, 1981).

A review of the studies that have compared young unemployed persons with employed groups shows that, on the whole, the former group tends to report poorer health and more mental and psychosomatic problems than the latter group.

As far as the relationship between alcohol consumption and unemployment is concerned, the results from the Swedish surveys are not entirely consistent. Some studies suggest that alcohol consumption among men tends to increase during unemployment, while other studies have not been able to find any relationship. Some studies show that alcohol consumption is higher among the unemployed compared to other groups (Hammarström, 1986, 1991). However, the pattern is not consistent. Two studies found no significant difference between unemployed and employed persons (Fredlund and Tomth 1985; Ståhl, 1986).

It is known that unemployment affects young people in different ways. For some of them, unemployment is a torment, while for others it has no noticeable adverse effects. There seems to be some evidence that young unemployed women are inclined to report more health problems than young men (Hammarström, 1986). Our review also suggests that young men and women who have been unemployed for a longer period of time report more problems than those who have been unemployed for a shorter period.

Studies guided by the assumptions behind the finances-shame model show that young unemployed suffering under a higher degree of financial hardship and the experience of being devalued and belittled (shamed) exhibit noticeably more symptoms of ill-health than do those young unemployed living under less financial hardship and less experience with being devalued and belittled (Rantakeisu, Starrin and Hagquist, 1999).

3 Youth unemployment and social exclusion

As with the other Nordic countries, Sweden has poor research traditions within the framework of poverty and marginalisation. Swedish interest in studying marginalised groups arose in the 1990s as a consequence of the rapid changes in the labour market and the cutbacks in the welfare system.

The concept of social exclusion is not established in the Swedish discussion about poverty and marginalisation. However, it has been claimed in this discussion that the concept of social exclusion through its emphasis on relational aspects has brought a new dimension to the view of poverty and marginalisation (Halleröd, 1997). The phenomena or processes which the term social exclusion is intended to express have, at least partly, been described with the help of other terms, such as poverty, marginalisation and vulnerability.

In addition to *poor/poverty* and *marginalised/marginality*, the Swedish discussion also uses terms such as *resource-weak groups*, *vulnerable groups/vulnerability* and *socially deprived* to refer to circumstances and processes that are disadvantageous to groups further down the hierarchy of society. Probably the most common term is *exposed groups/exposure* and the national Public Health Report (Socialstyrelsen, 1997) use this terms and refers to a considerable number of surveys that show that socially and economically *exposed groups* generally feel less content with different aspects of life than the majority of the population.

Exposed groups in the Swedish labour market

As mentioned above, studies about exposed groups in the Swedish labour market are limited. Another problem is the lack of data relating directly to young unemployed people in each of these groups. There are some groups who seem to be more vulnerable than others in relation to the labour market, such as young people with a low level of education (Ackum Agell, & Harkman, 1997). One study shows that people with minimal education were clearly over-represented among the groups who had been unemployed on two occasions during a five-year period. This was especially the case for young people. Many immigrant young people also run the risk of exclusion from the labour market. The native-born Swedish population has a considerably higher level of employment than immigrants. Young people with a foreign background and minimal education are hardest hit by unemployment (Statistics Sweden, 1996). It is also considerably more usual that immigrants work in the lower-paying fields. Young persons with physical disabilities comprise another risk group. A major national investigation of the conditions of handicapped citizens at the beginning of the 1990s showed that persons with disabilities live under worse conditions than the rest of the population (Statistics Sweden, 1997).

Consequences of long-term unemployment

Long-term unemployed young people run the risk of *prolonged unemployment* for the simple reason that long-term unemployment is a factor that to a considerable degree can worsen the chances of finding work (Åberg, 1998). Unemployed young people also run the risk of being the victims of *economic problems*. Many of them can not even qualify for basic unemployment benefits and have for that reason been referred to social welfare agencies. This is an important reason why a large share of social welfare recipients in Sweden are young unemployed people. The number of young people that are poor has risen dramatically in the last decade. The increasing number of young people with low incomes is closely related to the difficulties they face in establishing themselves in the labour market. Without the state's transfer payments, many young persons between the ages of 18 and 29 would have had an income that placed them under the relative poverty line (Gustafsson, 1996).

4 Long-term unemployed youth and the risk of social exclusion

The results of our empirical study show one common feature: on the whole, the group long-term unemployed youth belong to the dominant culture and society. They share to a considerable extent the same work values as those who work. Almost all wish to become part of the working society, even though some do not know how to reach that goal or are quite pessimistic about their possibilities and thus not active in their search for a job.

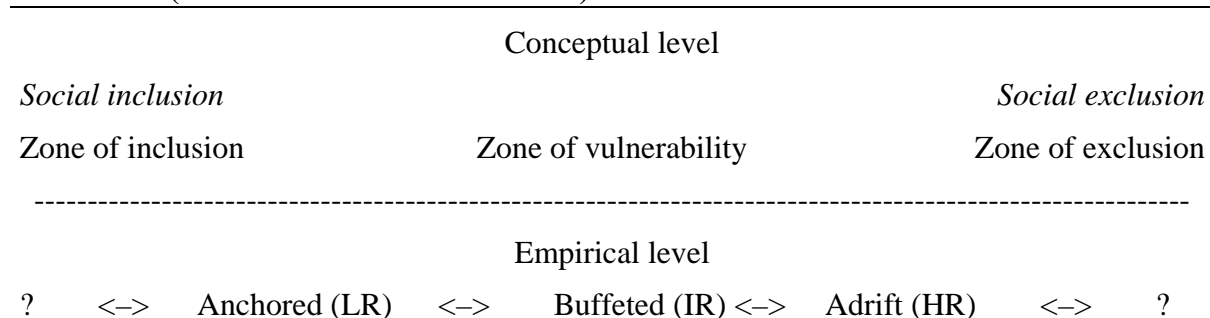
There seem to be two vulnerability factors that are common for all long-term unemployed young people: first, the structural *absence of a demand for regular labour force*. Second, the *length of unemployment*, which seems to be an important selection factor in the eyes of employers when deciding whom to employ. It may be due to the fact that they suspect that long-term unemployment has decreased the will or ability to work.

The common protective factors for all are: 1) The *Swedish labour market policy* which supports to those who are unemployed with different labour market programmes. 2) *Unemployment insurance and social benefits* which make consumption and social-cultural participation possible to a certain degree.

A typology

The young people in our study can be divided into three subgroups, the 'anchored' (LR), the 'buffeted' (IR) and the 'adrift' (HR). These three groups are situated in different zones along the inclusion and exclusion continuum. This is illustrated in figure 2 below.

**Figure S-2: Empirical level (typology) and conceptual level
(social inclusion <-> exclusion)**



Characteristic for each group is the specific relation to four central dimensions which determine or affect the placement between the extremes of social inclusion and exclusion respectively. These dimensions are; (1) family of origin and education; (2) the labour market;

(3) finances; and (4) social relations and activities. The three groups are distinguished consequently by what characterises the relations to these dimensions. The analysis indicates a very fragile situation among the 'adrift' (HR) but the situation of the 'buffeted' (IR) is also vulnerable from the perspective of exclusion. The position between social inclusion and exclusion can consequently be determined from the individual's connection to the labour market and to the other dimensions.

The 'anchored' (LR) run the least risk of social exclusion. What characterises the anchored are positive school experiences and their plans for further education. Unemployment is a time when recreational interests can be developed while at the same time they don't need to wrestle with ordinary financial problems. The largest group is the 'buffeted' (IR), whose situation is more vulnerable from the perspective of exclusion in comparison to the 'anchored' (LR). The 'buffeted' is relatively marginalised in the labour market, which also serves to weaken the economic position. This is exacerbated in several cases where the parents are also living under tight economic conditions in comparison with the parents of the 'anchored' (LR). A marginal labour market position in combination with economic difficulties elevates the importance of their secure social relationships, that is, supportive parents, friends and so on, as important assets of which the ties to the individual and society consist. Finally, the group 'adrift' (HR) - which is the smallest group - runs the risk of totally losing the connections to society. The group is characterised by a weak position with respect to all of the central societal dimensions. Their position in the labour market is very weak and some have for a long time not been registered as unemployed. They have serious economic problems and lack social support. The situation is precarious. However, the responsibility of the welfare state in the form of guidance and financial support ensures that they do not lose their connection to the society.

The surprising importance of the family

A characteristic of the Swedish welfare model is that the state has the primary responsibility that its citizens achieve a tolerable standard of living. A somewhat surprising finding from the empirical study is the great importance the family plays in preventing exclusion. The family gives both financial and emotional support. The social relations between young people and their relatives appear to be solid, with a few exceptions. The dependence of the young people upon the family partly goes against the conventional wisdom that the Swedish welfare state has assumed the former support role of the family member for the whole house and above all for the family members who have limited resources.

Our findings show that the publicly financed welfare state has not taken over the family's role or responsibility but that *the public sector* and *the family* must be regarded as complementary. This study shows that long-term unemployed young people are to a surprisingly large extent dependent upon both. The mass unemployment of the 1990s in combination with the problems financing the welfare state and the state's budget rectification process have probably meant *an increased burden on the family*, since both the market (in the form of paid employment) and the welfare state's contribution to the maintenance of the young people (in the form of unemployment compensation) has been reduced during the 1990s. The question is whether this circumstance does increase the risk of social exclusion - and in the long run results in *increased societal gaps* - because many of the 'buffeted' (IR) and the 'adrift' (HR) have parents whose material resources are limited.

5 Institutional responses to youth unemployment and social exclusion

Labour market policy and measures against youth unemployment

During the last years, the Swedish labour market policy has more explicitly been a part of the overarching economic policy. A goal of 80% employed by 2004 has been formulated as a part of the employment policy, an objective that has been deemed achievable (Sweden's Action Plan for Employment, 1999). In 1990, just before the recession, the employment rate for men was 82% and for women 79%.

The Swedish labour market policies can partly be characterised by the ways in which they intervene in the labour market. To begin with, two general categories of measures can be identified: *active* and *passive means* (Johansson, 1989). *Passive* measures refer to cash-based support such as unemployment insurance. *Active* labour market measures refer to intervening programmes.

Active measures can be divided into three categories (Johansson, 1989). The *first category* is usually described as matching measures to create those conditions in which the job seeker and available jobs are matched with each other. The *second category* are those measures which are directed at affecting the number of available job by improving the employment mechanisms for the job seeker and to remove obstacles for finding work. This is done through a process of education and training to bring career qualifications in line with available jobs. These efforts can even stimulate geographic mobility through reducing the job seeker's costs for relocation. The *third category* of labour market initiatives comprises those active measures aimed directly at the demand mechanisms. This is the most controversial aspect because the purpose is to intervene deeply into the labour market processes. These measures are all focused on creating jobs for longer and shorter periods.

The government and labour market authorities have formulated goals and programmes in the fight against youth unemployment. As mentioned above, one goal is that every young unemployed person shall be offered work, training or other employment within 100 days of registering as unemployed. For assistance, the authorities have access to different programmes. The most important of these programmes are *the municipal youth programme* (for youth under 20 years of age) and *the development guarantee* (for youth between 20 and 24 years of age). This priority of this goal has contributed strongly to the reduction of unemployment figures among youth.

In April 2000, the National Labour Market Board initiated an interesting pilot scheme for persons who have been registered at the unemployment office for a time period of at least 24 months. The scheme consists of a *labour pool* and *transitional jobs*. The programme is planned to start full-scale all over the country in August 2000.

A transitional job can be established on the side of the labour market without encroaching on those jobs that are carried out under market conditions. For each individual participant, the goal is to enter the regular job market as quickly as possible. A labour pool with groups of job seekers (10-15 people) participates in an active programme full time under the supervision of qualified unemployment counsellors and with the full arsenal of labour market programmes without the current time restrictions. The group members develop individual job seeking plans, build networks and so on. The objective is to systematically develop the unemployed person's competency and employability in accordance with carefully worked out individual job seeking plans.

Main problems of young long-term unemployed people

Our interview study with experts provides a fairly uniform picture of what constitute the main problems for long-term unemployed young people. Some of these problems are; a) the low educational level; b) weakened position with respect to the social insurance system because of the close connection between wage employment and the social insurance systems; c) absence of work contacts and lack of employment references which makes it difficult even to get a temporary job; d) lack of structure in the daily life which means problems developing a normal daily rhythm, required in order to handle a job.

The work with unemployed youth

When the experts report about their work against youth unemployment, it is to a large degree simultaneously also a work against the main problems described above. These problems are partly those which obstruct the entry into the labour market, for example poor education and partly those which are more effects of unemployment, for example the lack of structure in daily life. Both of these problems have implications on the development of excluding mechanisms and must therefore be countered as a part of the struggle against unemployment and social exclusion.

Most important of the individual programmes seems to be those programmes which increase the individual's employability through education and other measures to raise individual competence. The programmes have to proceed from where the youth currently is. For that reason, it could be necessary to find different approaches to motivate young people lacking motivation for studies. Long-term individual strategies may be necessary before they can arrive at a decision concerning studies.

It is important that long-term unemployed young people are given an opportunity to perform internships and to obtain employment references. A period of internship is an opportunity to show personal capacity as the employers are often sceptical regarding long-term unemployed persons. It is also important for unemployed young people to have access to apprenticeships in companies in which studies are alternated with practical work.

A number of different authorities are usually involved concerning one and the same unemployed youth. According to all of the experts, the authorities have to further improve and develop their cooperation. This cooperation can apply to both the head entity as well as various programmes under the same head entity. Furthermore, it seems also important to strengthen the participation of the unemployed youth in decisions involving them.

6 Conclusions

Country specific situation regarding health and social exclusion of long-term unemployed youth

The research that has been undertaken to study the link between youth unemployment and health show on the whole that young unemployed people exhibit more symptoms of ill-health than those who work. Studies also show that the adverse effects of long-term unemployment vary according factors such as the length of unemployment and gender. Studies show as well, the importance of economical factors and relational factors in that those suffering from both a higher degree of financial hardship and having more experiences of shame (devalued and belittled) exhibit noticeably more symptoms of ill-health than do those living under less financial hardship and with fewer experiences where they felt ashamed because of their situation.

Our study within the YUSEDER project shows that long-term unemployed young people can be divided into three groups which have been designated the 'anchored' (LR) (14 individuals), the 'buffeted' (IR) (27 individuals) and the 'adrift' (HR) (eight individuals). These groups are characterised by their specific relations to their family of origin and education as well as the labour market, finances and social relations. Where they are located along these dimensions is important for the discussion of appropriate interventions in counteracting social exclusion. Appropriate interventions for one group are perhaps not at all appropriate for another group.

With all individuals, regardless of group, forces exist which contribute to either inclusion or exclusion. Why only a minor proportion of the long-term unemployed youth run the risk of being socially excluded may be due partly to the welfare system and partly to the supportive function of the family. The adrift seems to be a group in need of measures which are specifically focused on individual circumstances.

That the 'adrift' (HR) group consisted of only eight individuals may be attributed to the protective effect of the public support system and that of the family. This serves as an indication that this group comprises a residual group with specific need of individual supportive efforts to counteract factors of exclusion.

Most important responses to youth unemployment and social exclusion

Our study with experts from different institutions provided a similar picture of the main problems of young long-term unemployed people. There is also a considerable sharing of views among experts concerning the various institutional responses they regard as important to address the situation of unemployed youth. One of the institutional responses and measures most often mentioned by the experts was the priority goal, confirmed by the government, which mean that every young person should be offered work, training or other employment within 100 days of unemployment.

Priorities and measures formulated in the national action plan for employment 1999 are on the whole in line with our studies within the YUSEDER project. We will however, in addition to measures mentioned above, recommend a stronger priority in "Pillar I – improving employability" about the need for measures and methods to support children and young people who for various reasons have weak preparation for participating in schoolwork. We will also recommend a more extensive application to apprenticeships like "Värmland apprentice" (one of our case studies) where the educational system and the local business cooperate. The above-mentioned programme including labour pool and transitional jobs seems also to be an important contribution to the labour market policy against long-term unemployment and exclusion.

Effects of labour market policies

An important aspect which concerns the weakest groups on the labour market is that the labour market programmes create an alternative to definitive exclusion from the labour market. The results from our studies within the YUSEDER project found that the long-term unemployed had not retreated from the labour market, and the central relationship in this connection was the efforts of the welfare state serving as an obstacle to labour market exclusion.

Research questions and need for research

There are some features that characterise Swedish research into youth unemployment and health. First, it has been mainly quantitatively orientated. Second, the quantitative studies have on the whole been cross-sectional. Only a few studies are longitudinal. Third, the research that has been undertaken has been quite atheoretical and correlational in nature. There are nevertheless some exceptions. For example, the classic stress theory, the theory of control

locus and the theory of financial deprivation have been used. Among these, it would seem that the stress theory in a more or less developed form underpins interpretations of the relation between unemployment and ill-health.

Another exception is the development of the so-called finances-shame model to increase the understanding of why unemployment might be an affliction for some whilst others are not affected negatively by it to any marked degree (Rantakeisu, Starrin & Hagquist, 1999). In the finances-shame model, two research traditions are brought together. The financial aspect of the model is linked to research on financial stress and deprivation, whilst the social aspects are associated with microsociological research on social bonds, social networks, self-image and identity. The model postulates the significance of two conditions for understanding the relationship between unemployment, ill health and social problems: the level of financial hardship and the extent of shaming experiences.

We will point to some directions which the future research, within the area of youth unemployment, should take. First, there is a need for more qualitatively oriented studies, as such studies would make it possible to achieve a better understanding of what unemployment actually can involve. In addition, qualitatively orientated studies would inspire new approaches, as they are open to surprises. Second, there is a need for more longitudinally oriented studies, as those studies make it easier to draw causal conclusions. Third, future research has to go deeper into the gender aspect. Swedish studies show that young women tend to report more ill-health than young men. Understanding of gender differences is quite limited. Fourth, future research should develop the understanding of the finances-shame model and its significance to understanding why unemployment might be an affliction for some whilst others remain unaffected.

Finally, we will also point to some lines of development in the analysis of social exclusion: 1) One aspect is to unit micro- and macroanalysis. To use the terminology of C. Wright Mills, it means that the goal is to combine the analysis of social exclusion expressed in terms of private troubles with analysis of social exclusion as a public issue (Mills, 1959). 2) A second line of enquiry could follow the trails that are ensconced in theories which postulate that exclusion concerns alienation within established groups (Scheff, 1997). 3) A third line of enquiry is to recognise and identify liberating and resource-enhancing tendencies in the praxis surrounding the 'excluded'. This is to say that research should have the ability to mobilise action.

3.2 Belgium

1 Introduction

In Belgium, youth unemployment rates have followed the general unemployment rates since the seventies, and recently they have been decreasing. Starting in the mid-seventies, youth unemployment figures increased sharply and reached a historical peak of over 150,000 young people in the early eighties. Due to a more prosperous situation, decreasing birth rates, the increasing proportion of young people who continued studying and the growth of part-time employment, the youth unemployment figures decreased during the late eighties and the beginning of the nineties. In 1993 and 1994, the Belgian youth unemployment rates reached new peaks, but the situation clearly improved afterwards. In the period 1997-1998, general unemployment decreased to 11% and youth unemployment also declined considerably. This decrease was highest among low-qualified and long-term unemployed women and among long-term unemployed young people. Only a slight decline could be observed among young people less than 20 years old and among non-EU foreigners. Despite this positive development, the amount of low-qualified young people and long-term unemployed young people remained at a high level. Youth unemployment figures are found to be still two or three times higher than the overall unemployment rates.

Youth unemployment rates are especially high among the very young (aged 14 to 19) and also among those between 20 and 24 years old. Moreover, clear differences can be demonstrated according to gender and region: female unemployment rates are higher in all age groups and in all regions and the youth unemployment situation is much worse in Wallonia (35%) and Brussels (30%) than in Flanders (12%). Half of all unemployed young people have low qualifications and 28% have been unemployed for more than one year. Females with low qualifications are especially at risk of becoming unemployed. The labour market position of young people in Belgium is extremely precarious. Moreover, youth unemployment apparently is only the tip of the iceberg, many young people work as part-time or temporary employees.

Research showed that several barriers interfere with the chances young people have on the labour market. Age certainly is a handicap on the labour market, since it is often associated with a lack of experience and lack of specific knowledge and the need for more training. Also gender, duration of unemployment, work experience and qualification of the applicant can be barriers to employment. The fact that long-term investment is not so attractive and causes employers to recruit employees who can make the business pay immediately and is one of the fundamental reasons for the growing problem of youth unemployment, especially among low-qualified persons.

There seems to be a problem in the transition from school to work, since over 50% of all school-leavers are still unemployed after one year. The transition from school to work can be hampered by several factors, including the mismatch between school and the labour market, the high school drop-out rate and the large number of low-qualified young people.

The activity rate among young people is further decreasing due to the extended period of schooling, difficulty entering the labour market, a lack of professional perspectives, and the high requirements of employers. The initial working career of many young people is thus often characterised by subsequent periods of employment, practical and vocational training and part-time and temporary employment.

The results show that at least two particular features characterise the Belgian labour market, that is, relatively low labour market participation and high unemployment (over 1,000,000 Belgians have no full-time job). Other tendencies of the Flemish and Belgian labour markets are: the constant increase of the active population, more vacancies for low-qualified persons, more part-time employment, more and more persons with high qualifications, more jobs in the 'services' sector and a decrease of the employment rate. However, persons with low qualifications are pushed aside by persons with higher qualifications, employers require more and more flexibility and unemployment remains very high among immigrants, persons with low qualifications, women and young people.

The employment policy of the former government (Dehaene II) aimed at reducing labour costs and social insurance contributions for employers, reorganising the labour market and combating the submerged economy. Moreover, this government invested a great deal for the training of unemployed and employed individuals (e.g. education, training in the services sector' and life-long learning) and paid special attention to long-term unemployed persons, persons with low educational qualifications, immigrants and persons with disabilities.

The last elections (13-6-1999) totally changed the Belgian political landscape. For the first time in decades, the Christian Democrats were not part of the government and a new coalition was formed with Socialists, Liberals and the Green party. The new federal government wants to prevent and to combat unemployment and social exclusion actively by investing in employment and education rather than passively spending social welfare benefits. The coalition partners agree that employment functions as the basis for financing the welfare state. Some of the central objectives of the new government are the creation of the 'active welfare state' and the increase of employment. The means to achieve these objectives are, among others, introducing 'starting jobs', diminishing labour costs, preventing individuals from being 'trapped' in unemployment, integrating long-term unemployed persons and social welfare recipients and promoting more flexible working hours.

The employment policy is also a focal point in the declaration of the new Flemish government. Since welfare is not feasible without employment, the Flemish government wants to create 30,000 new jobs during the next five years. Other objectives for this legislature are diminishing labour costs, preventing people from falling into/being caught in 'unemployment traps', creating public transport free of charge and affordable child care for individuals with a low income.

2 Youth unemployment and health

The association between youth unemployment and health is poorly documented in Belgium. A limited number of studies have been conducted and a majority of publications are based on foreign research findings. The few publications on (youth) unemployment date from the mid-eighties and the beginning of the nineties. Recent research focuses more on the effects of long-term unemployment. De Witte is the Belgian author who has contributed most to the debate on (youth)unemployment and health by reviewing the international literature on this topic and by putting forward an adaptation theory which includes a decrease of psychological well-being shortly after becoming unemployed and a later stabilisation. Only re-employment can break this cycle. De Witte and other researchers at the Higher Institute for Labour have studied the psychosocial profile of short- and long-term unemployed persons and have observed that especially 'desperate' and 'discouraged' persons suffer from their unemployment, while 'withdrawn' and 'adapted' persons are less affected by it (De Witte, 1986, 1989, 1992, 1993, De Witte & Hooge, 1997, De Witte & Wets, 1993).

During the early eighties, Belgian researchers warned for the first time of the devastating consequences of youth unemployment. When entering adulthood, young people face three developmental tasks: leaving the parental family, completing their identity development and integrating into society. Employment can help to achieve these tasks, but unemployment keeps these young people in a dependent position. Therefore, unemployment might be associated with a number of problems such as unstructured life, social isolation, loss of prestige, boredom, lack of self-reliance, and political apathy. De Witte has stated that youth unemployment affects psychosocial development. Therefore, the generation of young unemployed individuals can be described as a 'broken' generation.

In general, young people appear to be affected by unemployment to a lesser extent than older unemployed individuals. They usually have better perspectives regarding jobs and less financial responsibility, there is no loss of status and less social isolation in spite of being unemployed.

Although many (young) unemployed persons appear not to be affected by unemployment, this experience can cause divergent psychological, physical and social problems. Long-term youth unemployment can cause feelings of dependency and insecurity and affect self-esteem. Unemployed persons often feel bored and inferior. Feelings of shame and inferiority can lead to passivity and withdrawal. Researchers warn that young people may become discouraged and demotivated because of their limited professional perspectives. Due to a lack of control, unemployment may also induce a kind of learned helplessness. Unemployed persons are generally more anxious, depressive and pessimistic. Moreover, unemployed people often report a low level of psychological well-being, have an increased risk of developing psychiatric disorders, and are clearly over-represented among mental health care patients.

Social contacts often decrease in cases of unemployment, leading to loneliness and social isolation or even 'social death'. These devastating consequences may not be due to shame or low self-esteem, but rather to structural factors. Stigmatisation of unemployed persons appears to affect these persons. Researchers describe unemployed young people as a 'socially vulnerable group', who experience the confrontations with social institutions as controlling and discriminating. In the beginning of the eighties, it was generally believed that youth unemployment led to aggression and delinquent behaviour. However, this assumption has not been confirmed in the Belgian research.

Loss of income is an obvious consequence of unemployment. A detrimental financial situation is perceived as the most dramatic aspect of unemployment, as it interferes with the (financial) subsistence in many families. Financial losses not only affect savings, but also psychological well-being and the desire to have children.

No empirical evidence of an association between unemployment and mortality rates has been found, although a European comparative study shows that the high mortality rates in Southern Belgium are associated with high unemployment rates. Unemployed persons are six to seven times more likely to attempt suicide than employed persons. Particularly young unemployed men appear to be at risk.

Many unemployed young people experience financial distress, but only some groups of unemployed persons seem no longer job-oriented. Well-being is affected by unemployment, which can lead to psychosomatic complaints, a decrease in psychological well-being and self-esteem, thus inducing feelings of dependency and powerlessness. The political orientations of unemployed young people appear to be only slightly influenced, while their social life may be

subject to substantial changes. Youth unemployment is not associated with juvenile delinquency, and only a limited influence on health behaviour has been demonstrated.

The association between youth unemployment and health appears to be confounded by mediators such as age, gender, education and length of unemployment, and by moderators including work and job orientation, financial strain and social support. Particularly, social support and financial strain appear to affect the experience of youth unemployment.

Overall, unemployment emerges as a risk factor and stressor, thus affecting divergent health-related aspects. This national research shows that unemployment confronts individuals with a new reality which challenges adaptation capacities.

3 Youth unemployment and social exclusion

During the last two decades, youth unemployment in Belgium has constantly been at a high level. Rather than a cyclical phenomenon, youth unemployment appears to be a structural phenomenon, which endangers the social inclusion of many young people. When we consider the youth unemployment rates in Belgium according to gender, age and region, some clear differences appear: first, a perpetual gap between male and female unemployment rates can be observed. Second, although the total group of young people (up to 30 years old) is clearly overrepresented in the unemployment figures, some groups are especially at risk, such as the very youngest age group (14 to 19) and the slightly older group (20 to 24). Finally, huge differences between the Belgian regions can be observed. Flanders has relatively low unemployment rates, but the situation in the former mining region (Limburg) and in the cities Gent and Ostend should be closely followed. Walloon has extremely high youth unemployment rates and especially young women seem at risk. The situation in Brussels is only slightly better and should also be a matter of great concern.

Besides these demographic variables, which seem to partially determine the risk of social exclusion, long-term unemployment, low qualifications and dependence on social welfare benefits can further increase the risk of social exclusion. In comparison with other European countries, Belgium has a very high rate of long-term unemployment, also among young people (25% have been unemployed for more than two years). Consequently, many employment initiatives focus on this 'at risk' group. Low-qualified persons are the main group within the group of 'unemployed young people', due for example to dropping out of school early. Most have few required skills or qualifications and are sometimes even crowded out of the labour market by young people with higher qualifications. Therefore, the government promotes additional education and vocational training for and subsidises the employment of low-qualified persons. The number of young social welfare recipients was rising quickly in the nineties and it seems that especially unemployed young people are at risk for becoming dependent on the social welfare system. Young people in their 'waiting'-period also seem at risk, since they have few social rights. A combination of these risk factors of course further increases the risk of social exclusion.

The initial working career of young people is characterised by episodes of unemployment, vocational training, temporary employment, part-time employment, etc. The high requirements of employers, the competition with several applicants, some personal characteristics, etc. definitely contribute to the employment barriers young people have. In Belgium, the employment chances for youngsters are further hindered by the enormous labour costs.

The past reactions of the government to the unemployment situation were ineffectual. According to Derenne and Deutsch (1995), this is due to the fact that Belgium focused rather on controlling inflation and reducing public debt, than on reducing the unemployment rate. In some recent interviews, the Minister of Employment and Labour (Ms. Miet Smet) clarified the governmental policy concerning unemployment. The labour market is still regarded as the ultimate means to achieve social integration and inclusion, and employing persons at risk of social exclusion should prevent them from becoming socially excluded. The present political focus concerning the risk of social exclusion among young people is well illustrated by the Flemish 'Programme of Leuven', signed by ministers, representatives of all democratic parties and social partners, which aims at halving unemployment by 2003 through measures at five levels (Vrancken, Geldof, & Van Menxel et al., 1997): decreasing labour costs, policy concerning redistribution of labour, promoting new employment in social services, combating the submerged economy, and policy concerning training and supervision of especially long-term and low-qualified unemployed persons.

The Belgian discussion concerning 'social exclusion' definitely includes the exclusion from the labour market. The lack of socio-professional integration emerges as the biggest challenge towards the financial subsistence of people and, consequently, the guarantee of an income is a key mechanism towards social exclusion. Different social groups seem at risk on the labour market (e.g. persons with a disability, immigrants, unemployed persons) and an accumulation of different characteristics only increases the risk of social exclusion. As a 'contradictio in terminis'; employment is seen as the key mechanism to eliminate the link between unemployment and social exclusion. Within the Belgian debate concerning social exclusion, we couldn't identify any key mechanisms leading from unemployment to social exclusion, since so many interrelated variables are involved.

The Ministry of Employment and Labour (1998) predicted a further increase in the employment rate for 1998, also among young people. Moreover, the reduction of labour costs, the improvement of the state of the economy and several employment measures will further encourage employment aid among the Belgian population. According to Traisnel (1997), demographic features (decrease in the number of young people and ageing of the population) might partially eliminate the number of young unemployed persons until 2020. Holderbeke (1996) contests this statement and expects no significant increase in the employment rate (Holderbeke, 1996). Also, the Ministry of Employment and Labour (1998) remains very cautious concerning a more long-term prediction: only part-time jobs can increase the number of employed persons. The evolution of the labour market after the year 2000 is hard to predict. Holderbeke (1996) expects a further decrease in the employment rate due to international competition and further centralisation of activities rather than an increase in available jobs. There are few good perspectives for unemployed young people, especially if they are long-term unemployed, have low-qualifications, have a physical disability, are black, or live in the southern part of Belgium (Walloonia or Brussels).

4 Long-term unemployed youth and the risk of social exclusion

The decision was made to interview subjects in two different regions, namely Kortrijk/Roeselare and Gent. The data with regard to socio-demographic variables – gender, level of education, region – were furnished by the VDAB (Study Centre of the Flemish Employment Office).

Based on the information from the interviews, the subjects were categorised into three groups according to their risk of social exclusion. The categories include high risk individuals and those at increased or low risk of social exclusion.

Table B-1: Sample distribution according to types of social exclusion

I High risk of social exclusion	n = 23	46%
II Increased risk of social exclusion	n = 12	24%
III Low risk of social exclusion	n = 15	30%

Persons at high risk of social exclusion

In order to speak of a high risk of social exclusion, there has to be exclusion in two of the three central areas (exclusion from the labour market, economic exclusion, and exclusion by social isolation). In addition, one other form of exclusion must be present.

In our sample 23 persons, which is almost half of the total number of interviewees (46%), appeared to be at high risk of social exclusion. None of the young people at high risk of social exclusion had higher qualifications. All of them had a lower qualification (left school at the age of 16).

In both the regions of Kortrijk/Roeselare and Gent, there clearly are three factors leading to a high probability of social exclusion, namely low qualifications, an uncertain financial situation and psychological vulnerability. This is the case for both men and women. It is also apparent that social support plays an important role among people at high risk of social exclusion.

Persons at increased risk of social exclusion

Young people with an increased risk of social exclusion experience more than two of the six dimensions of social exclusion but do not belong to the category “persons at high risk of social exclusion” (which refers to those experiencing two of the three principal dimensions with a third additional one).

Young people at increased risk of social exclusion experience a high degree of “exclusion from the labour market”, regardless of gender or education level. The second most important exclusion dimension is “institutional exclusion”; 54% percent of those with an increased risk of social exclusion report having to cope with it. Finally, there is also the “economic exclusion” dimension which 31% of the young people with an increased chance of social exclusion experience. The dimensions “exclusion by social isolation”, “cultural exclusion”, and “spatial exclusion” are less evident and each represent 15% of the unemployed youth with an increased risk of social exclusion.

Among the young long-term unemployed people at increased risk of social exclusion there is only one female who is highly educated; the other eleven young people have a lower qualification (left school at the age of 16).

Key mechanisms with regard to an increased risk of social exclusion include low qualifications. This means that there are deficits in the area of school education and job qualification. It is evident that a higher level of education indeed provides protection against social exclusion, but is not an essential condition for protection. Most of the people in this group are active on the labour market; they even are optimistic about their (re-)integration into the labour market. However, the few people who no longer search for a job do not believe in their

chances of finding a regular job. Especially men are satisfied with the institutional support they get. Women find the institutional support insufficient.

A majority of the young people from this group are supported by their social environment. This means that they are not only emotionally supported, but that they also receive instrumental help. In some cases there is not enough instrumental and especially financial support, but the majority of youngsters with an increased risk of social exclusion are in a financially secure situation.

Last but not least, socio-cultural activity can be viewed as a protective key mechanism. Many youngsters with an increased risk of social exclusion feel good about themselves, they engage in social and cultural life, and they are able to structure their days. They have high self-esteem. They can cope with psychological stress adequately; they are able to look at their situation in a realistic way. Despite this, for other young people in this group, poor mental health is a key vulnerability mechanism. They feel that their situation is very insecure and they look to the future with fear.

Persons at low risk of social exclusion

Low risk of social exclusion means that there may only be a question of exclusion in only one of the six social exclusion dimensions.

In the Belgian sample, 28% of the unemployed youth display only symptoms of a low risk of social exclusion. Fourteen out of the 15 young people at low risk of social exclusion do not experience any of the six dimensions of social exclusion. This concerns young people who have made personal, well deliberated choices, such as staying at home for their children, or relying on a very specific diploma with which they want to try their chances at finding employment. Only one person has the feeling that the institutional support he gets is insufficient.

Long-term unemployed youth at low risk of social exclusion have rather good chances for integration into the labour market. They are comparatively highly educated or they are in a qualification training programme or are ready to begin one. The access to the labour market is not permanently blocked, and they stay rather close to the working world or the training system.

None of the young people at low risk of social exclusion is financially restricted. They are not at risk of economic exclusion, not only because they are supported by their surroundings but also because they are able to use their money in a sensible way.

Concerning their social environment, the long-term unemployed youngsters at low risk of social exclusion have not suffered from negative changes such as a reduction in their social contacts or of the support by others since the beginning of their unemployment. Young people of this group do not withdraw from their social environment since they feel that they are accepted without reservations. Their social contacts are characterised by mutual confidence. In some cases, additional instrumental help is given in the form of money or concrete assistance with the job search. They do not perceive their contacts with governmental institutions as a problem or a burden, and in some cases these contacts have been supportive. For them, the employment office was able to contribute to their chances on the labour market by providing training or job offers. Unemployed young people who show only a low risk of social exclusion are not permanently excluded from the labour market. Their financial situation is relatively secure, which in turn helps them to participate in cultural life and also to integrate in

(socio-) spatial terms. Furthermore, they are supported considerably by their social environment as well as by societal institutions.

5 Institutional responses to youth unemployment and the risk of social exclusion

On a national level, the federal government has expanded the Plan for Jobs for Young People into the Advantage Job Plan: after one year of unemployment the RVA (Federal Department for Employment) provides a job card with which the unemployed person has the right to several advantages regarding benefits. The federal government has also created the Smet-jobs¹¹ as a measure against social exclusion. These jobs are available after two years of unemployment. This system means that a part of the unemployment benefits is used to pay the wages. Working in Smet-jobs means that the long-term unemployed can be hired for jobs that are not carried out (or are no longer carried out) in a company or in an enterprise. These unemployed persons are put to work in the private sector or in certain government institutes. These Smet-jobs are intended to improve the service to customers, the work conditions of the employees, or the environment in and around the company. These jobs are linked to advantages for the employer; the employer is exempt from paying a part of the net wages. This part is known as reintegration benefits. Another federal measure against youth unemployment and social exclusion is Gesko. For the employer, this means a very high wage cost subsidy and a decrease in the RSZ-contribution (Federal Social Security). The cost for the employer is therefore very low. Participation becomes possible following an unemployment period of 6 months and it gives the unemployed an opportunity to work and gain experience within that framework for a number of years.

The federal government created Article 60 as a measure against social exclusion. Recipients of subsistence benefits and people eligible for financial support have a chance to work several years in a job provided by a municipal entity. Since the Social Program Law was expanded, private enterprises can also provide similar jobs. The government wants to take measures against the shortage of jobs in the job market in several professional sectors (caregivers, nurses). In cooperation with the social partners, measures are under consideration for directing young immigrants to the health care professions. At the same time, the authorities want to avoid a situation where the older work force leaves the job market prematurely because the profession is too demanding. The authorities would like to redirect these veterans to other tasks such as training young people at risk of social exclusion. Although these young people may not become health care professionals, they can still learn about this profession from experienced care givers.

The Ministry of Public Health is launching information campaigns to attract people into the health care professions. This is due to an expected shortage in the work force within the health sector in the future. The focus of these campaigns is mainly directed at the weaker groups (women with (very) young children).

The Flemish government has its own measures against youth unemployment that were created according to guidelines from the national government. One of their measures is the creation of Young Trainees. This implies that any employer providing work to more than 50 employees is obliged to set aside 3% of the trainee places for young persons up to 30 years old. These trainees must have been registered as job seekers for at least 9 consecutive months. The training period is for six months and can be extended to a maximum of one year.

¹¹ Smet: the name of the minister who introduced this type of job

Another measure against youth unemployment and social exclusion is the Counselling Plan. The federal, regional and municipal governments have entered a cooperative agreement concerning the obligatory counselling plan for job seekers. Since January 1, 1999 this agreement has been valid only for young people with lower qualifications up to 25 years old when they begin their sixth month as job seekers. This measure requires that after six months the VDAB contact these young people for an analysis of their options. Choices are made from the following:

- Work
- Part-time work/study
- Further education (or training)

The government also created the Youth Job Plan. This means that the government encourages employers to employ young persons up to 26 years of age who have been unemployed for at least one year by lowering the employers' part of the social premiums.

The Youth Work Guarantee Plan is another institutional response to youth unemployment and social exclusion. This measure is directed at young people up to 25 years old and who have been unemployed at least 2 years and have rights to benefits. These young people are employed for one year with a contract and are counselled so that later they can move on into the normal labour circuit. Within Flanders this was the first measure that was specifically directed at young people.

The Youth Guarantee Plan was gobbled up by the Work Experience Plan, which is directed at all young people with a lower qualification who have been unemployed for at least two years. The intention is to give job seekers a better chance to enter the normal labour circuit by giving them the opportunity to gain work experience. Another measure against youth unemployment is the Initial Work Experience Contracts. School drop-outs who have been seeking work for at least nine months get a chance to gain work experience in the Flemish public sector for a period lasting six months to one year.

On 1 April 2000, the Starter Jobs began to create chances for younger and older people. There is a difference between Belgium and Flemish levels. These starter jobs have a federal part and regional part. These levels vary in different regions because of the differences in situation and authority in the Flemish and the Walloon provinces in Belgium. These starter jobs are also followed up. On a federal level, starter jobs last one year. On the Flemish level, there is follow-up during and after the starter job. These starter jobs are linked with advantages for the employer. On a federal level, it involves a decrease in labour costs of 500 – 1125 Euro/quarter. Within Flanders it is about 15 million Euro. The cooperation, counselling, mediation and training goes through the VDAB (Flemish Service for Employment-Finding and Professional training), which is reoriented towards the starter jobs programme.

6 Conclusions

The aim of the National Action Plan is to create an active welfare state in Belgium where everyone has a decent income. The government wants to keep people from having to live below the subsistence level or having to live off unemployment benefits. In the past, the emphasis was on a rather passive approach, namely an attempt to reduce unemployment by means of unemployment benefits. The aim now is to intervene more actively by means of protection. Those new government plans become obvious in the measures against youth unemployment and social exclusion. There is clearly a change of style; the emphasis is now more on preventive measures than curative measures. The government wants to prevent young people from

becoming unemployed. The measures from the past to fight unemployment are still active, but the government is developing new preventive measures for young people.

The National Action Plan also wants to lower labour costs in order to increase employment. These intentions are not mentioned in the governmental measures against youth unemployment and social exclusion. They only mention the benefits for the employers (the reduction of costs) when they recruit a graduate (cf. the starter jobs).

In the National Action Plan, it is also noted that more attention will be paid to measures preventing unemployment traps. This aspect was very obvious in the new measures against youth unemployment. In the national and regional government, a lot of attention is dedicated to this subject. But still there is the general impression that they have not been able to find a solution yet; they are still working on it. On the national level, there were already some suggestions concerning a mobility bonus and a bonus for child daycare centres.

After the elections in the summer of 1999, a new government was formed with a new political party in office. This means that a lot of measures against unemployment and social exclusion are not active yet. The formation of the new government has taken a lot of time and the planning of the new actions started only recently. The measures against youth unemployment and social exclusion that are now active on the local level were all created by the old government. The new government is still planning, creating and making new measures and actions. As a result of the elections and the changes that were made, several government ministries (not all of them) seem to have no knowledge of the past institutional activities and measures, or have an evaluation of these activities and the effects of the projects. In fact, this means that some ministries are planning and creating new actions and measures against youth unemployment and social exclusion without considering the effects and evaluation of the measures that are active now. When we asked for some evaluations of recent actions we were referred to the administration of the office or to the local institutions .

On a national level, there was the perception that the governmental organisations have not taken much action against youth unemployment. There is much concern about unemployment in general, but not specifically for youth unemployment. It also seems that even less attention has been paid to the issue of social exclusion. On a more regional level, there are some very effective measures against youth unemployment, although it has been remarked that these institutions are often the creators and financial supporters of the projects and not executors of them. There was one exception: C.A.B. (Centre for Ambulatory Treatment). This centre has a very effective measure against youth unemployment and especially social exclusion. Intense, personal guidance is an important factor in their actions. This was the only organisation/institution that has taken action against any type of exclusion. The only criticism of this institution is that the target group should be larger (now the target group mostly consists of young people referred by the Juvenile Court). But this organisation serves as a good model to the other institutions. Intense, personal guidance seems to be an important measure against youth unemployment and social exclusion.

Young unemployed people depend on national institutional activities to lower their risk of social exclusion. These measures should provide some stability to these young people, but every time a new government is formed, new measures are taken and the former ones disappear. This means that the government is not able to create any kind of stability for this group of young people.

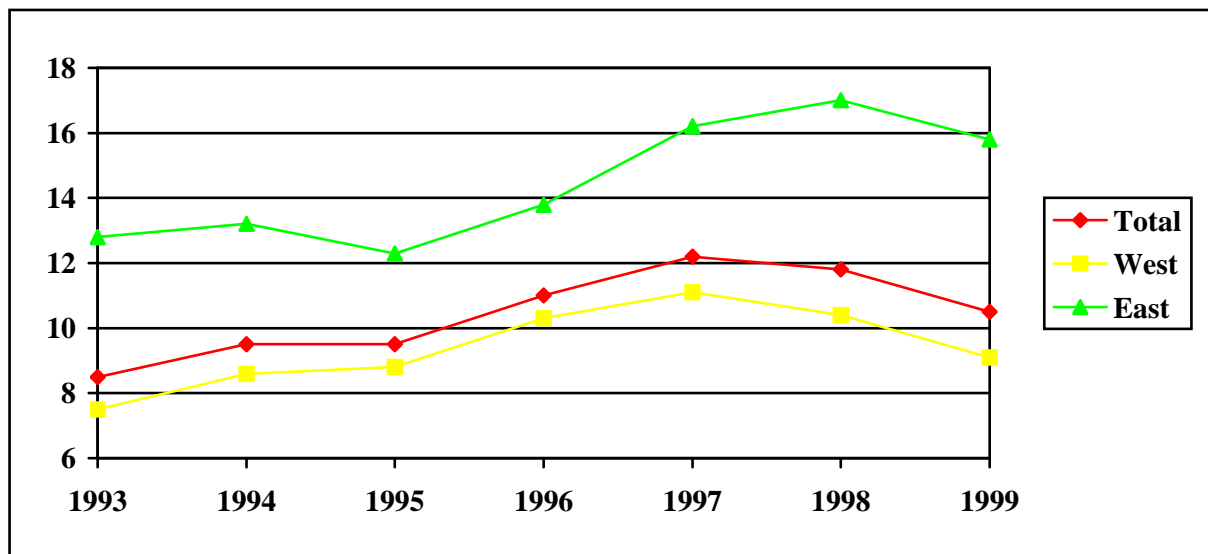
3.3 Germany

1 Introduction

In recent years in Germany, the problem of youth unemployment has received increasingly greater attention. In the scholarly as well as in the public forum, unemployment in general and youth unemployment in particular is regarded as one of society's major challenges. Especially the insufficient supply of training places and jobs for young people and the discrepancy between the qualification requirements of employers and the existing educational and vocational qualifications of job seekers have in recent years exacerbated the situation enormously for young people. And the problem of youth unemployment has experienced a new component, not least because of German unification. However, since 1998, the labour market statistics show a slight upturn (see Figure 1). In implementing its Instant Programme to Combat Youth Unemployment, the German government demonstrates that it has recognised that it must assume more responsibility for young people's problems on the labour market. First results of a survey among project participants suggest success for the programme, which began in 1999 and will be continued in 2000 (see Dietrich, 2000). The programme's initial effects are reflected in the official unemployment rates from the Federal Employment Institute (see figure 1). In Germany, the rates for young people under age 25 rose continually from the beginning of the 1990s and reached their highest level in 1997 with 12.2%. In 1998 (11.8%) and in 1999 (10.5%), the rates declined, rates which continued to decline in the first half of 2000 (an average decline of 0.8% compared to the previous year). How long this trend will continue depends not least on whether the Instant Programme can be maintained.

In comparison, the statistics for young people in western and eastern Germany display parallel developments, with, however, the rates for young people in eastern Germany being almost double those for young people in western Germany in recent years. Only after the rates reached their highest level of 17% in 1998 did the rates in eastern Germany show a slight downturn. However, the 15.8% rate for 1999 is still notably higher than in western Germany. The highest unemployment rate for those under 25 was reached in the West in 1997 with 11.1%. In 1999, the rate was markedly below 10% (9.1%).

Figure GER-1: Unemployed young people in eastern and western Germany (under 25)¹



Source: Federal Employment Institute, 2000. Nuremberg.

¹Percentage of dependent civilian labour force

In comparison to other European countries, the rates for unemployed young people in Germany are visibly lower, especially in comparison to southern European countries, which show rates two to three times higher (e.g., Spain 29.5%, Italy 32.7% in 1999). Lower rates can be found, for example, in the Netherlands (7.2% in 1999).

2 Youth unemployment and health

In Germany, there has been little research into the relationship between unemployment and health. In comparison to research concerning older people, little attention has been paid to the subject. Even in times of mass unemployment, the connection between unwanted joblessness and its deleterious effects on the health of young people has been treated only marginally. This lack of attention has meant a scarcity of systematic investigations, and the heterogeneity of the existing data makes it difficult to draw generalised conclusions.

Causal relationships between youth unemployment and health-related effects cannot be established because scarcely any longitudinal data exist. The investigations which have been conducted vary greatly in concept, content and methodology but point to the general finding that phases of unwanted unemployment go hand in hand with numerous psychological, physical, financial and social disadvantages which, in the long run, can lead to increased rates of psychosocial destabilisation.

These undesirable effects, as the above analysis demonstrates, can be detected at several levels and may be summarised as follows:

- Among the various *psychosocial stresses*, fear of career disintegration is the main one. Others are boredom, the absence of a structured day and family conflict due to the burden of increased financial dependence.
- The *subjective state of health* of unemployed (in comparison with employed) youth is characterised by increased somatic and psychosomatic problems.
- Unemployment appears to lower young people's *self-esteem* and self-confidence and bring about feelings of resignation and aimlessness.
- Young respondents in almost all the studies complain about the severity of *financial hardships* brought on by unemployment, especially as regards their leisure activities and buying power. Social interaction is reduced; increased financial dependence on parents creates conflict. The financial situation of unemployed youth is notably worse than that of working youth, but not worse than that of unemployed elders.
- During periods of unemployment, peers – not parents – fulfil the crucial function of *social encouragement and support*, notwithstanding a general reduction in the social circle of friends and acquaintances. Some studies report a reduction in the circle of friends, stronger family dependence and a resultant increase in conflict.
- The studies show the *work orientation* of unemployed German youth to be very high. This orientation is predominantly economic and materialistic. Their crucial need is to have a paying job.

These results make apparent that further investigations are urgently needed to clarify precisely the relationship between youth unemployment and health. The control group comparisons

should not only refer to the status of the unemployed versus the employed but also take into account the quality and intensity of concrete work activities, existing alternatives, processes of adaptation to the social norm in respect to unemployment and the young people's background. Only by including these influence factors neglected thus far can we gain new insights which clarify the relationship between unemployment and its effects on health, not least to discover appropriate strategies to compensate as far as possible for health problems resulting from unemployment.

3 Youth unemployment and social exclusion

The introduction of the concept of social exclusion into social science research on unemployment is a result of structural changes on the labour market. The accelerating reduction of jobs in the traditional areas of production and, with it, the related tripartitioning of the German labour market have led to a situation where ever more people find themselves in uncertain work relationships or are affected by unemployment more often or for longer periods. The term social exclusion serves in this context to describe and analyse this altered social situation. Thus, this concept can be understood as a continuation of and an addition to the discussion of the upsurge in social processes of falling into poverty and of forms of disintegration. In Germany, the debate surrounding the concept "social exclusion" was influenced primarily by Kronauer (1998). He developed a system of social exclusion dimensions which may also be applied to the problem of youth unemployment.

The main focus in dealing with the connection between social exclusion and youth unemployment lies in the analysis of vulnerable groups. In Germany, the following eight groups of young people present a considerable risk of social exclusion: the long-term unemployed, the unemployed with little educational qualification, the unemployed in structurally weak regions, unemployed single mothers, unemployed immigrants, the handicapped unemployed, the homeless and poverty-stricken unemployed and young delinquents. The situation for unemployed immigrants and young delinquents represents a special problem. The lack of cultural integration leads to a worsening of the unemployment problem for immigrants; whereas the resocialisation of young offenders is of foremost importance.

As can be seen from the national focus regarding social exclusion among young people, the question of key mechanisms linking unemployment and social exclusion has not been dealt with extensively in Germany, either on a scientific or on a public or political level.

The main focus in Germany regarding a specifically high risk of social exclusion among young people has obviously been on unemployment and its economic effects. Often the exclusion from the labour market is treated even as equivalent to social exclusion. This result supports the statement made by Kronauer (1998) that work is one of the main mechanisms in Germany for an overall social integration. The inability to enter the labour market in the first place must be understood as a central factor for deciding about the further development of young people. It might even be justly said that, in the long run, having a job versus not having a job sets the pattern for the integration into or exclusion from society.

The main preconditions for exclusion from the labour market are described in terms of *institutional* and *economic factors*, and also, to an increasing degree, in terms of *processes of spatial exclusion*. Of these three, the institutional factors—in the sense of a failed integration into the educational system in Germany—are of major importance because of the link between qualification level and employment opportunities. However, no one has taken into consideration

the possibilities for preventing exclusion by the educational system or by government welfare institutions.

Finally, it must be pointed out that the concept of social exclusion should be better adapted to the specific situation of the target group (for example, to the particular situation of the young unemployed). For young people, social participation, for example, is not exclusively defined in consumption patterns. Integration into a subculture can play a much more important role, as do education and family background. These aspects are not stressed in the social exclusion concept we applied. For the future, it would be better to develop age-specific exclusion profiles. This means that the concept of social exclusion should be conceptualised and specified for the particular target group.

4 Long-term unemployed youth and the risk of social exclusion

For the empirical study, 50 long-term unemployed young people in western and eastern Germany were interviewed to ascertain the different degrees of unemployment in each region. Using the main questionnaire of the comprehensive European project, we were able to determine the principal key factors which favour the risk of social exclusion: low qualifications, passive behaviour on the labour market, little social and institutional support, shaky finances, unstable mental health, deviant behaviour and drug addiction. The following protective factors work toward counteracting these vulnerability factors: better qualifications, active behaviour on the labour market, social support, adequate institutional support, high self-esteem and socio-cultural activities.

The typology created from our study is based on the six dimensions of social exclusion, divided into primary and secondary dimensions. For Germany, labour market exclusion and economic exclusion as well as social isolation comprise the primary dimensions contributing to processes of social exclusion. Accordingly, unemployed young people may be divided into three types: at high risk (48%), at increased risk (32%) and at low risk (20%) of social exclusion.

The individual types may be characterised as follows:

High risk of social exclusion: On the average, this exclusion type displays four to five exclusion dimensions and a number of vulnerability factors. Most often occur the three primary dimensions (labour market and economic exclusion as well as social isolation) and the secondary dimension of cultural exclusion. Which vulnerability factors influence the exclusion risk for this group? Especially because of their low qualifications, long-term unemployed young people of this type have little or no chance of regular employment and, furthermore, hardly attempt or do not attempt at all to find an entrance into the labour market (self-exclusion). Their finances are uncertain, and they experience insufficient support both from their social environment as well as from government institutions. Some individuals of this type tend toward deviant behaviour. Their health is marked by numerous forms of psychosocial stress. A third of those interviewed in this group suffered considerable insomnia and other sleeping problems related to depressive moods and anxieties, and, moreover, half of them expressed thoughts of suicide.

This type displays the following socio-demographic characteristics: the majority of those interviewed are unmarried; only four persons live with a partner. In addition, only a few grew up in complete families. On the average, they have been unemployed for 32 months. A third of them has no leaving certificate from any kind of school.

Increased risk of social exclusion: Our data show that this exclusion type unites one to three exclusion dimensions. As a rule, the risk of institutional and cultural exclusion (secondary dimension) exists along with the primary dimension of labour market exclusion. Economic exclusion and social isolation are less relevant in comparison to the group at high risk of exclusion. The young people in the group at increased risk of social exclusion are clearly less affected by financial stress and feel themselves more strongly integrated into a social network. The main problem for this group is labour market exclusion. The major feature of this type lies essentially in the young people's lack of educational and vocational qualifications; some of them see hardly any chance for integration into a vocation. This stress factor is mitigated by relatively stable finances and satisfactory integration into a social environment. Admittedly, the health of these young people is characterised by several stress factors, but the severity of such factors can be viewed as significantly reduced in comparison to the group at high risk. Some of the young people in this group display protective factors which compensate for the risk of exclusion: besides receiving support from their social surroundings, some of them demonstrate noticeable efforts toward entering the labour market, and a few display a rather optimistic view of the future along with a realistic perception of their situation.

Some in this group show socio-demographic features quite different from the type "at high risk of social exclusion". Half of those interviewed live with a partner, and more than two-thirds grew up with both parents. Most are qualified with a secondary school leaving certificate.

Low risk of social exclusion: The majority in this group display no features of social exclusion. Only two of these young people show tendencies toward institutional exclusion. All are clearly more qualified than those in the other two risk groups. They not only have realistically rather good chances on the labour market, but they also personally take advantage of vocational integration opportunities. They can be considered as economically stable, partially because they have few consumer needs and demonstrate responsible handling of money. Their unemployment has not affected their social contacts. Central to their health is a combination of factors both favouring and relieving stress. Half of these young people display stress-relieving factors, especially their generally optimistic attitude: they have concrete perspectives for the future and judge their vocational chances as positive. They demonstrate a good deal of involvement in the active planning of their future.

Most of the young people in this group come from complete families, live with a partner and have finished vocational training. They have not been unemployed as long as those in the other risk groups, only an average of 20 months.

In summary, it can be said that the type "high risk of social exclusion" is characterised by an assortment of mutually interrelated problems, labour market exclusion occurring in all cases. Characteristic of the type at increased risk of exclusion is labour market exclusion coupled with economic stability and, for the most part, social integration. Nevertheless, the risk of social exclusion remains "increased" because of labour market exclusion. In contrast to the previous group, the type at low risk of exclusion can be considered socially integrated despite unemployment. Even though they have been out of work for over a year, they are not excluded from the labour market: either they have concrete prospects of a job, or they have much better qualifications.

On the whole, the results clearly point out that especially young people of the type "at high risk of exclusion", who are affected by numerous stress factors, urgently require institutional

help. Target-group approaches are necessary in which it is attempted to alleviate vulnerability factors through purposeful intervention.

5 Institutional responses to youth unemployment and the risk of social exclusion

In selecting the case studies and interviews with experts, we considered especially projects, initiatives and programmes which have played a significant role in Germany in respect to their concepts, research and labour market policy. In addition, we selected projects which have admittedly played no particular role in public awareness but which, because of their special approach (employer initiatives, health-oriented approaches) could well provide stimuli for combating youth unemployment.

The main institutional answers to (long-term) youth unemployment and the processes of social exclusion in Germany are (1) training and qualification, (2) cooperation and networking and (3) psychosocial stabilisation and personal development.

Training and qualification: In Germany, the priority definitely lies in this area. A large portion of the efforts in combating youth unemployment is placed in school and business-internal qualification, where key qualifications and social behaviour are taught. But also very important is the combination of qualification and employment as an integrating element – thus taking into account the chief cause of youth unemployment, qualification deficiencies. The primary goal remains one of giving unemployed and especially long-term unemployed young people the opportunity to develop their own career prospects through work and training. At the same time, these measures promote social and cultural integration and prevent exclusion from the labour market.

These qualification and career training approaches can be based only on the constructive cooperation of those young people concerned. Therefore, approaches are necessary in which counsellors and those responsible for the projects develop prospects for the future in accord with the young people. The work in the projects appears in part thus: a concrete career development plan is designed with each individual in which the individual career wishes and goals have priority. The drawing up of a “developmental plan” accompanied by counselling, support and oversight by experts avoids the risk of project abandonment and raises at the same time the responsibility level of the young people. The goal of the effort is to activate the young people and to enable them to put into practice these ideas independently step by step. Here, an essential and innovative element is that qualification chains can be created which are linked systematically to one another. Young people thus have the opportunity to achieve certified interim qualification (modularising). An essential element would be a qualification pass in which young people’s abilities and experience are noted. In this way, interim qualifications such as work experience or short-term employment could be documented as significant interim successes. Furthermore, real work projects which combine a direct benefit with possibilities for identification can help young people achieve adequate qualifications.

Co-operation and networking: Another important approach in combating youth unemployment and social isolation processes is the cooperation and networking of labour market organisers. Some projects demonstrate in an impressive way what such networking can look like, for example, in the placement of young people in training and employment positions. Businesses cooperating with counsellors in the responsible institutions can achieve tailor-made placement of young people. That is, an individual is selected for a certain training or job placement who fulfils the specific requirements for that training or employment position. This

cooperation is accompanied by regular meetings of the project organisers in which there is an intensive discussion about problems and placement possibilities among the cooperating partners. Such an approach, however, presupposes mutual trust and requires enthusiasm by those concerned. Especially the social responsibility of the businesses is appealed to, without whose active cooperation such concepts would be condemned to failure. But, with this idea, the young people require a large measure of independent activity. With such a strategy, however, a serious problem of long-term youth unemployment could be reduced. The above-mentioned approach begins with these deficiencies and attempts to actively integrate unemployed youth into the process of searching for work and of continuing qualification.

Psychosocial stabilisation and the development of the individual personality: A third intervention approach in Germany consists of projects which tackle more decisively vocational preparation, emotional and psychosocial stabilisation and the promotion of personality development of unemployed young people. Some of these projects, however, are conducted in connection with qualification and training measures. The basic idea is to stabilise the young people, some of whom demonstrate severe psychological but also financial and social problems, in order to eliminate, for example, the risk of economic exclusion. Only after a phase of stabilisation can the young people be offered help with vocational orientation and support in their vocational plans for the future.

A further criterion for the success of a measure is the question whether and in what way young people are to be approached. Certainly, placement by the labour office is a possibility toward integrating young people into a programme or project, but the direct approach by outsiders (for example, social workers, psychologists) has shown itself to be especially efficient. Furthermore, it is decisive to what extent the different labour market organisers cooperate with one another, that is, which institutions participate in the (re)integration process.

We were not conducting a systematic assessment and evaluation in all projects and measures. The formal evaluation of some projects has not yet been completed; in other cases, we were conducting a somewhat unsystematic self-evaluation. The criteria for success or failure of a programme or project are determined to quite a degree by the number of placements. However, nothing is yet said about the stability and quality of the respective qualification and employment activities. On the whole, the interviews with experts were able to demonstrate that the approaches that show the most positive effects are those that attempt to design individual goal perspectives with the young people themselves. This kind of project was able to achieve up to 70% placement (also in projects with the so-called multiply disadvantaged).

In summary, we can clearly state that there are many and many-faceted projects in Germany toward combating youth unemployment and avoiding social isolation processes. With two thousand million DM (one thousand million Euro) annually, the Federal Youth Instant Programme to Combat Youth Unemployment offers immense financial possibilities toward realising the innovative approaches presented here. The essential question here is not changing the institutional frameworks but extending evaluated approaches found to be suitable. The changing labour market and employment structures should be adjusted to the urgent needs of young people for work and training. The co-ordinator of the Youth Instant Programme sees the following tasks toward future development:

- the measures toward reach-out youth work must be strengthened; unconventional forms of approach must be broadened;
- practice-related projects toward career preparation and orientation should be installed in schools (primarily there where the school requirements are rather low);

- a local contact point should be created for young people where professional counsellors are available for questions on training and qualification;
- offers of professional services should be established which can assume a placement function between businesses and unemployed youth.

These objectives surely will not solve the structural problems of unemployment, but, for each unemployed youth, experimental inroads can be made toward qualification and employment as well as learning, in order to reduce the risk of social isolation.

6 Conclusions

In the summary of the German study within the YUSEDER project, the results point to some of the peculiarities and differences in the comparison with other partner countries. In the German study, the striking heterogeneity found in the long-term unemployed youth interviewed is remarkable. We have a large group at high risk of social exclusion (48% of the German sample) affected by complex problems but also a group which, besides suffering the problem of unemployment, can be described as being sufficiently supported financially and socially (increased risk of social exclusion, which is 32% of the sample). Finally, there is a small group (low risk of social exclusion, 20% of the sample) of young long-term unemployed characterised in fact by a relatively high level of personal competence and goal orientation.

Especially the group at high risk of social exclusion is of central importance. In comparison to the other partner countries, the group forms, along with the Belgian sample, the largest group in the YUSEDER project. The difference can partly be explained through selection effects. Due to the relatively low youth unemployment rate in Germany, we assume that those young people who are unemployed are more at risk than young people from other countries with much higher rates. In addition, in Germany, we expect that as a consequence of the Federal Instant Programme for Combating Youth Unemployment the group of the young unemployed at high risk of social exclusion will increase.

It follows that the labour market integration of those who may be categorised according to our typology as at increased or low risk will be less of a problem than the integration of those young people at high risk of exclusion. In the future, this can further aggravate the situation of those young people living under great stress factors. They already display a number of problems which could be exacerbated, so that even extensive programmes, projects and initiatives are inadequate to offer them vocational prospects. Their individual hopelessness and lack of perspectives could thus be increased. These young people are, above all, affected by financial stress, inadequate social and institutional support, a lack of training and qualification and by psychosocial stress factors. This accumulation of problems can probably be dealt with only by a step-by-step strategy at the end of which first should be integration into qualification or work.

The results of the national study show that long-term unemployment among the majority of young people is accompanied by severe individual and social consequences. We fear that these young people will have enormous difficulties achieving an entry into the labour market, even in five or ten years. Without intensive institutional help, they will not succeed in finding an entry or re-entry into the labour market which offers prospects beyond intervention measures. For these young people, long-term unemployment means a major intrusion into their life's plans, whose realisation is hindered or made impossible by the long-lasting withdrawal from the world of work. The repercussions could be a further drifting away from social links

with its resulting negative consequences as well (orientation toward extremist groups, criminality). And not least for these young people are the severe health problems we must reckon with which can manifest themselves after long phases of unemployment. Thus, unemployment and processes of social exclusion also represent an epidemiological risk.

The German study points out that long-term unemployment affects young people to different degrees. The extent reaches from a largely secure life situation with young people at low risk of exclusion to those who find themselves in an extremely critical phase of life attended by grave risks (high risk of exclusion). Some of the young people lack only a modest amount of institutional help (e.g., professional counselling); whereas those at high risk need an entire package of support, in order to have a long-term chance on the labour market.

In their future dealings with the problem of youth unemployment, government welfare institutions should take into account all these different problem levels within which primarily the long-term unemployed young people classified “at high risk” should receive institutional help. It is precisely this group who urgently need this help, in order to prevent their exclusion from society.

3.4 Greece¹²

1 Introduction

Unemployment in Greece has been constantly increasing since the early 1980s, reaching 10.3% in 1997, a total of 440,350 unemployed people. Young persons 15-24 years old and especially women are the hardest hit by unemployment. Table 1 shows the rate of youth unemployment by age and gender as it was presented in the national statistics in 1997. The unemployment rate for this age group is almost three times higher than the total unemployment rate. Long-term unemployment, which affects mostly women and young people, comprises 57% of the total unemployed population.

Table GR-1: Youth unemployment rate by age and sex (%), 1997

Age group	Women	Men	Total
15 – 19	52.6	27.9	39.6
20 – 24	39.5	21.4	30.3
25 – 29	22.5	12.3	16.8
Total (14-65+)	15.9	6.6	10.3

Source: E.S.Y.E., Labour Force Survey.

The national unemployment rate for women is almost double that of men. Female unemployment in the 15-29 age group is also much higher than males in the same age group. Unemployment rates vary widely in relation to attained educational levels: The lowest unemployment rates, 6.5% and 7.6% are experienced by the less and the highest qualified, the people with only basic school education and the university graduates and post graduates. The highest unemployment rates 14.5% and 14.9% affect people with secondary education (nine or twelve years of schooling) and graduates of Institutes of Technology (16 years of education) (EPA, 1998a, p.15).

Several factors are related to the rise of unemployment in Greece during the last two decades. The shrinking of the primary (agricultural) sector, of the public sector and reduction of small family businesses, the increasing participation of women in the labour force, the continuous urbanisation and the economic stagnation of rural areas, the increasing number of immigrants, the restructuring of the manufacturing industry and the lack of correspondence between the educational and technical qualifications of the labour supply and the labour market demand for updated, qualified manpower, and the trend of young people toward autonomy and independence from the family of origin. All the above-mentioned factors have contributed to the continuous rise of unemployment especially among young people (Sokou et al, 2000b).

The rise in unemployment, affecting mainly the most vulnerable social groups, has created a strong political momentum. As a result of increasing public concern, new policies and programmes have been created to combat unemployment and social exclusion. In 1999, *The National Action Plan on Employment*, a European Union programme of structural intervention at the national level aiming to combat unemployment, set out priorities and objectives promoting employment especially among young people, that are to be achieved over an agreed time frame. The plan is carried out through a number of specific actions: educational and training

¹² Katerina Sokou & Demetra Bayetakou

projects, employment promotion policies linked with training and other activities. They all aim to combine market demands with employee capacities and are co-financed by the EU.

Among the recently introduced policies for the benefit of the young unemployed, it is worth reporting a few examples: In January 1999, unemployed people under the age of 30 became entitled to public health insurance, regardless of previous employment status. This policy solved a major problem faced by the unemployed young people who no longer qualify for public health insurance when they are over 25 and no longer students. Another example refers to projects which subsidise employers to hire young unemployed persons, especially young persons with physical disabilities, as well as those with lower qualifications. Other projects promote work experience of qualified university graduates with no previous work experience. The introduction of all these initiatives encouraged registration of the young unemployed, which has increased dramatically, depicting a more realistic picture of actual Greek unemployment.

It is important to note the presence of social inequalities in the unemployment area. A principle inequality of the Greek policies in comparison to the policies of other European countries is the absence of economic benefits for unemployed. Several European countries provide all young unemployed, independent of their previous work experience, with economic support. In Greece, the young unemployed who have no previous work experience are not entitled to unemployment economic benefits. The family is totally responsible for the financial support of the young unemployed person. Young unemployed people who have not the economic support of their family are economically (and socially) excluded. Dependence of the young unemployed on family economic support, though it may be a significant economic, social and mental support, inhibits autonomy and empowerment of the young and creates further social inequalities between the unemployed who have family support and those who have not.

Another social inequality among the young unemployed is created by the place of living and the opportunities provided for obtaining additional occupational qualifications as well as for finding a job. Training and job opportunities are provided in big urban areas and are scarce or non-existing in rural areas. Issues related to the beneficial role of the family economic and psychological support versus the state economic and training support are worth investigating. Another major issue related to unemployment is the role of the submerged economy. Young unemployed people working in the submerged economy gain work experience, have a revenue, an organised time schedule and social life and relations. However, it does not provide the social and other benefits of the official labour market. Working in the submerged economy creates a kind of barrier to looking for a place in the regular labour market. The pros and cons of the submerged economy at the mid- and macro-level is an issue of investigation.

Another issue needing investigation is the efficiency of the school in the vocational orientation of the young and in their preparation for undertaking social responsibilities as adults. School ethos and education should respond to contemporary social-economic needs. Other issues needing research are related to the higher unemployment rates among women, and unemployment in rural areas. What kind of balanced solution does the state really plan regarding these long-existing problems? Finally, to what extent are projects to combat unemployment evaluated in terms of their efficacy and efficiency? To which extent is the state informed by the unemployed themselves of their needs and, why not of their plans and visions as well?

2 Youth unemployment and health

Health according to the World Health Organisation's definition is a state of physical, mental and social well-being. This is a dynamic concept of health which takes into consideration that an individual's well-being is not assured only by physical health. All people need a secure place to live and work to survive, social support and relations and all those social and environmental prerequisites for a meaningful life. Employment is a main factor assuring social and mental health of the individual and for some scientists, it is a significant factor for physical health as well. According to several scientists, there is a causal versus selective hypothesis which explains the unambiguous dualism between ill health and unemployment. Unemployment may be the result of poor health. People with health problems have limited access to the labour market, and are deprived from mechanisms that would promote their adaptation. On the other hand, unemployment, underemployment, and insecurity at work affect health in general by preventing development as autonomous individuals, with a decent social and economic participation in society (Svensson, Westcott & Zöllner, 1985).

In Greece, research on the relation between youth unemployment and health is scarce. An overview of Greek studies on health issues conducted since early 1990s, with a number of them still in progress, shows that most research has not focused on unemployment as a main variable nor on the unemployed as the population under investigation. Data related to youth unemployment and health arise from the analysis of health and working status included in several of the studies. The analysis of results of these studies shows a relationship between unemployment and social and mental health indicators.

Concerning objective health indicators such as mortality, morbidity and suicidal behaviour rates as well as the frequency of utilisation of health services for the age group between 15-29 years old, reference with regard to employment status is scarce. According to national mortality rates, the 15-29 age group with "undeclared occupation" has a higher mortality rate caused by traffic accidents, suicides and self-inflicted injuries. However, the category of "people with undeclared occupation" does not consist solely of unemployed persons. One of the researches concludes that the lower socio-economic groups have a greater risk of chronic disease (Sissouras et al., 1997). Other Greek studies show that the unemployed use health services less frequently than the employed population, especially for preventive care (Tselepis and Agrafiotis, 1997; Athanasouli et al, 1990). No direct correlation between unemployment and suicide among the young population could be found in any of the studies. A study by Tselepis and Agrafiotis (1997) supported the theory that unemployed young people may display a tendency to health related risk behaviour that sometimes leads to accidents and – indirectly – to suicide. This assumption remains rather ambiguous and needs further investigation.

The young unemployed suffer from psychosocial strains such as financial strain and financial dependency which can easily lead to frustrations, feelings of uselessness and loss of time structure (Sokou, 1989). Regarding subjective well-being, unemployed young people are at greater risk for psychological disturbance and symptoms of depression compared to the employed (Tselepis and Agrafiotis, 1997; Sissouras et al, 1997). There is evidence that young unemployed neglect health related daily activities, have eating and sleeping disorders and a higher consumption of alcohol, tobacco and drugs (Sokou, 1989). A higher consumption of licit and illicit drugs among the unemployed as well as a riskier sexual behaviour regarding AIDS have also been reported (Tselepis and Agrafiotis, 1997). Self-esteem was found to be substantially harmed among the young unemployed (Sokou, 1989; Tselepis and Agrafiotis, 1997), who according to the same studies are less politically active compared to the employed and tend to create their own grouping to which they withdraw, showing elements of social and political alienation (Sokou, 1989).

Important *mediators* in the relation between youth unemployment and health are: age, gender, educational level, social class, length of unemployment and family and community support. Although most available studies do not make a clear distinction of age subgroups, more significant psychological disturbances have been observed among the older age groups between 25-29 years of age (Tselepis and Agrafiotis, 1997). Unemployed women present an overall better health state than men since society accepts marriage and childbearing as an equally important role, enabling them to feel useful and socially integrated (Sokou, 1988). Differences are observed with regard to psychological well-being according to level of education. Young persons with higher educational levels, in contrary to the unqualified young unemployed, present higher levels of self-esteem and better psychological well-being as they enjoy emotional support from their families and social surroundings (Ioannidis and Mestheneos, 1999). Regarding social class, unemployment affects more the well-being of young people from lower socio-economic status groups (Kouveli et al., 1997). The lower income families are the ones most affected by unemployment, as the youngsters of the family have no access to training or other alternatives to increase their abilities. Low qualifications lead to multiple psychological strains, financial hardships, insecurity and psychosocial stress (Kouveli et al, 1998). Further, it was found that the long-term unemployed suffer the most from psychosomatic disturbances (Tselepi and Agrafiotis, 1997). Mechanisms of community support including family support and the sense of belonging which is stronger in smaller communities, influence positively the health state and the coping abilities of young unemployed people (Sissouras et al ,1997).

Psychological variables which affect the health condition of young unemployed persons are work orientation, financial strain and social support. High work orientation is negatively related to psychological well-being. Minimising the expectations towards work and life in general (as a defensive coping mechanism) seems to improve the ability to cope with unemployment (Sokou, 1989). Financial strain is a main factor that has a negative effect on psychological well-being. Social support through family and friends is considered to be a fundamental element helping to avoid or alleviate health disorders related to unemployment. According to the Greek studies that have been presented in this article, mental and social health and to a less degree physical health problems seem to be related to youth unemployment. Unemployed people suffer from psychological disturbances, stress, loss of self-esteem, depression and social disorientation. The relationship between unemployment - especially youth unemployment- and physical health remains ambiguous and needs further research as far as it concerns physically healthy young unemployed people. What also requires additional investigation is the level of importance that is attributed to certain mediating variables such as economic status, education, social class, gender, age, community and family support. Nonetheless, the health-related consequences of unemployment is a dynamic issue that requires attention and further analysis, as it reflects and interacts with society' s norms, values, preventive mechanisms and social development.

3 Youth unemployment and social exclusion

The concept of social exclusion, which reveals a multitude of mechanisms, aspects, and situations in a dynamic, multidimensional, and structural character in order to plan its control, since social exclusion does not only refer to several situations of marginalisation but also constitutes a process which pervades the whole society, beginning with the weakening of social bonds and ending in social nonexistence (Kronauer, 1998; Castel, 1995).

"The de-affiliation of an individual from the labour market implies the absence of monetary income from employment. This is usually sufficient enough to throw one into poverty. How-

ever, the nonexistence of income is not sufficient to classify one as socially excluded." (Karantinos, Koniordos, & Tinios, 1990; Kasimati, 1998). The concept of 'social exclusion', compared to the concepts of 'poverty' and 'marginalisation', places more emphasis on the multiple ways in which individuals and groups can be excluded from social interaction, experiences, institutions, and social rights, all fundamental factors for social integration and social identity. Social exclusion does not only mean insufficient financial resources as applies to the concept of poverty, or exclusion from the labour market, but it is also associated with insufficient or non-participation in other social domains, like housing, education, health, social services, cultural activities, and social contacts (Sokou et al, 1987, 2000). These insufficiencies are often interconnected and represent different aspects of the same mechanism of exclusion.

In Greece, - until 1997 - the concept of social exclusion was neither an issue of scientific, nor of open political debate. However, the lack of reference to the concept of social exclusion during the 1980s and early 1990s does not mean that the phenomena described by the term did not exist or that the Greek government was not concerned. The Greek government had since the early 1980s introduced integration policies for repatriated Greeks from the former Soviet Union and earlier than this period for the integration of social minorities such as the Gypsies. However, there were and still are several social groups at risk of social exclusion who are not sufficiently protected. The unemployed and especially the young unemployed are one of them. Young unemployed are threatened by social exclusion as a result of a weakening of traditional support networks like the family which shows signs of strain (Sokou et al, 2000). Families can only partially replace the inadequate welfare state in the face of mass long-term unemployment, especially in the large urban cities. By limiting the role of the state and its social services, the probability of social exclusion is growing.

Young unemployed persons and especially *young women*, the *long-term and the unemployed living in rural areas* face a high risk of exclusion from the labour market and the social structures. Widespread unemployment and the limited opportunities for the employment of young people, as well as the ongoing changes affecting the creation of available jobs, force young people to accept precarious and poorly paid temporary or part-time jobs which often do not even ensure them the minimum rights according to the law. Economic recession and unemployment destabilise the process of young people's professional and social integration. The risk of permanent marginalisation is increased through the vicious circle of temporary employment, unemployment, inactivity, and little chance for professional and social integration, in which young people remain in a situation of poverty and exclusion (Vaiou & Karamisini, 1998).

Low qualified unemployed young persons are particularly vulnerable to social exclusion. Even in 1991, 27.5% of the 15-24 years old had not completed obligatory school education (nine years of schooling). The drop-out rate is higher for men than for women because more men leave school in order to find a job. Most of them come from poor and illiterate families or from minority groups, gypsies, immigrants etc. They work mostly as unskilled labourers with no social security because few vocational training opportunities are open to them to improve their qualifications. All these make their employment situation very insecure, and put them at risk of occupational and social exclusion.

Other social groups at risk of social and economic exclusion according to recent literature (Karantinos, D., Alipranti, L., Fronimou, E., 1996) include the following: *young unmarried unemployed mothers*, who constitute a rather small group in Greece, are hit by labour market exclusion. Their needs as heads of households drive them to clandestine, insecure, seasonal/casual jobs with less social security rights (Papantoniou, 1997). *Young Unemployed*

persons with physical disabilities face barriers in the process of their social and economic integration due to shortage of necessary infrastructure, that is special schools, ramps, special laboratories facilities, libraries, specialised personnel and material, special technical vocational schools etc.

Juvenile delinquents are usually young persons who have experienced life conditions inhibiting personal development and access to a socially accepted way of life. Lack of family or insufficient support within the family, neglect or abuse, rejection or dropping out of the educational system are among the factors characterising juvenile delinquents involved in trafficking, consumption of illegal drugs or other more serious offences. Imprisonment or residence in drug rehabilitation centres stigmatise the young person, leading to further social exclusion, an additional obstacle to labour market inclusion. Employment, on the other hand, is a dynamic ideological and practical strategy of social inclusion, creating norms, values, and behavioural patterns that prevent the delinquent from further illegal/criminal acts, empowering young persons and training them in self-control, social dignity and autonomy.

Economic immigrants and *repatriated Pontian Greeks* from the former Soviet Union have gradually become the most numerous group at risk of social exclusion. Most of them are employed in the submerged economy and are usually exposed to hard, dangerous work while remaining uninsured. Due to language difficulties, Pontian Greeks' integration in the labour market is fraught with difficulties. Only a small percentage of them are working on professions relevant to their studies and skills. Due to their poor economic situation, their children often leave school to enter the labour market. Eighty percent of the economic immigrants are Albanians. Until 1998, Albanians comprised a highly transient labour force which developed a subculture in the margins of society. Social exclusion pushed some of them into criminal activity that further marginalised them and stigmatised their group as a whole. The *Gypsies* living on the outskirts of Athens and in smaller communities are often deprived of the most essential necessities such as water supply, electricity, drainage and sewerage. Most are unskilled and work in insecure, irregular jobs, as peddlers and small traders or as occasional workers providing cheap, uninsured labour. The high illiteracy rate along with the inadequate knowledge of the Greek language prevent their access to social services and their understanding of their rights and obligations.

It is high time for extensive research on the situation of the groups at risk of social exclusion in order to estimate the size, as well as aspects related to the problem. The evaluation of the effectiveness of the policies which are implemented for each group so far is a major research question. Another question is the extent that the above-mentioned social groups feel excluded from mainstream society and if in certain cases (*Gypsies*, economic immigrants etc.) this disintegration from the mainstream society is desired and intended, protecting their identity by preserving their own norms, values and traditions.

4 Long-term unemployed youth and the risk of social exclusion

A qualitative study was conducted in Greece in 1999 based on interviews with 50 long-term unemployed persons 20-25 years old regarding their experiences with unemployment and processes of social exclusion. The sample was selected from Athens and the provincial towns of Thiva and Drama with their surrounding semi-urban and rural areas in order to compare young unemployed people living in a major urban area with those living in the province. All selected areas were among those with higher unemployment rates in the country (Sokou et al, 2000c).

Social exclusion was examined using six different dimensions: labour market exclusion, economic exclusion, institutional exclusion, exclusion through social isolation, cultural exclusion, and spatial exclusion. According to the individual reports of the young unemployed interviewees, lack of jobs, oversupply of labour, low work qualifications and lack of work experience, saturated university studies, lack of a merit based system, the importance of social connections, and repeated frustration of job acquisition were mentioned as the most important barriers to *labour market inclusion*. The mandatory military service for men and the traditional social norms for women were further obstacles. Furthermore, mainly, the male interviewees with a lower educational status perceived the massive influx of foreigners in the labour market as a major factor of labour market exclusion. *Economic exclusion* is a most important dimension of social exclusion. In Greece, the vast majority of the young unemployed between 20-25 years old still live in their parents' house. This is a totally socially accepted situation, which functions as a protective factor against the risk of economic exclusion. Parents feel obliged to provide for their children who are not working. State support in the form of economic benefits is non-existent for the majority of the young unemployed. Therefore, the young unemployed persons are totally dependent on family support. Any economic instability in the family automatically affects the young unemployed persons and makes them vulnerable to economic exclusion. There were a few cases of interviewees whose family could barely secure survival of its members and had to reduce expenses to the minimum. All young persons stated that they feel uncomfortable asking money from their parents and not being able to provide for themselves. They had all reduced their expenses to what they considered to be necessary.

Institutional exclusion affects the whole population of the Greek province, through the limited access to educational, occupational and cultural institutions. All young unemployed regardless of place of living, complained of receiving poor vocational guidance at school and of the inefficient way in which the labour office (OAED) works. Regarding *social isolation*, the majority of the unemployed interviewees were well integrated in society. They had good relationships with their immediate family and most of the time they had a steady circle of friends, usually from school, who were in the same situation and shared similar problems. In the province and especially in rural regions, young people receive additional support from the local community, as long as they followed the socially accepted norms. However, all the young unemployed complained that their social contacts were dwindling, as they did not have many occasions to make new friends or acquaintances, and that they found it difficult financially to have many social contacts with working people. *Cultural exclusion* was mainly influenced by economic exclusion. The socioeconomic status of the family was a predominant factor in the ability of the young unemployed to participate in current life style trends. In the province, people were deprived from cultural activities such as theatre, festivals etc., since small cities did not offer many of these opportunities. However, other types of cultural activities existed in the provinces — for example, local events at no cost. In general, the majority of the young unemployed showed relatively little interest in current affairs and had a fairly vague view of the labour market situation. *Spatial exclusion* was experienced in different ways and depended greatly on the place where one lived. It existed in underdeveloped and downgraded areas in the outskirts of Athens. With regard to the province, spatial exclusion affected the entire population, not just the unemployed, as these areas fall behind Athens in terms of educational, labour market and cultural opportunities and general infrastructure. The rural regions surrounding the provincial towns were affected the most. All interviewees claimed to be satisfied with the quality of housing conditions and the environment.

The Greek study has found that a *high risk of social exclusion* exists in cases where labour market, economic exclusion and exclusion by social isolation are all present. For the young unemployed living in the provinces, social isolation is not significant due to community support. It is the spatial and the related institutional exclusion that are significant, combined with the labour market and the economic exclusion. Vulnerability factors reinforcing processes of social exclusion in the Greek sample are described below: the *precarious financial situation of the family* is considered to be the most important vulnerability factor, as it has a tremendous impact on the young person's life and can create conditions which favour long-term unemployment and social exclusion (i.e., dropping out of school, discontinuation of studies after secondary education, no vocational training, low mental health, limited social contacts etc); the *lack of social connections* as well as the *low level of work qualifications*, the *lack of work orientation* (ignorance of the labour market situation), *passive behaviour in the labour market* (not actively looking for a job), the *length of unemployment* (usually starting after school and lasting on average more than five years), *no work experience*. On the contrary, factors which prevent processes of social exclusion for the young unemployed of the Greek sample are: the *economic security* enjoyed within a caring family context, influencing positively personality development, the mental health state and the educational achievements. *High work qualifications*, *active behaviour in the labour market*, *work experience* (in the submerged economy or even in the regular market), *relatively short-term unemployment* (not exceeding two years) contribute to social inclusion.

Regarding the health situation, unemployment affects mental health more than physical. All the young unemployed feel under stress and they frequently experience tension with parents and other family members. The higher the risk of social exclusion, the more intense symptoms of psychosocial strain the young unemployed suffer from, leading to psychosomatic complaints like headaches, stomach-ache, insomnia etc., attributed to high stress. Also young persons at high risk of social exclusion are characterised by low self-esteem and passivity. The majority of the interviewees claimed that they did not notice changes in their health behaviour. Suicidal thoughts surfaced in only two persons of the sample, who belonged to the group who were at high risk of being socially excluded. The sources of this behaviour have to be traced back to the earlier years of socialisation within the family and school. All unemployed of the sample criticised young people who used illicit drugs, and none, with the exception of one, hinted that they used illicit drugs. None of the interviewees experienced changes in their alcohol consumption, which was rare and limited (a maximum of two glasses of alcohol, usually less than once a week). Often, they did not drink at all. A minority of the interviewees smoked. Those smokers, facing a higher risk of social exclusion as a result of their economic incapacity, had to cut down on their daily consumption. Smokers belonging to the low risk of social exclusion group and a few from the increased risk group had increased smoking because of stress and boredom. Overall, nutritional habits had not changed. The high risk of social exclusion group is characterised by absence of physical activity. A remarkably higher level of physical exercise is noticed in the persons facing a lower risk of social exclusion.

5 Institutional responses to youth unemployment and the risk of social exclusion

Institutional responses to youth unemployment in Greece were characterised until the late nineties by the predominance of state policies which were blamed for several drawbacks: lack of coordination among relevant public institutions, lack of adequate dissemination of information on the unemployment programmes to the target groups, lack of appropriate training of the personnel in the local employment offices and of the trainers in the training projects. All this, in combination with the lack of allowances for the new entrants in the labour market and the

low percentage of job placements, discouraged the young unemployed from seeking help in the employment offices and get registered as unemployed.

Since 1998, Greece has focused on developing a comprehensive and coordinated strategy for the promotion of employment, introducing new innovative policies for the country, with the support of the European Social Fund. The Greek National Action Plan on Employment (1999), focuses on preventing and combating youth unemployment, implementing an active unemployment policy before the young unemployed have been unemployed more than six months. The national policy aims to offer a comprehensive individualised intervention, prioritising women. The government cooperates with social partners in the planning and realisation of the national action plan.

The new national policies are based on a general reconstruction of the local employment offices. The *Centres for the Promotion of Employment* (K.P.A.) designed as a "one-stop shop", provide individualised consultation and guidance to all young job-seekers. Educational and vocational training systems are connected with the needs of the labour market. Programmes of initial vocational training are realised in the Institutes of Vocational Training (IEK) and in the Vocational Training Centres (KEK), covering the needs of different groups of young unemployed. Counselling and guidance is provided to those young unemployed who are interested in the creation of their own businesses subsidised by the state. Incentives are given to employers to hire young unemployed persons.

National institutional responses against the risk of social exclusion related to youth unemployment exist only in relation to certain social groups recognised as particularly vulnerable ones: physically disabled persons, immigrants, refugees, repatriated Greeks, young delinquents, ex-prisoners, prisoners, former drug addicts, persons belonging to cultural or religious minorities, single parent families, persons living in isolated mountainous or insular regions of the country and mentally ill persons.

An overview of the institutions shows that in Greece the *labour administration institutions* are the ones which are primarily responsible for the planning, implementation, supervision and evaluation of programmes on youth unemployment. *Social welfare institutions* have not developed yet any special programmes for the young unemployed and *self-help groups* for unemployed persons do not function in the country. Regarding *public health institutions*, starting from January 1999, a new policy entitles all young unemployed until the age of 30 years with free access to public health care through the Institute of Social Insurance (I.K.A). Concerning *education and training schemes*, in addition to the vocational training programmes, the "Complementary teaching" programme, has been launched by the Ministry of Education in 1997 supporting students with low school performance in regions with increased educational needs. Many local authorities have developed important local initiatives like Centres of Information for the Unemployed and the Employers, Counselling Centres etc. The Institute of Employment (-IN.E.) of the General Workers Union (-GSSE) and several other organisations have developed a wide range of innovative activities and programmes combating unemployment.

Systematic evaluation on the efficacy and efficiency of programmes both on quantitative and qualitative terms will be useful. The successful interventions have to be disseminated and economically supported for sustainability. A more effective dissemination strategy of existing programmes and opportunities is necessary. The young long-term unemployed persons with poor mental health need special psychosocial support in order to get stimulated to enter the

labour market. The same young people need financial support as they usually come from poor families.

The existing institutional responses to youth unemployment will face only a portion of it. Many of the young unemployed still remain without help. Unemployment has to be tackled with mutual efforts and strategies initiated by the state, the social partners and the unemployed. Emphasis should be given on a more equal allocation and distribution of the new Centres for Promoting Employment taking into consideration the real needs of all Greek regions. Planning should be based on research evidence.

6 Conclusions

Long-term unemployment can be a devastating experience for young people, especially for those seeking a job for the first time. This is because employment, nowadays, is the most powerful means of social and economic integration. Unemployment undermines personal development and forces dependence on family. In contrary to what is happening in northern European countries, the young unemployed in Greece are fairly well protected from a high risk of social exclusion. Young persons usually stay with their family of origin independent of their employment situation until they start their own family. Until the 1990s, it had been considered a parental obligation to provide for the young unemployed. The young unemployed enjoy family, relatives and friends, although they feel unable to expand their social networks. However, the Greek young unemployed, despite all family support, experience the side-effects of unemployment, especially the mental health issues like stress, insecurity, loss of time-structure, low self-esteem, etc. These problems can take significant shape in the cases of young persons whose family cannot help them to cope with their unemployment situation economically or psychologically. These persons are usually low qualified, with no vocational training, have never been integrated into the labour market and are long-term unemployed, usually more than three years. When the family is absent, the need for institutional support to the young unemployed becomes pressing.

The issue of youth unemployment has turned out to be so complex, that traditional responses seem to be played out. Interventions against youth unemployment have to be both innovative and efficient at the same time in order to be effective. Recently, in Greece systematic and coordinated efforts to combat unemployment have been initiated, especially among young people. Many projects are very new and lack proper evaluation. There have also been good practices which stopped functioning because they could not find the necessary financial means to continue. This is the case with many projects sponsored by the European Union. When the European resources ran out, the programmes had no financial support to continue.

Innovative interventions aim to offer comprehensive support to the unemployed person covering a variety of needs: information - work orientation - vocational training - psychosocial support - job placement. Participation of young persons who have experienced the unemployment phase and have managed to enter the labour market is extremely helpful. Networking and volunteer work are also of key importance. The development of close cooperation with the local community, with public and private institutions, with the existing structures combating unemployment as well as with enterprises and potential employers on the one hand and with a number of professionals and scientists working voluntarily on the other, multiply the efficiency and flexibility of the intervention.

National policies against unemployment, in order to be successful, need to look after the unemployed in a comprehensive way. *Prevention* of unemployment should be a well-

coordinated intersectoral policy activity based on long-term planning and involving school, educational and other training and vocational institutions, local authorities, commercial and other economic agencies. School is one of the main preventive agencies against unemployment which may help through the control of school failure and dropping-out, through vocational orientation and training in social and other important abilities for empowerment and social integration. It should motivate young adolescents to participate actively in cultural, ecological and developmental projects within the local community gaining experience, creating social relations and learning abilities related to their social and psychological development. Other agencies which could have an active preventive role are those involving young persons in sports, cultural and ecological protection activities. Active community participation of students and of the unemployed in such agencies is very important. Health and social care services also have to provide support and counselling to the individual in order to empower him or her to find a job and become autonomous.

Further, care of the mental health state of the young unemployed can increase the effectiveness of labour market integration policies. The psychosocial support should focus on the empowerment of the young unemployed with the development of necessary skills to cope with their own problems and increase their autonomy and self-esteem. In cases of poor mental health, family members of the young unemployed should be involved. Psychosocial support should continue after job placement to ensure stability of employment.

State financial support of young unemployed people facing the risk of poverty in the family context is imperative. The young unemployed will be encouraged to integrate if they can participate actively in policy measures such as vocational training, self-help groups, cultural activities etc. Special policies for the young unemployed living in the province and especially in rural areas should be provided, including promotion of educational and vocational opportunities related to the needs of the local labour market, improvement of existing infrastructure in terms of communication and transportation, and development of cultural and recreational facilities for young people.

Policies for higher participation in the labour market for women should be promoted. Special innovative interventions should be designed to combat unemployment of young long-term unemployed women with an emphasis on the less qualified and the more disadvantaged. Irregular work is another issue which should be taken into account in the planning of the employment policy. It is necessary that the state integrates irregular forms of employment in the official labour market to serve as a training and work experience passage to regular employment. Systematic evaluation of the efficacy and efficiency of policies against unemployment is of high importance. It should be a necessary component of all programmes as it will help clarify the most and the least successful aspects and contribute to a more effective unemployment policy.

Finally, institutional responses to the young unemployed have to be careful not to stigmatise the young person involved, creating as an obstacle to his/her successful integration in the labour market.

3.5 Italy¹³

1 Introduction

Before assessing the analyses resulting from the YUSEDER study, we would like to summarise the salient features of the problem of unemployment and, in particular of youth unemployment, here in Italy.

Italian unemployment is characterised, first and foremost, by its extremely *diversified distribution throughout the country*. This feature obviously affects, and is an integral part of, youth unemployment as well, with significant unemployment in the North of the country (but within the European average) comparing favourably nevertheless with the extremely high levels of unemployment in the South. This leads us to the problem that young Italians have in finding a job once they have finished their schooling: the difficulties encountered in making the transition from school to the workplace, in fact, are common to all areas of the country, although in the South the situation has reached an extremely worrying level. This problem is even more serious among the weaker segments of the labour force (the female component of the unemployed is higher than the European average, especially in the South). The geographical concentration of unemployment, and the difficulty in obtaining regular employment on the labour market (hence the high percentage of irregular employment), is symptomatic of Southern Italy, structurally characterised by the limited offer of employment, by infrastructural weaknesses and by more complex conditions of economic and social hardship.

The above is a rather synthetic description of the characteristics of the so-called *Italian model of unemployment* (Pugliese, 1993; Mingione & Pugliese, 1996), which gives an effective summarised account of the structure of Italian unemployment.

These main characteristics can be summarised as follows:

- an accentuated North – South dualism;
- low rates of employment (very low in the South, and in general among women);
- high rates of youth unemployment;
- a large female component of the overall unemployed;
- a considerable number of long-term unemployed.

As regards the analysis of the quantitative trend in youth unemployment, on the other hand, we need to point out once more that despite a gradual, extremely slow process of reestablishing an internal equilibrium on the labour market, particularly in the North¹⁴, unemployed Italian youth are mostly people looking for their first job (64 % of the total in 1998). As far as concerns the geographical dualism indicated by the model of unemployment, the ISTAT figures we have dramatically confirm the net imbalance between North and South. Youth unemployment in the South was over 56% in 1998, and still shows no real sign of diminishing. Finally, another important feature of Italian socio-economic reality which is to be of decisive importance when formulating institutional measures to combat the problem of unemployment is the low levels of employment, especially among women, which in turn points to a gender dualism on the Italian labour market.

¹³ The following report has to be considered as a result of a full collaboration of the whole Italian research team (Vando Borghi, Federico Chicchi, Michele La Rosa). However, it is possible to attribute specifically to Michele La Rosa the chapter 3, to Federico Chicchi the chapter 1, and the rest of the Report to Vando Borghi.

¹⁴ The number of people in search of their first job has fallen at the national level, according to the latest ISTAT figures, by 4.2%.

The following table briefly summarises the historical evolution of the phenomenon we are dealing with here:

Table I-1: Youth unemployment features

	1985	1992	1995	1996	1997
youth unemployment rate (15-29)	23.9	21.0	25.0	25.7	26.1*
youth unemployment/ total unemployment	76.6	69.1	61.3	60.7	60.8
youth long-term unemployment (% youth unemployment)	69.2	56.8	64.2	65.7	67.0

Source: Eurostat: in the 1985 figures for unemployment rates, subjects 14 years old and over were still included.
*Istat.

The main objective of the research programme we are going to briefly describe below can be sub-divided into two segments: firstly, once we have an understanding of the framework of the phenomenon and of the debate over the analysis and observational points of view of the same phenomenon, we are to conduct a qualitative field study in order to identify the causes and the key mechanisms behind exposure to the risk of social exclusion among young people and in particular among unemployed youth; subsequently, on the basis of the results that emerge, we are to monitor and evaluate the various institutional answers given to this problem, so as to try to formulate new, far-reaching measures with which to combat the phenomenon in question.

The method employed in selecting the sample of subjects and local areas to be empirically analysed in the first of the two parts of the study had to take account of the characteristics of national unemployment mentioned above. To this end, as we shall see, the Italian study was conducted in its entirety in two different parts of the country: in the city of Naples in the South, and in the city of Bologna and the province of Ferrara in the North.

With regard to the various forms of institutional intervention, the geographical divergence between North and South constituted the main variable factor to be borne in mind, as we shall see in the second part of the present summary, both as the decisive factor during the planning of action and as a factor that differently effects (in terms of local impact) those measure – e.g. the reform of those public structures that regulate the labour market – that aspire to produce results throughout the entire country.

The following considerations aim to give a more detailed account, albeit in a more schematic form than the respective Research Reports mentioned, of the various subjects analysed and of the results of the research conducted here.

2 Youth unemployment and health

We can summarise the results given by a number of different empirical studies and analyses of statistical data (Crepet P, Vetrone G., Piazzzi A., Costa M., Lombardi 1992; Depolo M., Fraccaroli F., Sarchielli G., 1992; Vetrone G., Crepet P, Costa M., Piazzzi A., Di Tommaso L., Ferrara R., Petrangeli L., Frighi L., 1992; Grassi A., Falzoni M.C., Fasol R., 1992; Fraccaroli F., 1989), concerning the relationship between unemployment and health (both mental and physical) as follows:

- in general, unemployment is clearly associated with worse conditions of health and higher rates of morbidity and mortality;

- certain analyses of statistical data show that this association is particularly evident among young people in search of their first job: in the 1980s, the risk of death was 50% higher in this group than among others (Costa, Segnan, 1988);
- nevertheless, the nature and direction of this relationship between unemployment and state of health – is unemployment the cause or the effect of worse health ? – remains to be empirically proven.

As regards the more specific question of those studies of that group of young unemployed people between the ages of 15 and 29, the target group of our particular research project, in Italy these have concentrated more on the socio-psychological effects of unemployment rather than on its possible physical effects. A number of points can be underlined here:

- although not all the studies explicitly confirm it, it would seem that youth unemployment is associated with a condition of socio-psychological difficulty: unemployed young people clearly have problems in perceiving their own future, and are more exposed to a feeling of hopelessness, which can evolve into a situation of complete discouragement and (self)exclusion;
- certain variable factors, such as *gender* (girls are often more significantly affected by depression, hopelessness and loss of self-esteem, even if this is not always linked to being unemployed) and *work involvement* (unemployed young people with a strong vocational inclination display lower levels of psychological well-being), seem to influence the link between unemployment and psycho-social hardship; the educational factor, albeit important, is not on its own capable of influencing the results of the General Health Questionnaires, but tends to reinforce other factors;
- the support of the community, of the family and of friends is of decisive importance to those strategies and abilities employed in coping with unemployment and with the psychological effects it has on young people.

Generally speaking then, what emerges from these studies is the need to avoid simplifying what is in reality a rather complex phenomenon. On the one hand, a number of studies seem to substantiate the hypothesis according to which the difficulty and suffering witnessed is connected to the subjects' youth rather than to the condition of being unemployed as such (one's youth seen as a passing phase characterised by a series of anxieties, fears, expectations, frustrations, etc.). On the other hand, it is generally felt that we need to get away from purely economic models that presuppose a clear, direct causal connection between social phenomena, structural factors (labour market trends, technological changes, changes in economic and productive cycles and so forth and individual vocation, that is, between quantitative aspects and the ethical and socio-psychological importance of work in the life of young people (Sarchielli et al, 1991, p.183). Thus alongside the need to carry out further, more systematic longitudinal studies into the overall relationship between unemployment and health, there is also a need to continue research into the various ways youth unemployment evolves (within certain spatial and social settings) into psycho-physical suffering, or other suffering, and into the strategies and measures that can be adopted to counter such suffering and hardship.

3 Youth unemployment and social exclusion

In the Introduction we mentioned the specific features of the "Mediterranean model" of unemployment that characterise the phenomenon in Italy. In truth, unemployment in Italy can be seen to be an "excluding" variety of that model (Therborn, 1986; Mingione, Pugliese, 1996; La Rosa, Giullari, 1995). The social composition of unemployment in our country, in fact, is similar to that of other countries in southern Europe (Spain and Greece, for example)

and is thus further characterised by the ruthless way it hits a specific social and geographical area. As we said at the beginning, this form of unemployment tends to be concentrated within the confines of a clearly marked social sphere, mainly affecting young people in search of their first job, the long-term unemployed, more women than men and is more marked in the South than in the North. However, while these are the main traits of unemployment within the Italian context, what then are the links between this condition and the risk of social exclusion?

In order to try to answer this question, we must first return to the debate in Italy over the meaning of this latter concept. The idea of “social exclusion”¹⁵ in Italy has only recently been discussed, compared with its prior appearance across Europe (Saraceno, 1993; Negri, 1995; Procacci, 1996; Tosi, 1996), within the framework of a comparison that has shown not only the terms (the consideration of the multifaceted and processive nature of phenomena) but also its limits and ambiguities (the identification of structural needs, the de-politicisation of the problems, the grouping together of very different situations and problems, etc.). However, generally speaking, we may summarise three main Italian approaches to the analysis of phenomena classifiable within the framework of social exclusion (Morlicchio, 1996):

- a) the analyses that mainly point out the “fractures” involved in the *system of personality* of subjects whose lives are characterised by an increasing process of their own relational and self-determinational weakening; these analyses, for the most part, make reference to situations of “extreme poverty”, interpreted starting from a “missed interpenetrating between psychic and social system” (Pieretti, 1993, p.37). From this point of view, poverty, which in a society characterised by stratified differentiation “is a matter of social system”, in the societies with functional differentiation “risks becoming, if not exclusively, also a matter concerning psychic systems” (Idem, p.36);
- b) approaches which, in particular, focus on the *welfare systems*, trying to point out the modalities with which government institutions outline (or stop) some intervention possibilities along paths and trajectories of exclusion (Kazepov, 1995), and focus on the differences that, at local institutional level, are generated in terms of exclusion risk prevention and of inclusion projects realisation (Kazepov, 1996). Even though underlining that “under the same ties the poverty path develops in a differentiated way, according to the characteristics of the individuals”, such an approach justifies the analysis of the government action and the way in which it pre-structures exclusion risks and inclusion paths, through the connection it establishes “with the other welfare elements: family and mutual relationships first, *non-profit* sector and the market” (Kazepov, 1995, p.45-6),
- c) the approaches which stress “the importance of the *labour market* perspective” in the study of the processes of exclusion and impoverishment, in an analysis in which “the increasing difficulties of access to stable and sufficiently paid jobs and the increase in the number of long-term unemployed are registered” which “tend to reproduce a group of poor people excluded from institutional and community resources, at high deviance risk, which results in being more and more concentrated in specific metropolitan areas and particular social groups” (Morlicchio, 1996, p.11). It is from this point of view that, purged of the moralistic and censoring trend prevailing in the American literature, the concept of *underclass* is reinterpreted from a comparative point of view which is useful for the comparison among the different actual forms in which these phenomena of “cumulative syndrome of labour exclusion” develop (Mingione, 1994, p.89).

The crux of the study with regard to the link between unemployment and those social mechanisms that exacerbate the risk of social exclusion – seen as a situation in which there is still some hope of intervention and of interaction between excluded and included subjects (Negri, 1994) – remains so far unexplored in the existing literature. This correlation,

¹⁵ For further details of this, see La Rosa & Kieselbach (1999).

in fact, even if limited to the relationship between unemployment and the more circumscribed condition (compared to that of social exclusion) of economic hardship, cannot, however, be seen as a simple or automatic one (Pugliese, 1996).

In general terms, nevertheless, we can say that the geographical divide that characterises the country deeply affects the form that processes of exclusion take as well as the transition itself from unemployment to exclusion and leads to different models and different subjects at risk in the North compared with in the South (Benassi, Mingione, 1998). In the South risk is more closely linked to the combination of unemployment and low pay in large families, often concentrated in poor areas of the city. In the North, on the other hand, those most affected are isolated subjects, deprived of support from a family network, suffering the loss of a job or of housing (or being unable to hold onto them), and affected also by events that weaken their own social capacities, such as chronic illness or a problem of mental health, drug-dependency or alcoholism, or a previous experience of imprisonment.

In more specific terms, the age-group that constitutes the object of our study (15 – 29) is characterised by the link between the risk of social exclusion and the condition of unemployment in the South, where the above-mentioned factors are often accompanied by the phenomenon of early school leaving, and more generally of low or even extremely low levels of education, which together strongly favour the onset of risk situations. Then there is the analysis of the effects of the submerged economy and of irregular employment which, as our study shows, play an unclear, ambivalent role with regard to the connection between youth unemployment and social exclusion.

4 Long-term unemployed youth and the risk of social exclusion

Our field study thus followed this geographical divergence as the main aspect to be borne in mind when we interpreted the phenomenon in question. To this end, 50 “problem-focused” interviews were conducted with long-term unemployed young people in two distinct areas of the country: 20 in a depressed area within a rich *northern* region, Emilia-Romagna, and 30 in an urban setting, notoriously disadvantaged, Naples, which lies within the structurally depressed *South* of Italy. Within this sample group, defined as far as possible in keeping with the statistical data on gender and schooling regarding youth unemployment in the South and the North of the country, three risk areas were identified in order to make our results comparable with those of other similar studies conducted in countries taking part in this international project. We were thereby able to classify eight situations as cases of “high risk of social exclusion”, six of which from the South; nine as cases of “increased risk of social exclusion”; and thirty-three as cases of “low risk of social exclusion”.

However, aside from these quantitative figures, important results emerged concerning those social mechanisms and factors that may either exacerbate, or alleviate, the risk of social exclusion. According to research findings, the key variable which largely accounts for the presence or absence (and the degree) of the risk of exclusion is that of *family support*. In a context like the Italian one, characterised by the almost complete *lack of public support and assistance* for unemployed young people, and by their *staying on at home for a prolonged period*, this variable is one common to a whole range of different socio-economic situations, such as those taken into account in the present study. This variable, in fact, underlies a variety of factors influencing the protected position or the vulnerability of a young unemployed person. It directly determines the *material quality of life* of those in question (their financial resources, the quality of the domestic setting, etc.) and the primary *moral or relational support* they receive in their disadvantaged position as unemployed persons. However, it also influences,

albeit indirectly, their store of knowledge in the wider sense, through the transmission of models of behaviour and of a certain logic underlying such behaviour, which in turn has repercussions both on these persons' career paths (through their educational choices, the degree of commitment to finding work, the role of illegal employment, etc.) and on their experience of unemployment (support and encouragement in looking for work, going along with their choice to put off decisions, placing blame, and so on). Also the *psychological effects* of unemployment may be associated with the variable of the family support, emerging in the form of a sense of guilt towards the family or the desire to free oneself from them. As far as regards these factors in general, the risk of social exclusion does not seem to have had any significant effects on the *physical or psychological well-being* of our subjects, even in the cases we classified as at high risk of social exclusion; this can perhaps be explained in terms of the youth of our sample, of their overall social integration (both into the family, albeit at times in a rather strained situation, and among friends and acquaintances), and explained by the fact that they interpret their situation more as a "common social problem" rather than a sign of "personal failure". As we said above, the family situation, both in material and relational terms, seems to be the focal point for an understanding of the overall situation of our subjects, in that it conditions all aspects of their lives, including their psychophysical well-being, acting as it does either as an important protective factor or as a vulnerability factor, according to the case in question.

The *relational setting* in the wider sense of the term also plays an important role, transforming the experience of unemployment into either a collective problem or a personal thing; it is no coincidence that the situations in which there is a *risk of social isolation*, as much as this risk may be the result of various problems, were only present in the northern part of the survey group, whereas in the South even the cases we classified as at high risk of social exclusion were hardly affected by this particular problem.

The *irregular employment* variable (like that of housing and more general spatial conditions) is an ambiguous variable, as we said, and it acts more as a reinforcing factor (rather than an independent one) in one direction or the other: for example, an irregular job, even a permanent, well-paid one, may just as well constitute a factor of vulnerability when it acts as a brake on the commitment to searching for regular employment or when it prevents the person from looking too hard and far for such employment, thus increasing the risk of social exclusion at some later point.

However, *all of these points need to be linked to the focal importance of exclusion from the labour market*: the latter is, in itself, insufficient to lead a person into a situation of social exclusion as such (and, in certain cases, those within what we defined "at low risk of social exclusion" show that this may even be of secondary importance). Nevertheless, whereas other conditions may mount up and increase the existing vulnerability of a person, this particular variable takes on a particular importance here: in those high risk cases we analysed, in fact, the risks of social exclusion were not so much linked to marginalised lifestyles or to socio-cultural isolation as to the triggering of a spiral of "unemployment/family problems/limits to social involvement" which, without wishing to identify any particular single causal mechanism, points to exclusion from the labour market as a factor which greatly intensifies the risk of exclusion.

More specifically, those situations classified as at high risk of social exclusion are generally characterised by an extremely low level of social skills, the result of a series of factors such as a low or extremely low level of schooling, the absence of job opportunities (even irregular ones) or access to only the poorest or de-qualifying forms of labour; family or local back-

grounds characterised by an extremely limited quantity of cognitive and material resources as well as life in socially/culturally deprived, poor areas. This situation of poor social skills, more often than not inherited from one's own background, results in a low degree of employability (the result, in any case, of a context structurally characterised by an extremely low demand for labour): this is the result of risk factors such as those just mentioned, and at the same time is also a cause of the consolidation of the very same factors and of the further exacerbation of the risk of social exclusion. The *time factor*, that is, the permanence of these features and their becoming increasingly chronic, thus plays a decisive role here.

5 Institutional responses to youth unemployment and to the risk of social exclusion

The final part of our study concentrated on the institutional response to the need to combat phenomena of social exclusion connected to youth unemployment. With regard to the problems identified in both the overview of studies on the relationship between unemployment and social exclusion and in our own field research into the processes leading to the risk of social exclusion in long-term unemployed young people, we need to point out the invariably different way an observer such as a research body sees the problem and the way it is perceived by an institutional body. In fact, as well as responding to various forms of pressure and urgency to the point of influencing the very definition and interpretation of a phenomenon, the institutional body tends to redefine a problem, breaking it up according to the various options for intervention (that in turn correspond to its various internal divisions). This helps underline the fact that there is no uniform institutional definition of the phenomenon of social exclusion linked to youth unemployment and no series of specific measures aimed at resolving the same problem, as is clear from a quick overview of the institutional responses to the problem in question. On the contrary, there are a number of different actions taken by various institutional bodies, which are in turn formulated by the regional or local offices of the latter, that directly or indirectly constitute an answer *also* to the problem we are looking into here. Let us now take a brief look at some of the features of this series of actions currently implemented as mentioned.

The first feature of those current social policies aimed at preventing any further exacerbation of the problem of unemployment is that such institutional responses to the problem seem geared towards increasing the existing rate of employment. They are preeminently classifiable as *policies aimed at encouraging employment*, based above all on: a) tax relief for employers taking on new workers and/or b) forms of economic and administrative support and advice for the setting up of new companies (especially those employing young people or women) or independent businesses; c) the promotion of work experience and new-start contracts.

A second feature, of essential importance if we are to fully understand this situation, is the process of reform of the entire labour market regulatory mechanism. In fact, up until very recently the Italian model of state regulation of the labour market had been characterised by a series of severe limits (Reyneri, 1996; Paci, 1997). A process of reform was got underway from the mid-nineties onwards, involving the public administration's general framework as well as those mechanisms specifically designed to regulate the labour market: this reform process aimed, in fact, to change the above-mentioned limits. It consists, on the one hand, in the reorganisation and re-launching of labour training, and on the other hand in a radical transformation of the marketing of new employment services. Very briefly, the latter consists in the following: the creation of new Employment Services grouping together the various labour market administrative authorities; the decentralisation of decision-making and management within this field (to the Regions, the Provinces and to Local Councils); the superceding of the purely bureaucratic nature of such structures, and the provision of diversified services

(information, orientation, counselling, job placement); the consequent re-qualification and outplacement of workers; the ending of the state monopoly over employment agencies. This reform process, however, has still a long way to go: once again, the geographical variable plays a fundamental role here. Whereas in the North, in fact, the process of reform has been got underway, in the South the situation is much more difficult and uncertain.

These measures have been accompanied by a fourth piece in this mosaic of change: i.e. the re-launching of professional training by the Ministry of Education. In 1998, 200,597 people took part in regional job training courses, 146,642 of whom were young people up to the age of 25¹⁶. However, there has been very little monitoring or substantial evaluation of the outcome of this training programme, which has once again been characterised by the significant differences between one part of the country and another as mentioned previously.

Moving on now to a fifth feature of the situation under examination, that is, to the various measures aimed at providing socio-economic support to persons in difficulty - in a context characterised by the complete absence of any basic public welfare law, and thus of the considerable fragmentation of action, and of the geographical inequality thereof (Kazepov, 1996) – we should mention an innovative new measure being experimented with for the first time in Italy, and that is the Minimum Insertion Income (MII). The MII, which consists of financial support (of an average sum per family of 741,548 lire¹⁷) together with a personalised programme of reintegration into the labour market is currently being experimented with in 39 Italian councils: five in the North, nine in the Centre and 25 in the South and the Islands, with a total of 24,919 families involved. An initial assessment of results (T. Alti & F. Maino, 1999; F. Montemurro & T. Tarquini, 1999), although generally positive overall, shows that there are still considerable areas of difficulty and uncertainty, especially as far as getting people involved is concerned. Involvement is envisaged through the implementation of local measures which attempt to avoid falling into the trap of becoming yet another “passive” measure, the granting of a subsidy merely subject to bureaucratic constraints. However, according to the evaluations that were made during the course of an interview with an expert from the Ministry of Employment, it seems likely that once economic support has been guaranteed, this measure will be proposed on the national scale, and included in the National Employment Plan, currently in the design phase.

Finally, another measure which, although not specifically aimed at persons at risk from social exclusion, ought to be briefly mentioned here, consists of a *Youth Bill* drawn up in order to favour the presence of young people at the political decision-making level as well as the promotion of local projects, events and activities aimed at, and actively involving, young people.

Thus summarising, we can say that within the framework of the various forms of intervention introduced by public bodies, *there are no recognisable general measures specifically aimed at helping long-term unemployed young people avoid the risk of social exclusion*. This problem is, as we have said, dealt with in a very fragmented, indirect and partial manner by a variety of institutions and measures.

6 Conclusions

Until very recently, the institutional framework in Italy was characterised by the highly centralised state regulation of the labour market; its purely bureaucratic nature and procedural control over local branches, accompanied by the proliferation of “submerged” forms of con-

¹⁶ See the *Piano d'azione nazionale per l'occupazione 1999* [The 1999 National Employment Plan].

¹⁷ Approximately 371 Euro.

trol over the job market; the extreme fragmentation of professional training policies, often poorly coordinated with local bodies (public and private); the absence of any financial support for unemployed people without previous work experience (all benefits were indexed to previous employment); the absence of a law giving general guidelines for the provision of assistance and thus the extreme fragmentation (at both regional and municipal levels) of intervention. Certain signs of an attempt to intervene in a more concrete manner with regard to such questions have recently emerged. These include: the process of reform (begun in the second half of the 1990s) of the public regulation of the labour market, the relaunching of professional training and of forms of combined job experience and training and finally the introduction of the experimental Minimum Income.

The consistency of the infrastructural, economic and productive disadvantage, together with organisational and cultural difficulties encountered by the very introduction of these institutional changes, in fact has a different impact in the South to that produced in the North. Whereas in northern Italy they seem to constitute the institutional recognition of processes already underway in society, which they accompany, accelerate and strengthen; in the South, on the other hand, they seem to constitute measures and methods that have yet to be constructed and implemented.

We also need to take account of the fact that the risk that unemployment may degenerate into a condition of greater social exclusion is very different from South to North: this difference is another aspect of the more general geographical differentiation of the country which constitutes the key to the questions examined in this research project. Our field research also confirmed a concentration of those situations causing the greatest risk of social exclusion in the southern part of the country, and in more general terms the increased chronic of those dynamics that we have seen underlie the processes of exclusion. This diversity explains, among other things, the almost complete absence of this problem in the agenda of those institutions and organisations surveyed in the North and the presence of such an item, on the other hand, in the intervention plans of their counterparts in the South (albeit with different operative consequences).

The working experiences in contexts where this link between youth unemployment and the risk of social exclusion is clearly evident – we saw this during the course of our research also in the analysis of certain excellent ongoing projects – together with the knowledge we acquired during the course of our research into the experiences of long-term unemployed youth thus make it possible to draw up certain general guidelines for those measures designed to combat this problem. They may be summarised by identifying certain “passwords” taken from an analysis of certain experiences of innovative intervention (compared with the general lines adopted by institutional policies) which has proven considerably effective:

- the effective *bringing together* (networking) of the various promoters, organisations and associations involved at the local level into a *network*;
- the considerable planning and operative *autonomy of local promoters*, organisations and associations;
- the *combination of local and national/international channels* through which to exchange and compare experiences on the part of those promoting intervention;
- the implementation of a *variety of different forms of intervention*, to be employed universally rather than the establishment of ‘one best way’ of doing things;
- the adoption of an *experimental approach* in planning and implementing measures;
- the increase in value of the *social and cognitive value of work*, be it regular or irregular, through intervention aimed at substantive rather than formal empowerment of those involved in intervention;

- the recognition of the *inherent value* (and not just in as much as they serve to find work) *of relational, cultural and cognitive measures* regarding young people at risk;
- the introduction of methods of *monitoring and assessing* that take account of the *qualitative aspects* as well and are open to change during the course of the projects;
- the *limitation, as far as possible, of “external” difficulties* that may interfere with the projects (bureaucratic, administrative or financial).

Of course, the above are only intended to be general guidelines, and they clearly do not exhaust the possible actions that may be taken toward such complex, phenomenologically diversified problems (according to the contexts within which they emerge) and that in any case are to be seen as additional to, and not a replacement for, the lines of intervention already adopted at the national institutional level. Nevertheless, the observations that emerged during the course of our research into the experiences of unemployed youth, during our encounters with the various experts and those conducted directly by us when examining ongoing projects and those projects being set up and during the last part of our research are in our view of great importance for the formulation of measures to be implemented in order to hinder and combat those processes of social exclusion connected to youth unemployment.

3.6 Spain¹⁸

1 Introduction

Youth unemployment in Spain increased considerably from the end of the 1970s to the mid-1980s, when it stabilised and began to decrease slightly until the early 1990s. In the first half of the 1990s there was a considerable increase in unemployment in general in Spain, and unemployment figures for this period reached historical levels, particularly in the case of youth unemployment. In 1994 the government put forward a reform of labour policy, introducing new types of temporary contracts (training contracts of many different kinds, temporary employment agencies, etc.), with the main justification of facilitating employment for young people. The age group of young people was seen as the most discriminated against by the labour situation at the time, and the reform liberalised the labour market tremendously in order to allow young people access to it. The result was an increase in the turnover of young people on the labour market, with the subsequent increase in precariousness.

In the second half of the 1990s, the trend changed and unemployment levels began to fall considerably, although they still remained high among young people. Despite the fact that since 1996 there has been an increasing recovery in economic activity in Spain, the global figure for unemployment remains very high: more than three million people, a rate of 19.6% in 1998 (14.9% males and 27% females), according to the EPA data (first quarters). The evolution of unemployment figures for young people (16-29 years) showed the following rates: 6.3% in 1975, 22.3% in 1980, 40.8% in 1985, 28.9% in 1990, 37.9% in 1995 and 31.5% in 1998 (according to EPA data for the first six months, 1975, and first quarters, 1980-1998; until 1980 the data concern the age group 14-29 years old).

In 1997, an important reform of the labour policies was agreed by the main social partners (Interconfederal Agreement for Employment Stability) in response to the dramatic effects of the previous situation. The proposed objectives were basically to promote permanent contracts and to facilitate entrance into the labour market of those unemployed people with special difficulties in finding employment (long-term unemployed, young people, people over 45 years of age, and people with disabilities), to regain the cause - and - effect aspect in temporary hiring, to regain the training aspects of training contracts and to extend the social protection rights of specific groups (part-time employees, training contracts, etc.). Furthermore, there are more incentives to convert temporary contracts into permanent ones, and the emphasis has been placed on training (vocational, occupational and retraining) for which considerable economic subsidies are due to be earmarked (mainly from the European Social Fund).

At the end of the 1990s, the Spanish economy is in a phase of expansion which facilitates the creation of employment of young people, but this includes a high level of temporary jobs (more than 30%), especially among young people (75%); so, although unemployment is falling, precariousness continues to exist on the labour market (according to the EPA data, fourth quarter 1998).

2 Youth unemployment and health

Spanish studies on the relationship between unemployment and health tend to share the idea that work fulfils an important function of integration of the young person into society. This circumstance means that the aspects of health most studied are mental health disorders. In this regard, it is not to be wondered that the most relevant theoretical aspect of the Spanish debate

¹⁸ Josep Espluga & Louis Lemkow

is the inclusion of the variable “social representation of work” to explain the level of deterioration in mental health among certain types of unemployed people, particularly those who have been socialised with considerable orientation towards work. The use of these theoretical concepts leads some authors to suggest that, in order to deal with the problems of unemployment, it is necessary not only to implement employment policies, but also to make an effort to socially reconceptualise work and unemployment.

There are few studies on youth unemployment and health in Spain and nearly all of them have a cross-sectional design, which means that they are merely descriptive, without being able to provide an in-depth explanation of the phenomena. However, there is a consolidated line of specific research on youth unemployment, focussing on the processes of transition of young people from school to active life (employment or unemployment).

In general, the research carried out in Spain consists basically of the cross-sectional comparison of unemployed and employed and highlights the poor quality of life of the former. However, in this relationship, it is necessary to take into account the presence of many mediating and moderating variables. With regard to the mediating variables, such as *age*, it is found that unemployed people between the ages of 16 and 30 are those who suffer from comparatively fewer health problems. The differences in *gender* among young unemployed people appear to be highly relativised, since, whereas some studies show more depressive disorders among men than women, other studies do not find any significant differences. With regard to the *social* class of the family, the lower classes show poorer levels of health, whereas in terms of mental health, it has been found that young unemployed people present poorer psychological well-being, regardless of social class. *Duration of* unemployment also affects the level of deterioration of mental health and the studies show two years of unemployment as the moment when greatest psychological discomfort is reached, although this relationship is not so evident among the group of young unemployed people.

With regard to the moderating variables, *work orientation* (or centrality of work) is shown to be a key variable in the relationships between unemployment and health. The level of depression suffered by specific groups of unemployed people is not due so much to their situation of unemployment as a socio-cognitive variable: the value they have learned to attach to work in the framework of their own personal and social development. From this perspective, the situation of unemployment is a necessary yet not sufficient condition, since some of the unemployed young people present lower levels of depression than the employed. Also, different studies show that the unemployed who receive some kind of economic benefit present a better level of mental health than those who do not, and thus *economic pressure* can be seen as a moderating variable. A significant relationship has even been found in young people of all social strata between the level of economic stress and the level of depression. Finally, *social* support is worth a mention, as research shows that young people with support from the family and other social networks present higher levels of psychological well-being. In general, the role of the family is highly valued in Spanish culture as it is thought to help support high levels of unemployment without generating relevant social conflict.

Some basic deficiencies have been detected in studies on unemployment and health. There is a need for more longitudinal studies which go beyond descriptions and make it possible to develop explanations for the phenomena of unemployment and health. Thus, for example, it would be possible to qualify some of the findings of some of the studies, such as the role of the family on attenuating the effects of unemployment on health, since the empirical research of YUSEDER attributes to it more ambiguous roles, which help the young unemployed person, but also bring to bear considerable psychological pressure. There also exists in Spain some useful secondary statistical data for studying the relationship between youth unemploy-

ment and health, since they tend to present levels of aggregation which makes it impossible to break them down into categories.

3 Youth unemployment and social exclusion

The concept of social exclusion was incorporated into the Spanish theoretical debate in the 1990s. Some studies on matters of poverty and inequality at the beginning of this decade articulated a theoretical framework based on the distinction between exclusion, marginalisation and precariousness, restricting the use of the term exclusion to situations of absolute poverty. Later, the use of the term exclusion began to impose itself, apparently from proposals issued by the European Union (Maastricht treaty, Green and White Papers on European Social Policy, etc.), so that the term social exclusion appears in use by different theoreticians and public managers to refer to something broader than merely extreme poverty, and is often used indiscriminately to refer generically to processes which give rise to the more visible social inequalities. Currently, the concept of social exclusion is gaining ground over other concepts used to refer to situations of social inadequacies, basically due to its multi-dimensional nature (it includes economic, educational and relational aspects, etc.), its dynamic quality, since it describes the process (the causes and effects of poverty), and its very ambiguity which means that it can be used with different contents by authors of different theoretical and ideological tendencies. Despite the fact that, in recent years, there has been a considerable increase in the use of the concept of social exclusion in the broader sense, there are few empirical studies which define it or use it properly.

In the Spanish case studies, the concept of social exclusion appears in relation to other classical concepts of the social sciences, such as poverty, marginalisation, vulnerability, social integration, entrance into the labour market and social inequality. The factors indicated by Kronauer (1998) (exclusion from the labour market, economic exclusion, institutional exclusion, social isolation, cultural exclusion and spatial exclusion) appear to a greater or lesser extent in the works of a large part of the authors who use the concept. Specific aspects of the Spanish context include the following:

- the high level of unemployment, and particularly the precariousness of employment, which means that exclusion from the labour market is seen as being of most concern, to the point where it is considered a clear variable independent of situations of social exclusion.
- restriction of social benefits for people who are in a vulnerable situation, which is also related to social exclusion from work, since most social welfare rights are linked to a salaried job.
- the role of the family in regard to the attenuation of the processes of exclusion, as it prevents social isolation and provides minimum basic resources.
- the importance of the model of owner-occupied dwelling, which is broadly established in Spain and which has attenuating effects on the processes of exclusion, settles the population in the territory and prevents the appearance of excessive segregated areas.
- the existence of a large group which suffers from cultural exclusion, i.e., the Romany community.

At present, job precariousness in Spain is increasing, particularly among young people and includes a group of people who enjoy relative social integration, albeit unstable and without guarantee in the medium to short term. Many of these young people are not in situations of poverty, thanks to the action of some compensatory mechanisms such as family solidarity (which redistributes resources among its members), the expansion of the welfare state (the democratic era in Spain has guaranteed the right of all citizens to education, healthcare and, to a lesser extent, to specific social benefits), and the high proportion of families who own their

own dwellings (an important resource in terms of not becoming excluded, as it allows access to certain services and partly reduces spatial segregation).

Nevertheless, in the current circumstances, there has been an increase in Spain of the risk of passing from precariousness or vulnerability to social exclusion characterised by the lack of access to the basic mechanisms of integration. Some of the traditionally marginalised groups, together with the newly excluded are in a situation of social exclusion, due to the excluding tendencies of present society. One distinctive characteristic of Spanish social exclusion is that a large part of those excluded develop some kind of economic activity, generally unstable and/or in the submerged economy. Nevertheless, this economic activity is often not sufficient to allow them to subsist and in no case allows them to develop their rights and obligations as citizens.

In these contexts, the young people at greatest risk of social exclusion tend to be mainly related to the following categories:

- Young mothers with unshared family responsibilities.
- Longer-term unemployed young people who live in a family context of generalised unemployment.
- Young immigrants who have been in the country for a short time, particularly illegal immigrants.
- Young convicts and ex-convicts, particularly those with drug problems.
- Young Romany people, particularly those belonging to marginalised groups.
- Young people with no schooling, normally belonging to one of the above groups.
- Young people with poor qualifications who are subject to high job turnover.

All these categories can be mostly related to family units with different problems (economic, relational, psychological, etc.). Except for young single mothers, all the other groups mentioned are mainly made up of men. Finally, there is currently a high proportion of young people in Spain who are in a situation of job precariousness which, if aggravated, could lead them towards exclusion. This is particularly true if the current attenuating mechanisms disappear (family, state services, dwelling).

4 Long-term unemployed youth and the risk of social exclusion

The empirical research of YUSEDER in Spain consists of the execution and analysis of 50 problem-focused interviews with young long-term unemployed people of both sexes, structured according to the level of formal education and the area of residence, mainly Andalusia and Catalonia. From the empirical data, we can say that two types of situation can be distinguished among young long-term unemployed people in Spain, which makes it possible to classify them in three categories according to their risk of social exclusion: youth at high risk of social exclusion, youth at increased risk of social exclusion, and youth at low risk of social exclusion.

The young people at a high risk of social exclusion suffer from considerable exclusion from the labour market, as well as situations of economic exclusion and social isolation and, in some cases, from a relative form of cultural exclusion, as they feel discriminated against because they cannot keep up with the patterns of consumption and relations in their social environment.

Among young people at an increased risk of social exclusion, the factor which appears as most important is also exclusion from the labour market, which leads to differing degrees of

economic exclusion. This exclusion is, in many cases, attenuated by the quality of the social relations of the individual.

However, young people at a low risk of social exclusion show only some economic exclusion, manifested as a feeling of dependence on the family, dependence which, in cases where good family relations are maintained, tends to dissipate considerably.

In general, while it is true that spatial exclusion is not experienced as important by most of the interviewed sample (it only appears with relative importance in the case of young people at a high risk of social exclusion), the inability of many young people to leave home (for financial reasons and lack of institutional support) often generates problems of social relations in the family. In this regard, the dwelling presents itself as a problem for young unemployed people, as they often lack the resources to find housing independently.

The lack of work, combined with processes of family destructuring or problematic relations with the family, generates a scenario which is conducive to social exclusion among the young people. This combination tends to be accompanied by economic exclusion, a lack of income which ends up being decisive in defining the level of social exclusion. The research indicates that when young people are unemployed for a relatively long time, without their own income and with little family support, the circle of friends tends to slowly diminish and they begin to become isolated from society. When this point is reached, some aspects of cultural exclusion may also begin to be seen, because the young person cannot follow the pace of their social environment and may commence a marginal lifestyle. This is the culmination where the risk of social exclusion for the young person reaches its highest level.

According to these statements, it might seem that, in order to prevent the risk of social exclusion in Spain, it is merely necessary to increase social support, particularly in terms of the role of the family. However, the analysis of the interviews shows that this is not necessarily so because, interestingly, one of the most recurrent negative aspects among the interviewees of all categories analysed is the feeling of economic dependence on the family. Most of those interviewed see this dependence in a very negative light and it is one of the main generators of psychological health disorders and psychosocial tension. The interviewees at a high risk of social exclusion see this experience as a considerable obstacle in their day-to-day lives. However, for young people with a low risk of social exclusion, the feeling of economic dependence on the family also constitutes one of the main causes for concern. In general, there is certain discomfort at the idea of “over-exploiting” the family.

Difficult family life when the young person is long-term unemployed is reflected in the high level of victimisation (tertiary) which a large number of the interviewees present. The young people are often criticised for the way they deal with their situation of unemployment and this contributes to a loss of self-esteem and to a lack of motivation to find a way out of the situation, particularly when the pressure comes from the parents or close group of friends.

Nevertheless, it should also be pointed out that, given the considerable lack of institutional support for young unemployed people in Spain, social support (family, friends, neighbours, etc.) has become one of the main factors in preventing or reducing the risk of social exclusion among young unemployed people. Analysis of the interviews clearly shows how young people living in a situation of poor social support have many, often insurmountable, difficulties in finding work and leaving the precarious situation they find themselves in.

Another aspect is that, in general, the individuals of the sample who are at a high risk of social exclusion tend to be those who mostly have a lower level of education, whereas the individu-

als at a low risk of social exclusion are those with higher qualifications. Nevertheless, this relationship cannot be considered a causal correspondence since the analysis of the interviews shows that more or less education does not automatically mean a lower or higher risk of social exclusion. Education, like the risk of social exclusion, does not appear to be an independent variable, but a consequence of prior variables, such as social class of the family or the type of social environment in which the young person has lived. Among the young people interviewed, there are cases of people with a higher level of education who suffer from a considerable risk of exclusion. In some cases, the people have qualifications in areas which do not interest them or are of no use to them on the labour market where they want or are able to enter. As a result, the hypothesis can be established that training or education is a resource which affects the risk of social exclusion, but it is not a determining factor.

5 Institutional responses to youth unemployment and the risk of social exclusion

Most institutional interventions in Spain against the risk of social exclusion related to youth unemployment are aimed at young people between the ages of 16 and 20 who have not successfully completed the compulsory educational cycle and who live in social and personal situations which are considerably deteriorated (high risk of social exclusion). The limitation is due to the fact that most of the interventions are financed by the European Social Funds (Youthstart and similar programmes), applications for which are aimed at the 16-20 age group. Other general requirements for participating in these projects in Spain are the lack of qualifications and a deteriorated social situation. The requirement of being officially registered as unemployed with the Employment Office, is often assumed so that there are projects which do not even ask for registration, despite the fact that the objective is getting young people into the labour market. In accordance with this, the duration of unemployment is almost never taken into account in order to be able to participate in entrance programmes. In general, the risk of exclusion for young people with secondary or higher education is not taken into consideration by the institutions devoted to the matter in Spain. Neither do young people between the ages of 25 and 29 tend to be the object of specific interventions. Even institutional projects which include people between the ages of 16 and 25 are rare in Spain.

For the YSEDER study in Spain, the heads of 12 associations and institutions involved in the fight against youth exclusion and unemployment were interviewed. A detailed analysis was also made of 6 specific projects dedicated to these topics. In many cases, before thinking of access to the labour market, these institutions try to improve the social integration of these young people from other dimensions. That is, the aim is to achieve not merely entrance into the labour market but into a social environment as well. In general, the institutions perceive the main problems of young unemployed people at increased risk of social exclusion as disorientation, loss of self-esteem and lack of motivation to construct a personal future project. It is for this reason that many of the specific projects analysed have the end object of providing the young people with the basic abilities and skills to orient themselves and to learn to take responsibility for their own plan for integration into the market.

The institutional interventions in Spain which are implemented against social exclusion of young unemployed people tend to be based on training. Many existing initiatives consist of training actions which aim to offer the young people vocational training which supposedly allows them to enter the labour market. Nevertheless, many professionals are aware that the efficacy of the vocational training courses is limited and that it is necessary to relativise those which often do not provide the young people with useful knowledge. Nevertheless, on many occasions, training is used as a strategy to organise groups of young people, to strengthen relationships among the young participants and to socialise them by acquiring guidelines and habits which will be necessary on the labour market.

On many occasions, training is perceived as not being very useful by the young people themselves, which becomes an obstacle for the insertion projects as it demotivates the young people and makes it difficult for them to achieve the objectives of the integration programmes. Motivation, awakening the interest of the young people and, especially, making them responsible for their own plan for integration are general concerns in many of the institutions involved in these areas. Almost all the projects aim to achieve the final autonomy of the young person, but this is often not attained. In this regard, the projects which encourage self-awareness and self-management of the plan and which provide the tools and professional support at all times and with sufficient flexibility are those which seem to be most successful in the fight against the social exclusion of these young unemployed people (normally young people between the ages of 16 and 20, with no qualifications and from problematic social situations).

Many of the institutions offer the chance to train and/or work in companies, and many projects have a final stage of an opportunity to be hired by the company where they have gained their work experience for a pre-established minimum period. However, most of the work contracts established in this manner are temporary or casual and their duration is generally low. Nevertheless, some projects have been found which tried to guarantee stability in the hiring of the young participants, but this is not usual.

Another important aspect which is taken into account by the institutions is the strengthening of social relations, in an attempt to prevent social isolation of the young unemployed people. This strengthening of relations is attempted in different areas. On the one hand, the involvement of the families is required in order to provide support for the programme and not to obstruct development. On the other hand, emphasis is placed on the importance of generating group relationships among the young participants in the projects and also satisfactory relationships with the professionals who work on the projects (tutors, monitors, teachers, etc.). It is also seen as positive to establish links between the young people on the project and the place they live in order to strengthen social relations and to establish work contacts.

In general, it is difficult to fight against the risk of social exclusion of the young people without reference to the society where they live. The measures taken by most of the institutions are partial actions which progress with great difficulty due to the social environment the young people live in. In the case of Spain, a more global approach might be necessary to resolve this type of problem. In this regard, one of the deficiencies most often reiterated by the experts interviewed is the lack of coordination between sectorial policies and between institutions of different levels and areas of competence. The cases of effective collaboration between different institutions are mentioned as veritable successes and some of the projects analysed make a big effort to establish mechanisms to supplement these deficiencies.

For the immediate future, these institutions predict a tendency to reinforce personalised attention to the young people who participate in the integration programmes, to adapt as much as possible to the concerns and motivations of each young unemployed person. Also, the institutions in Spain which deal with these types of situations show a desire to widen the age bracket of the young people in the study, in order to carry out preventive action from the age of 14, especially for young people who are expected to have difficulty successfully completing school.

6 Conclusions

According to the data from the YUSEDER study in Spain, in the relationship between health and the risk of social exclusion, it is possible to establish a differentiation between the three types of category of young person, according to their level of risk of social exclusion. In general, it can be said that the young people at a high risk of social exclusion present different types of psychosocial problems, apparently related to the deterioration of social relations with the family and with the circle of friends. This generates feelings of loneliness and empty relations with the social environment. Some of these young people show continuous fatigue, irritation and bad moods, with concern about the difficulties involved in solving a multitude of day-to-day problems. These people present low self-esteem and a certain block with regard to future expectations. The value of work among many of these young people has a negative effect in unblocking these expectations and, in some cases, suicidal thoughts exist.

The health disorders of the people at increased risk of social exclusion are related to the concern about the uncertainty of the future. When they face uncertainty in a negative manner, they develop a lack of motivation and depressive tendencies, together with a lack of self-esteem (temporary or chronic). Some of these young people lack a greater valuation of themselves by the social environment, and they often think that if they had a job, they would earn more respect. It could be suggested that these young people who face their situation of unemployment and uncertainty negatively have undergone socialisation where work is a central value.

Young unemployed people at low risk of social exclusion do not present many health disorders. There is only a feeling of frustration or impotence at not being able to control the situation in which they find themselves (something they were used to when they were studying, since most of these young people have a high level of education). Among this group, there is also a minimum of psychosocial tension generated by the feeling of dependence on the family and by the guilt involved when spending money (although they have enough, they live with the feeling that the money belongs to their family and that they must account for their spending). The powerful protective factors which these young people enjoy act effectively to reduce or eliminate other possible health disorders. The protective factors include considerable social support (family and friends), knowing how to fill and organise their time, extensive sociocultural participation and not having work alone as a central value to their existence.

With regard to social relations, some of the young unemployed people find themselves in situations where they cannot keep pace with their friends, with the subsequent discomfort; and even if they can, there is psychosocial tension due to the dependence on the family (lack of autonomy). In these cases, the family plays an ambiguous role: it protects against the hardships of the world at large and covers basic necessities, but, at the same time, it is oppressive in its relations with the young unemployed person.

Another ambiguous aspect is work in the submerged economy which, in cases where the individual has consistent work experiences or good qualifications, can be beneficial because it helps to reduce psychosocial tensions, to structure time and to acquire work experience and professional contacts as well as providing economic resources. However, in cases where the individual does not have much in the way of qualifications and does not have consistent work experiences, submerged employment can become a factor which increases the risk of exclusion and health disorders. Work in the submerged economy, performed in poor working conditions, generates psychosocial problems and is even a source of accidents and illnesses which can leave the young person in an even more precarious situation.

According to the analysis of the interviews, the main factors which make up social exclusion among young Spaniards are: exclusion from the labour market, economic exclusion and exclusion through social isolation. In Spain, there is a considerable lack of support from institutions, which could be interpreted as a type of exclusion which affects all unemployed young people. However, since such support has never existed, it is not missed by these young people; that is, there is no personal feeling of exclusion, but there is real institutional exclusion.

The National Employment Plan for 1999 (PNAE, 1999) states that the fight against unemployment in Spain needs to try to provide a greater number of employees with permanent contracts instead of temporary ones, in order to prevent a continual return to unemployment. Despite this premise, in practice and in terms of young unemployed people, the political measures deriving from the PNAE 1999 which are being implemented in Spain are based on training actions (mixed training-employment programmes and vocational training) and, to a lesser extent, employment actions (support for self-employment, facilities for local companies which employ young people and promotion of social-interest jobs) and guidance (personalised tutorials to promote the search for work).

In light of the data from the YUSEDER study, it could be considered that the political measures which are being implemented in Spain to address youth unemployment are merely complementary measures which do not address the core of the problem, since all they are achieving is a high unemployment/employment rotation among young people. This situation contributes to the training being offered to these young people being often ineffective at mitigating the effects of unemployment. As a whole, the measures toward entrance into the labour market, while they may have contributed to reducing unemployment levels, do not appear to be effective enough to resolve the problems of social exclusion associated with it, since they maintain a general situation of precariousness among the young people.

Most of the institutional interventions against social exclusion related to youth unemployment consist of basically offering vocational training. In general, the most complete integration programmes, which include other measures beyond mere training, are aimed only at young people between the ages of 16 and 20, without qualifications and from highly deteriorated social-family backgrounds. It is this group of young unemployed people who are addressed by a large part of the innovative actions, mostly based on the idea of providing the tools for the young person to attain personal autonomy and creating networks of solidarity among the young unemployed people themselves and with their social context.

According to the data obtained from the YUSEDER study, it may be suggested that, in Spain, the fight against social exclusion of young long-term unemployed people should involve an increase in the quantity and, particularly, the quality of employment: reducing the precariousness of employment in order to reduce the uncertainty in the expectations of the young people as well as the high turnover of people entering and leaving unemployment. Furthermore, and in accordance with the factors of exclusion of greatest concern, political measures should consider at least, a) ways of providing an economic cushion for young people which eliminates their exclusive dependence on the family; b) ways of gaining their active participation in different areas of society in order to reduce the centrality of work (currently precarious salaried employment) in the configuration of their identity, hence unblocking their future expectations (reducing disorientation); and c) ways of encouraging construction or maintenance of an intense network of social relations around the unemployed person.

4 Country-specific contributions

4.1 Sweden: The development guarantee for youth¹⁹

The development guarantee for unemployed youth was introduced in Sweden in January 1998. It gives municipalities the opportunity to conclude agreements with the state to assume responsibility for counteracting long-term unemployment among youth. From the perspective of the state, the reduction of youth unemployment is a national priority. The shared responsibility and financing between the municipalities and the state have resulted in the development of a number of innovative projects.

According to one of the parliament's stated labour market goals, every unemployed youth shall be offered work, training or other occupation within 100 days of unemployment. Under the development guarantee programme municipalities offer unemployed youth between 20-24 years of age the possibility to participate full-time in an employment activation programme for 12 months. The activation programme is designed according to individual needs and involves different types of competence development (one other programme – "the municipal youth programme" provides similar opportunities for unemployed youth under the age of 20 years).

The agreements with the municipalities concretely stipulate that the unemployment office will work with job placement for up to 90 days. If they are unable to offer the young person work, training or other occupation within this period, they contact the municipality and discuss what can be done within the framework of, for example, the development guarantee programme, and whether they can develop an individual programme. The development guarantee is a threefold cooperative effort between the unemployment office, the municipality and the individual, a collaborative effort, which according to the institutional experts functions well.

The programme should increase the opportunities young people have to find work or to begin studies. Therefore, it is important that the efforts are clearly formulated in an individual plan of action that can be implemented in cooperation between the young person and the administrators from the municipality and the unemployment office. The activation programme builds on an individual plan of action. This plan can contain various types of competence development initiatives. These initiatives could, for example, be an internship, pure education, training alternating with an internship, job seeker groups, computer training, courses in entrepreneurship, open high school courses or some of the measures that already exist within the framework of the unemployment office's activities. The activation programme should not be longer than twelve months as there is a clear objective that the measures should not lead to a revolving door of programmes or trap the participants into programmes.

The most innovative aspect of the development guarantee is the simple and structural setup which clearly states that the state cannot accept long-term unemployment among youth in any part of the country.

The evaluations which have been done both at the national and local levels have shown that the development guarantee is a good example of how unemployment among youth can be combated. An evaluation conducted by the National Youth Committee in ten municipalities in different parts of the country showed that three of four young people who participated in the development guarantee believed that their possibilities of finding work in the future had been

¹⁹ Erik Forsberg, Ulla Rantakeisu, Marina Kalander-Blomqvist, Ulla-Britt Löfgren and Bengt Starrin

improved (Ståhl, 1999). Another evaluation of the development guarantee, which was implemented by the Labour Market Council, showed that approximately one third of all participants have a regular job directly upon the conclusion of the programme. The share of those working is higher after 180 days than after 30 and 90 days, respectively.

One good indicator of the effectiveness of the development guarantee (and *the municipal youth programme*) is the strongly reduced unemployment figures among youth. In January 2000, there were approximately 3,800 young people in the whole country who had been long-term unemployed (more than 100 days). This could be compared with the middle of the 1990s, when 40,000 youth on average each month were long-term unemployed. Two years ago in 1998 the number of long-term unemployed youth was already down to 10,000 individuals.

4.2 Germany: Particular problems in eastern Germany after the unification²⁰

The historic radical changes brought about by the unification of the two Germanys led to general employment insecurity in the new eastern states. The transition from a society without unemployment to one of mass unemployment is widely viewed as the most striking occurrence in the wake of this system change in eastern Germany, something which developed into the dominant event in the lives of the people there (Kieselbach & Voigt, 1993). The danger is great that the income gap between eastern and western Germany will become permanent. The sweeping socio-structural changes in eastern Germany have a direct effect on the lives, experiences and attitudes of the people there, all of which is reflected in the interviews conducted by the national YUSEDER project with long-term unemployed young people. The following primary aspects of the particular problems on the labour market in eastern German are to give an insight into how the high level of mass unemployment affects the individual.

In the former East Germany, no historical and therefore no public or individual experience existed adequate enough to anticipate the later mass unemployment. Individual and public responses were therefore unable to find models in people's personal experiences or in collective forms for overcoming the problem. The *right to work* guaranteed a large degree of control over peoples' lives through the world of work. This security was suddenly lost with this radical social change: individuals were now under much greater pressure to work out their own occupational prospects.

The fast-moving aligning of the social and economic systems of the former East Germany and West Germany also led to a rapid equalisation of living costs. Income levels, however, remain unequal. Thus, unemployment in eastern Germany causes infinitely greater poverty than it does in western Germany. All of the young people interviewed in eastern Germany complained not only about the lack of jobs but also about the high cost of living (especially rent). Moreover, mass unemployment has brought with it further social problems such as the extensive scale of criminality unknown before in East Germany.

A primary conclusion of research into unemployment is that the extent of financial problems arising from unemployment essentially determines an individual's psychosocial well-being. Therefore, we may conclude that unemployment in eastern Germany represents a graver health risk for those thus affected than for those in western Germany. This conclusion was confirmed in our interviews insofar as the comparison between young eastern and western Germans at high risk of exclusion demonstrated that those in eastern Germany display a

²⁰ Thomas Kieselbach & Ute Traiser

greater concentration of problems than those in western Germany. Both in respect to aspects of social exclusion as well as in respect to health problems relating to unemployment, the cases in eastern Germany display, on the average, more factors of exclusion than those in western Germany.

The atmosphere of demoralisation and the breakdown of social norms and values reported in large sections of eastern Germany can aggravate the problems of reduced self-esteem, increased depressive moods and raised levels of anxiety, all frequently brought about by unemployment; in other words, the individual's general state of health is worsened by unemployment. Some of those interviewed see themselves as "children of change": they feel their personality structures characterised by this transition. This great event rushed in upon them during a phase of their lives (adolescence) in which they were even less able than adults to overcome the problems associated with this system transformation. "Children of change" see themselves confronted by difficulties for which neither parents nor school prepared them and by which they feel overwhelmed as a result. Many of those interviewed long for orientation help and leadership and feel left alone; many of these cannot fall back on family support (especially those at high risk of exclusion). They also think that political decisions do not take young people into account. Memories of former East Germany are strongly influenced by idealised childhood reminiscences. They praise the security of the socialist state ("everybody got an apprenticeship") and wish for a return of the old system without, however, having fully been acquainted with it. But some of these young people do point out additional advantages in the present system, such as a greater selection of consumer goods, freedom of travel and a better infrastructure.

In former East Germany, the intensive orientation toward work tallied, on the one hand, with the official ideology, which found expression in idealising labour and which, on the other hand, corresponded to the social value occupied by the workplace as a centre in the lives of those employed there. This orientation applied to both men and women, although, at the same time, a high level of family orientation attempted to counterbalance this idealised position of work. In contrast to West Germany, the workplace in former East Germany served as a form of social and cultural infrastructure organising and shaping other areas of social life. For example, the workplace provided politically influential in-house daycare facilities or nursery schools for employees' children, planned leisure activities through workplace teams, sports clubs, former employee associations as well as planned holidays through the workplace or trade union. Thus, with the loss of the workplace, the unemployed in the new German states have experienced a much greater loss in more areas of their lives than the unemployed in western Germany. Many young people in our study miss the integration into a community which they experienced as children in the form of government-organised groups and, for example, holiday camps. One young man fondly remembers the "educational goals" in these groups centred round fitting into the group and learning mutual support. Nowadays, the "elbow society" holds sway instead. Again and again, the young people have the impression that people have become more self-centred and that each lives only for him- or herself.

The primary result of our study shows that many long-term unemployed young people in eastern Germany ("children of change") have difficulties coping with a highly individualised social system in which even overcoming such social risks as unemployment is left up to the individual. Our interviews show that these young people do experience solidarity with other young people in a similar situation (that is, who are unemployed, too) but that they also see themselves in strong competition with those who are employed. A massive social division is thus emerging between the employed and the unemployed, between the victors and the losers of the "change".

4.3 Germany: *Living, Working, Learning* - The Work and Qualification Association and the construction project "Waller Dorf"²¹

The Work and Qualification Association in Bremen/Germany (WaBeQ), a non-profit association with limited liability (gGmbH), is an education and employment organiser which has set as its goal sponsoring the vocational and social integration of welfare recipients, long-term unemployed and young adults. Their qualifications and thereby their chances in the labour market are to be improved by working on real building projects. A follow-up job placement in the first labour market is promoted through close co-operation with skilled-labour businesses from all areas of the building industry in completing building projects.

As a reaction to the high unemployment among young people in Bremen in the mid-1980's the attempt was made to develop offers in the area of youth vocational help from the open youth work of a youth leisure centre. Until then, the youth services in Bremen had no adequate offers in the area of employment and qualification for this target group. There were measures toward a later acquirement of a secondary school leaving certificate, later on carpentry workshops and the larger projects in new housing construction. The background for the orientation toward housing construction was the existing life situations of the participants. They were not only unemployed but also looking for flats. The project within the area of youth vocational help was therefore supposed to be connected to planned projects in housing construction in order to give young people the opportunity to create living space for themselves while at the same time earning a vocational qualification. The WaBeQ has presently six instructors and 64 participants. The instructors have double qualifications; they are trained pedagogically as well as in skilled labour. The WaBeQ pursues an integral approach, that is, employment is coupled with guided leisure activities, youth exchange programmes and training offers.

Important partners of the WaBeQ are, among others, the Bremen Home Construction Association (Wohnungsbaugesellschaft Bremische Gesellschaft), which finances the building projects, as well as initiatives, associations and municipal institutions for whom construction projects are conducted. This employment and qualification project is financed by the Federal Employment Agency and by the Office of Social Services. Starting with the first building project a co-operative alliance of the Office of Social Services, the Bremen Association and the WaBeQ was developed, whose goal it is to maintain an on-going offer for young and old in that city district.

The target group of the construction project "Waller Dorf", conducted from 1995 to 1999, is young adults, long-term unemployed and welfare recipients. Basic to the project is the principle that the work project is not an artificial process but conducted under actual conditions. Furthermore, building projects are to be realised which contribute to improving the local quality of life. The organisation of the programme rests as well in the idea that individual motivation to work is strongly dependent on the attendant psychological and social circumstances. An important aspect of the project is the promotion of psychological well-being of the participants and the creation of a pleasant social climate. The composition of the groups is oriented

²¹ Thomas Kieselbach, Ute Traiser & Ernst Schütte, social education worker and managing director of WaBeQ, Waller Str. 2-4, D-28219 Bremen. Paper presented to the International Conference „Unemployment and Mental Health“, University of Deusto, Bilbao/Spain, 20-21 May 2000.

to the existing abilities and to the interests and inclinations of the participants. Different age groups are mixed deliberately in the project in order to promote natural learning processes, so that the participants can – across age limits – exchange information. However, the organisers formed special youth groups for imparting specific information.

During the course of the project, young people were given the opportunity to experience under real conditions what it means to cope with the everyday world of work. The qualification measures (partial qualification in the areas of building and carpentry, rules of behaviour at a building site, completion of secondary schooling) were integrated into the construction project plans, which were fulfilled under existing conditions on the labour market, for example, deadline pressure and quality requirements. At the end of the project, the participants themselves were able to move into the completed flats. The identification with their work is significant, as they are able to participate in their work product and its use. Along with the meaningful and long-lasting use of the work product, the co-operation of the project with skilled-labour businesses in the first labour market is of decisive importance. Through the combined work on the construction project, the participants made close contacts with businesses which could lead to practical work experience, training vacancies or even to permanent employment in these businesses. At the same time, a social-educational assistance was integrated into the project to deal with psycho-social and life-situation problems as well as with drug abuse. By this means the participants were to be prevented from abandoning the project due to psycho-social problems they could not overcome.

The innovative aspects of the construction project "Waller Dorf" realised by unemployed and recipients of social welfare are the following:

- Housing construction and labour market policy/social policy are connected with the aim to create new living space.
- A functioning network of different institutions was achieved to improve the quality of support measures for disadvantaged groups, which in turn improves the working and living conditions of those people.
- Disadvantaged groups make an own contribution to the fight against a social problem, the lack of housing.
- Occupational qualification and employment is implemented in an important public sector (Housing Construction) and is connected with realistic types of problems and solutions for these problems.
- Living conditions and individual needs of the participants present a guiding principle for institutional intervention.
- The participants increase their chances of being placed in a job in the first labour market due to the direct co-operation with businesses during the project.
- Public support means from different programmes are brought together and are therefore used in a much more effective way.
- The responsible working on ambitious tasks leads to an increase of self-esteem and motivation among the participants.
- Working on the realisation of the construction project fosters a careful treatment of the buildings.
- Working on the realisation of the construction project contributes to the social integration of the participants into their new environment.

The results of the evaluation of the project suggest that, on the whole, the programme was very successful. The young people received not only attention and support in looking for work but also in psychological stabilisation and social integration. Many practical work experience positions and even some training vacancies were created in the participating busi-

nesses. Opportunities were given as well for limited or indefinite periods of employment. The businesses contacted the training organisers when they needed labourers. The placement quota was about 50%; there were, however, young people who abandoned the project after a short period of time, for example when a special problem situation arose.

The concept of work and living or rather parallel vocational and social integration was successfully put into practice. The number of residents in the building is stable; up to now few have moved out. The people are very satisfied with their living situation. Long-lasting residency in the village following completion of the building project continues to promote social integration processes. Structures reinforced over the years allow close networks to develop between the WaBeQ itself, the (former) participants, the residents of the city district and local businesses as well.

There were positive and negative experiences resulting from the mixing of groups across age lines. On the one hand, the younger ones were able to learn from the older ones, who in turn received the opportunity to break set thinking patterns. On the other hand, conflicts with areas of responsibility arose. The follow-up project will take this experience into account. The employees wish to pay more attention to this problem and improve understanding among the participants. Another problematical aspect is the brief length of the project. As a rule, a construction project takes two to three years; the projects for youth, however, are limited to twelve and six months respectively. It is therefore impossible for the participants to work on a building project from beginning to end. In many cases, however, the participants declared themselves willing to continue working on the construction site after their own programme was ended.

The future perspectives of the project are the following: A second building project has been underway since 1997 and is to be completed in 2001. A further construction project is planned in the neighbourhood. A number of employees work permanently in the acquisition of construction project plans which guarantee, along with subsidies, the permanence of the overall offer over several years. Furthermore, the WaBeQ is involved in other activities besides housing construction, for example, heat insulation and water conservation technology in schools or in recycling of used building materials. The creation of additional work places is planned, as the number of construction projects is very high. Training opportunities for masons and carpenters will be created.

4.4 The submerged economy as a trap and a buffer for young unemployed people

When feeling excluded from the regular labour market, trying to find alternative possibilities to earn money immediately becomes an issue for the affected young people. In this regard, it is important to know in what way the submerged economy prevents or enforces processes of social exclusion. According to the empirical studies of the YUSEDER project in Greece, Italy and Spain the submerged economy obviously plays a very important role - approx. 80% of the sample was involved in the submerged economy - whereas in northern Europe, it only seems to be of minor importance. In the following, the three southern European countries of the YUSEDER project summarise and compare their results with regard to youth unemployment, submerged economy and social exclusion.

4.4.1 The submerged economy in Greece, Italy and Spain²²

Greece

The submerged economy in Greece is widely accepted by the academic and the political world to be widespread, a view which is commonly shared among Greek citizens as well. Nevertheless, it has not been adequately studied using valid research methods. According to the few existing scientific references, until the mid 1970s, the submerged economy played a small role in the overall economy. This was due to relatively high growth rates combined with full employment during that period. The emigration of a great proportion of the Greek labour force to more developed countries contributed partially to the full employment of that period. The expanded rural sector until the mid 1960s, the somehow still-limited urbanisation and other socio-cultural reasons had an effect on the supply and demand of labour (Sokou, 1987). In addition, the 1967-1974 dictatorship was another reason for the limited role of the submerged economy. People were afraid to get involved in any illegal activity. The submerged economy reached, or even exceeded, the level of 30% of the official GNP in the 1980s and still remains high today, although a valid estimation is not possible. (Pavlopoulos, 1987; Negreponi Delivani, 1990; Vavouras et al, 1991, 1997; Kanelopoulos, 1992; Kanelopoulos et al, 1995). Moreover, the increasing number of illegal immigrants in Greece during the 1990s has sustained and fuelled submerged economy levels (Mousouris, 1996).

The great majority of irregular workers are low-skilled workers willing to work for an unstable, low daily wage, irregular hours, on a seasonal basis and under conditions that are not always safe. Most irregular jobs are deemed by the existing social values as low prestige jobs. However, there are a substantial number of highly qualified professionals who get involved in the submerged economy in order to add to their income. Further, irregular jobs have become almost the rule for new labour market entrants. A great proportion of unemployed people prefer to violate the law than to remain jobless.

Primary causes of irregular employment are the high taxation rates imposed both on the employer and the employee and the several other restrictions imposed by the state, the labour unions and society. Minimum wages, health and social insurance charges, regulations on working hours, employing and dismissing personnel, and restrictions on part-time or seasonal employment discouraged employers from hiring new employees and expanding their businesses until the late 1990s. As of the year 2000 social and economic infrastructures had not yet been sufficiently developed to channel part-time, seasonal and temporary jobs into official employment (Fakiolas, 1998).

Few estimates are available on the actual volume of irregular employment in Greece. According to the European Commission, irregular employment occupies about 14%-15% in Greece, the second highest in Europe after Spain (Katsoridas, 1998). Agriculture, education, health, tourism, and construction are the sectors which are characterised by intense irregular, temporary and seasonal employment. Irregular employment is present in small family enterprises. Work at home is another area where irregular employment is widespread, especially for jobs involving and leather. Outdoor merchants and peddlers (mostly gypsies and immigrants) also experience a high level of irregular employment, especially since 1991, when permits became more difficult to obtain. (Mouheli, 1996; Kokkinaki, 1983). Further, irregular employment is to be found in housekeeping, cleaning and care-giving services baby-sitting, elderly care etc. provided mostly by women and increasingly more by immigrants.

²² Demetra Bayetakou, Vando Borghi, Federico Chicchi, Josep Espluga, Michele La Rosa, Louis Lemkow, Stefanos Papakonstantinou & Katerina Sokou

As of the year 2000, Greece had not developed any programmes focusing on young people involved in the submerged economy. The issue is not openly discussed. However, though it seems to be neglected by the state socioeconomic policies, new economic policies introduced in 1998 promote more flexible work organisation models regulating the unofficial types of work such as telework (Law 2639/98). This is considered to help decrease irregular work, maintaining some of the advantages it has got for both the employee and the employer. Another policy aims to combat irregular work by illegal immigrants. This policy officially allows foreign labour force to work in the country. The legalisation process of immigrant workers, completed in April 1999, gave work permits to 180,000 immigrants. (Papantoniou, 1998). There has not yet been a systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of the new regulations in limiting irregular employment.

Italy

In Italy, illegal and irregular employment have reached such dimensions that they have become a question of national priority. From the point of view of the quantitative aspects of the problem, the National Statistics Institute (ISTAT) estimates that 5 million people work irregularly, who in turn represent 34% of workers in the South and 17% of those in the north. The figures available indicate that 27% of GDP comes from the “submerged” economy, with the respective consequences of large-scale tax and insurance contribution evasion. Apart from the obvious problems due to the absence of the most basic labour and work safety rights, research in this field has also centred on the poor quality of both skills and the resulting products that invariably characterises the submerged economy’s productive cycles. The competitiveness of those companies involved is based on cost-cutting exercises, which in turn leads to wages that are sometimes more than 50% lower than they should be, and on extreme flexibility (no contractual guarantees being provided). This naturally favours the growth of the phenomenon of *social dumping*, which destabilises and threatens to undermine the entire productive system. There is one part (albeit less significant) of the submerged economy that is, on the contrary, characterised by a high level of skill and professionalism, and which thus needs to be provided with support in order that it may emerge into the open, using all available contractual and legislative means (as is being done with the “emersion contracts” recently proposed by the Italian government).

As far as the geographical variable is concerned (Iard-Eu, 1996; Morlicchio, 1996; Pugliese, 1996a; Pugliese & Rebeggiani, 1996; Reyneri, 1996), it is important to understand that in the south of Italy, irregular employment provides for most the primary source of income, and only for some that of extra income. In the north, where the employment situation is very different, and unemployment is much more circumscribed, the main forms are those of second jobs, or of persons who have taken early retirement and often moonlight, or of youngsters who have left school early.

Policies of intervention in relation to this phenomenon, as seen from an analysis of national, regional and local policies, and of certain particularly significant projects, may be subdivided as follows:

- a. policies aimed at the suppliers of work, consisting of various instruments and measures, especially the provision of favourable credit terms and tax incentives designed to encourage the emergence of these productive employment sectors (incentives to companies, reduction in tax related to the cost of labour, etc.);
- b. policies aimed at the supply of labour, involving specific measures designed not so much to sweep away irregular employment, but rather to raise the quality of workers’ lives (both

those in regular and irregular employment) and the social life of young people living in socially deprived areas where the labour market is mainly based on irregular work.

Certain specific projects based on the experimental construction of alternating school/work paths, whereby intervention centres not only on obtaining a job, but also (and in some cases above all) on the relational, cognitive and emotional aspects of the lives of the young people, have proven particularly effective in combating the downward slide from unemployment to social exclusion.

Spain

Recent data estimate that the irregular economy comprises 18% of the whole Spanish economy. The different studies estimate that, in general, the sectors most affected are those which can decentralise production, and those related to agriculture, services, construction and small manufacturing. It is also thought that the bigger the company, the lower the probability of it having a submerged economy, and the same correlation is true for union presence (Miguélez & Martín, 1996). With regard to territorial distribution of the submerged economy, there is more incidence in the southern regions (Andalusia and Extremadura), where unemployment rates are higher, and where lower official levels of active population are more predominant. The submerged economy is less prevalent in the northern regions (Catalonia, Aragon, Madrid, etc.), with a greater concentration of industry and a larger public sector.

According to the Spanish Youth Report from 1996 (Injuve, 1997), 38% of young people (16-29 years of age) work without a contract. This proportion was much higher among those who work in a family business (75%) than among those who work for someone else (33%). Seventy-six percent of the young unemployed people interviewed for YUSEDER research in Spain 38 out of 50 young people, perform jobs in the submerged economy, but there are some differences in terms of the characteristics of these jobs. In general, the young people interviewed consider that submerged work is not done voluntarily, but because there is nothing else available.

In Spain, the main programmes carried out by public administrations regarding the submerged economy have been mechanisms for controlling economic fiscal fraud. Another of the measures was the relative adaptation of the labour legislation to the real situation of production (like the labour reforms of 1994 and 1997), but these measures have legalised highly precarious work (with high rotation work contracts, with low economic and social coverage, etc.). It should be pointed out that the few measures existing in Spain to combat the submerged economy and its effects are designed for all age groups in general, and not for young people specifically.

According the YUSEDER research, the measures adopted by the institutions (fight against tax fraud, etc.) do not correspond to the concerns expressed by the experts interviewed. It seems clear that the submerged economy is viewed with certain impotence by the institutions which in one way or another try to combat youth unemployment. The institutions consulted are currently performing two types of actions: trying to integrate into the socio-labour insertion programmes those young people who work in the submerged economy, to take them away from it or to legalise their activities, and to provide information in order to make young people aware of their situation if they decide to work in the submerged economy. The experts are aware of the paucity of these actions and suggest that it would be a good idea to establish more solid measures from the perspective of state policies, such as improving the quality of temporary contracts or offering economic benefits to all unemployed young people.

In this context, when suggesting political and institutional measures to counteract the effect of the submerged economy on the social exclusion of young unemployed people in Spain, the following may be considered:

- Improvement of the social and economic benefits of temporary contracts, as well as extension of their duration. This would make it possible to create a perceptible distance for young people between legal employment and irregular employment, something which does not currently exist.
- Offering some kind of economic benefit to young unemployed people so that they have a minimum income and minimum autonomy. It should be remembered that family tensions and distancing of the circle of friends has a lot to do with the lack of a minimum income and that this income is currently obtained through submerged employment.
- Informing young people of the structure of the labour market, of the different forms of contract and their rights and obligations as workers in each case. They also need to be informed of the consequences of working in the submerged economy (in terms of economy, health, future etc.). However, in order to do this, acceptable alternatives for young people must be available.
- Extend the current socio-labour insertion programmes to young people with other profiles. Today, they are aimed almost exclusively at young people between the ages of 16 and 20 who have had trouble finishing school successfully. The insertion measures of these programmes could be applied to all young people who demand or require them.

4.4.2 The submerged economy and long-term youth unemployment: the North-South division²³

Research carried out in the six countries taking part in the YUSEDER Project basically confirms the general hypothesis that the submerged economy plays only a limited role in the lives of long-term unemployed young people in *northern European* countries. For example, the submerged economy appears very sporadically in the results of the study conducted in Belgium, and the fear of “severe (financial) sanctions” (Willems, Vanderplasschen & van Heeringen, forthcoming) is often given as a reason for the limited nature of this phenomenon. The submerged economy seems to be of equally limited importance to the phenomenon of youth unemployment, as is in fact shown by a study conducted in Sweden (Rantakeisu et al, forthcoming) which, among other things, shows the reluctance of young people to do irregular work for reasons of “civiness” and the lack of insurance, as well as for those mentioned in relation to the Belgian case. On the other hand, the submerged economy seems to play a greater role in Germany. In some cases, resorting to irregular employment is justified as the only answer to severe economic difficulty, and sometimes as a preventative measure to ensure that the situation does not precipitate criminal activity. The submerged economy is also a means to give people a certain financial independence and allows them to maintain their standard of living at an acceptable level. Nevertheless, in the German case the effects of the submerged economy were relatively limited in the case of young unemployed people: this sector of the economy emerges from time to time and they are involved in it in an episodic way, and yet it is never really seen as a realistic alternative to regular employment (Kieselbach, Beelmann, Traiser & Meyer, forthcoming).

²³ Chapter 4.4.2 and 4.4.3 from Borghi, V. & Kieselbach, T. (2000). The submerged economy as a trap and a buffer: Comparative evidence on long-term youth unemployment and the risk of social exclusion in Southern and Northern Europe. Paper presented to the EU Workshop on “Unemployment, Work and Welfare” Directorate General Research of the European Commission Brussels, 11-13 November 2000.

The situation in the three *southern European* countries is very different, however. National estimates of the consistency of the submerged economy in each of the three countries in question show a socio-economic reality that is strongly conditioned by this phenomenon. As far as Greece is concerned, irregular employment is estimated at about 30% of total employment, while according to the Employment Institute of the General Workers Union in Greece, “six out of ten wage earner workers are unemployed, illegally employed or underemployed” (Sokou, Bayetakou & Papantoniou, forthcoming). In Italy, the share of “irregular positions of employment” stands at about 37% of total employment (Borghi, Chicchi & La Rosa, forthcoming), with a considerable gap between the central and northern regions (with irregular employment at about 31%) and the southern regions (where it stands at almost 51%). Finally, the Spanish case also confirms the greater presence of the submerged economy in southern regions (Lemkow, Espluga & Baltiérrez). The Spanish Youth Report indicates that 38% of young people aged between 16 and 29 work without an employment contract, and the majority of them (75%) work in family businesses. This latter statistic, which further underlines the role of family run businesses and, in more general terms, of small companies, in the submerged economy, is a feature common to all three southern European countries. Other common features include the strong presence of irregular work in farming, the building trade, tourism, manufacturing and non-commercial services, and it is more widespread in rural areas than in large towns and cities.

Our field research has confirmed these differences between the northern and the southern European countries involved in the study. Thirty-six cases (24%) of involvement in the submerged economy were discovered among the interviewees from central and northern Europe, many of which were only sporadic and of little importance²⁴; in southern Europe, on the other hand, one hundred and twenty-one cases of long-term unemployed (81%) with experience of irregular work²⁵ were discovered (out of a total of one hundred and fifty people interviewed in the three countries), albeit of different kinds and with differing results. Once again, the territorial factor is shown to be of considerable importance (although it is not the only one²⁶) in understanding the phenomenon of the submerged economy.

Generally speaking, in order to understand the involvement of unemployed youth in the submerged economy in such varying forms and different contexts, we can use the following typology²⁷:

- a) *permanent irregular employment*: this category includes those jobs that take up a significant part of the individual’s time during the course of the day and the week; these are real, permanent jobs (in as much as a job that is by definition insecure can be considered permanent), of a full-time nature, although not formally recognised as such and thus lacking in any kind of social security and welfare protection or trade union rights; this is an employment situation common to a number of different sectors;
- b) *irregular seasonal employment*: this category of job is characterised by an intense period of employment (often with longer than normal working hours) for a limited period of time; this kind of employment is most common in tourist areas and in farming;

²⁴ For example, in the case of the Swedish study many interviewees said that the irregular jobs they had done were connected to their time as students rather than with any period of unemployment.

²⁵ To be more exact, thirty-eight in Spain, forty-one in Greece and forty-two in Italy.

²⁶ For a further discussion of this point, see Williams & Windebank, 1998, pp.98-111: the authors underline the spatial divisions in informal unemployment using the tentative typology of localities according to the magnitude (high/low levels of informal employment) and the character (autonomous / exploitative work) of irregular employment present in certain areas.

²⁷ This is a classification drawn up and utilised in a similar fashion by both Spanish and Italian researchers, and which also seems to be applicable to the results of the study conducted in Greece.

- c) *casual irregular employment*: this category includes all those jobs which people have done, or are currently doing, of a strictly casual nature; it includes mainly casual and often unconnected jobs which last for a very short period, which are in no way associated with the education or training of the person in question and which, as the Spanish researchers have pointed out, cannot be used towards establishing a homogeneous working experience.

These diverse forms of involvement in the submerged economy, together with the nature and quality of the work done, the specific characteristics of the local labour market and social framework, the education and work experience of the unemployed youth, their employment prospects, as well as their social and family networks, all contribute towards the effect produced by irregular work on the risk of social exclusion to which these young people are exposed.

4.4.3 Irregular employment and the risk of social exclusion of unemployed young people

The following considerations constitute a summarised account of the YUSEDER research project's results (Kieselbach, 2000a, b; Kieselbach, v. Heeringen, La Rosa, Lemkow, Sokou & Starrin, 2001; La Rosa & Kieselbach, 1999) with regard to one specific aspect of youth unemployment: that is, *the role played by the submerged economy in regard to the risk of social exclusion of long-term unemployed young people*.

Generally speaking, social researchers need to adopt a somewhat cautious approach to the question of the informal economy and irregular work, as this phenomenon is one that is difficult to define using fixed theoretical categories (*irregular work* being often interwoven with, or superimposed on, regular employment), and which escapes official classification (it is after all, by definition, a hidden, underground phenomenon²⁸) and simple generalisations. Not only does it vary from one country to another, but its social effects often differ according to the social groups involved, the national welfare benefit system in question, the type of work involved and the different local socio-economic contexts present within the same country (Williams and Windebank, 1998). As a rule, the concept of irregular work refers to the gradual process of separation between work and formal employment that has traditionally characterised capitalist development (Leonard, 1998, p.3). Those persons who cross this dividing line are classified differently, at least in symbolic terms, with regard to the relationship between work, the economy and society.

If we look at this phenomenon and its relationship with the problem of social exclusion and unemployment, what we see are a number of socio-cultural connections, as well as the more obvious economic ones. This multi-dimensional aspect is strongly supported by the YUSEDER study, as one would have expected starting from a position whereby equal weight is given to the objective and subjective natures of employment, as in this particular case, and thus to the lack of employment study (Paugam, 2000, p. 15; Bourdieu, 1997, p. 241).

In the YUSEDER study we have used the term *irregular employment or work* in order to avoid the misleading connotations inherent in the different terms mentioned above.

²⁸ Moreover, when social policy debate tends to blame those persons who depend upon public welfare, research into the real nature of this phenomenon proves even more complicated: "given the periodic campaigns against supposed abuses of the welfare benefit system in countries such as the UK and the USA, it is very unlikely that people receiving these benefits will declare their involvement in informal employment" (Leonard, 1998, p.67).

It is clear that the greater presence of irregular employment in southern European countries reflects the need to soften the financial burden of unemployment on those affected. In those countries where the unemployed receive very little or no financial support at all, there is clearly a greater incentive to involvement in the submerged economy (Leonard, 1998, p.68). Nevertheless, the economic parameter is not the only one with which to measure the consequences of irregular employment. What we have tried to do during the course of this study is establish whether there are any other factors that may soften hardship, apart from such financial benefits; whether there are any aspects which tend to intensify the problems the young unemployed experience; and finally, in which cases, and for what reasons, the first or the second aspects tend to prevail.

The various observations that emerge from the results of the studies conducted in Greece, Italy and Spain confirm the *ambiguous, ambivalent role* played by the involvement of young unemployed people in the submerged economy with respect to the increase in, or limitation of, the risk of social exclusion.

Income earned through irregular work, despite being low, often discontinuous and rarely sufficient enough for a person to be financially independent, does nonetheless constitute a temporary solution, often a kind of “waiting wage”, whilst waiting to find something better, waiting to do military service, waiting for the employer to give you a regular employment contract, and so on. It partially satisfies the individual’s financial requirements. Moreover, in some local contexts, these “shadow” jobs may constitute the only available alternative to unemployment, given the unsatisfactory nature of employment measures and the paucity of chances to create regular employment, even short-term, low-paid work and/or work suitable for first-time workers, which otherwise takes the form of irregular employment²⁹. However, irregular employment perceived in its role of softening the phenomenon of economic exclusion, reveals a more problematic side precisely in those places where it is more commonly found, and where in many cases it constitutes full-time employment for those involved, and thus the source of a discretely substantial income. The studies conducted in the three southern countries, in fact, show just how this employment situation often threatens to subtract valuable resources (time, motivation, etc.) from the search for regular work, and that in the case of those jobs that do not reflect a person’s professional training and education or his job aspirations, often leads the individual in question up a professional blind alley.

The studies conducted in the three southern European countries highlight the ambivalent nature of irregular employment also with regard to the risk of *socio-cultural exclusion*. On the one hand, there is the opportunity to develop new social contacts through work, regardless of its irregular nature, and thus to develop a relational network which enables the individual to escape his or her restrictive family circle and to broaden social experiences which would otherwise be almost impossible to develop within the family. Such working experiences, albeit limited from a number of different points of view, contribute either directly or indirectly to a process whereby life skills are further developed. On the other hand, however, this irregular employment, by its very nature, tends to encourage exploitation, the denial of basic rights, and the creation of humiliating, arbitrary relations, as shown by the experiences reported during the interviews, and which drag individuals in the opposite direction to the one we have just described. Furthermore, even when these more extreme situations are absent, the fact that such activity takes place in any case within the family sphere or within a socio-cultural context similar to the individual’s original one, and/or consists in the completion of very simple,

²⁹ A hypothesis submitted by the Research Report on the Greek situation (Sokou, Bayetakou & Papantoniou, forthcoming).

uninteresting duties, considerably hinders the development and widening of the *life skills* mentioned.

In more general terms, as far as the general risk of *social isolation* is concerned, the following may be said: if the expansion of the submerged economy in these countries³⁰ does not lead to criticism of those individuals directly concerned, and this does not seem to emerge even in northern European countries such as Germany, where such a phenomenon is much less frequent, then it still allows for a partial degree of social inclusion, a reduced form of citizenship for these unemployed young people, the individual and social price of which ought to be seen not so much in relation to the present as to the future.

We can identify two general paths taken by the relationship between irregular employment and the social exclusion of long-term unemployed young people. The first of these sees *irregular employment contributing towards increasing the complexity of an unemployed young person's social relations and broadening (or keeping) the options available to that person*. By softening the economic hardship created by unemployment, irregular work enables an individual to persist in his search for regular employment whilst not binding him in an exclusive manner: it may even render this search more effective through the social contacts created by irregular employment. In fact, in some cases irregular employment increases an individual's professional and social skills through the widening of his range of experiences.

The second path taken is that by which, on the contrary, *irregular work contributes towards considerably reducing this complexity – that is, the range of accessible alternatives – in an almost irreversible manner*. It thus contributes towards rendering socio-cultural weaknesses (as well as economic difficulties) increasingly chronic, thus uniting the poor quality of the work carried out and the limited social contacts it may generate, with the limited cognitive and social resources derived from the family and social setting. While in the first case, it is clear that the submerged economy can be seen as a form of protection from the risk of social exclusion, in the second it leads towards marginalization and thus to an increased degree of exposure to the risk of permanent exclusion. In general, we can see that this second case emerges in situations where the irregular work – as the only available possibility for a young unemployed person in a deprived area – is characterised by its not only economic, but also social, cognitive and cultural poverty: in such a situation, the irregular work reinforces (instead of limiting) the disadvantages of origin.

The submerged economy is also intrinsically contradictory from the point of view of the types of intervention it can generate. On the one hand, it is seen as a social problem, given the wealth it removes from the community, social dumping among workers, and failed socio-economic integration. On the other hand though, as the YUSEDER studies confirm, the submerged economy provides partial socio-economic support to individuals, thus protecting them to a certain degree against the risk of a more radical form of social exclusion. At the practical level, however, such a contradiction may in fact be resolved by intervening on both sides of the same problem at different times.

In this way, those measures aimed at *clamping down* on the phenomenon of irregular employment can be perceived as *future-orientated*, and aimed at eliminating its structural causes and at encouraging it to gradually surface. This is the guiding principle that emerged from the final section of the YUSEDER study of the three southern European countries. These meas-

³⁰ To be more precise, we really ought to be talking about those regional areas within the southern European countries themselves, characterised by the highest concentration of irregular employment, and to which these observations refer.

ures are not usually aimed specifically at young people as such, but are designed to clamp down on tax evasion within the submerged economy, to encourage the above-mentioned “irregular” employment to surface through the offer of economic and tax incentives, and to expand regular job opportunities through job flexibility³¹ and self-employment, and so on.

At the same time, awareness of the fact that the effects of such measures take time to emerge legitimises the promotion of local projects and actions within a given social, cultural and economic context, and which are aimed at *empowerment* and at improvements in the quality of life of those young people for whom, *as things stand*, the irregular labour market represents the only available employment option. Thus, encouragement and support for projects of this kind, where the emphasis is placed more on the overall empowerment of the young people in question than on clamping down on irregular employment, must be seen as a relevant approach to “reducing the damage”. It should not indirectly legitimise the withdrawal of institutional measures designed to combat conditions which, although partially tempered by involvement in irregular employment, nevertheless do not enable these young people to enjoy their full rights as citizens and members of the community.

Conclusions

Apart from the economic support (constant or otherwise depending on the individual in question) that the submerged economy may provide to long-term unemployed young people, everything else (on the one hand the alleviation of social isolation, on the other hand involvement in a vicious circle of marginalization; the maintaining of some form of contact with the world of work, but at the same time the worsening of the individual’s chances of ever getting a regular job, and so on) may vary considerably. Such variations depend on the kind of job done, the skills and training of the individual, the gap separating the irregular job a person in fact does and the regular one he hopes to find, and so on. With regard to the link between irregular employment and the risk of social exclusion, there is evidence that certain features of the submerged economy make long-term unemployment more bearable from the economic and social points of view. However, it also has to be said that it may lead to the partial *social recognition* of those individuals in question. In denying access to the collective identity normally associated with regular employment, the submerged economy denies individuals the full experience of inter-subjective recognition which lies at the basis of their very integrity (Honneth, 1995). Among other things, this incomplete recognition, within a socio-political context characterised by an increasing divide between standard employment, accompanied by full social integration, and precarious employment (Castel, 1995), of which irregular employment is the most extreme example may lead to splits and conflicts among workers themselves³².

At the same time, irregular employment may also be seen in a positive light: the view that the formal economy constitutes a benchmark, and thus involvement in the informal economy is an indication of failure, may in fact be overturned. As other scholars have also shown (Mac-

³¹ The question of whether or not job flexibility constitutes an effective means of combating irregular employment remains an open one in discussions of employment policy. The views of some of the experts given in the Spanish study, for example, in fact point out that the employer-worker relationship within irregular employment is often advantageous for both parties compared with other forms of flexible regular employment.

³² As Lemkow, Espluga & Baltiérrez (forthcoming) write: “Workers who perform submerged, poorly qualified, occasional jobs in different places have great difficulties relating to stable workers in the companies which offer them submerged jobs. They have even more difficulty in obtaining support in any kind of complaint or claim they may make. Often, the submerged jobs are performed in unsuitable working conditions from the point of view of health, working hours and salary, and the lack of support from stable workers (and from the unions) does not help to resolve the problems. This means that not all submerged jobs lead to an extension of the network of social relations and the most occasional and disparate jobs can increase the experience of loneliness for the young person performing them.”

Donald, 1994; Bryson & Jacobs, 1992), the very ability of individuals to find some form of work in extremely difficult socio-economic conditions, and to execute this work despite the limitations, insecurity and hardship that the submerged economy implies, highlights their abilities and skills in coping with the failure of the economic system and the welfare state and achieve socio-economic integration. However, once again we need to bear in mind that such “submerged resources” must be seen as the starting point from which to launch projects aimed at their empowerment and the consolidation of their motivation and initiative³³, rather than as the justification for reducing the support provided to unemployed people.

As we can see, therefore, the ambivalent role played by the submerged economy with regard to the risk of social exclusion makes it impossible to come up with a simple, clear interpretation. Hence the need for the constant monitoring of its evolution, both as a significant phenomenon in its own right, and as an important key to a full understanding of social exclusion, especially in southern Europe.

³³ Other studies have highlighted the fact that involvement in the submerged economy may contribute towards the subject’s perception that he is playing an active part in the economic sphere, whereas objectively speaking this involvement in fact exacerbates the subject’s exclusion from such a sphere, and thus encourages him to accept his condition (Ditton & Brown, 1981).

5 Specific National Expertise

5.1 Belgium: Suicidal ideation and behaviour

Suicidal behaviour or suicidal ideation is not more common among very long-term unemployed young people than among the general young people population. In studying the association between very long term youth unemployment and suicidal ideation or suicidal behaviour, the role of social exclusion has to be taken into account.

Twenty-six percent of the long-term unemployed young people at high risk of social exclusion expressed suicidal ideas. Two of them are still very preoccupied with the notion of suicide; one has in fact tried to commit suicide several times; the others report past suicidal tendencies. In the survey, there are as many men as women who are considering of suicide; the subjects are also distributed evenly across both regions studied. It is notable that they all have lower educational levels.

On the basis of the results of the survey, we may conclude that suicidal notions can be linked to the unemployment situation in itself. The reasons for suicidal notions are very diverse. We refer to the situations of someone who as a prisoner was preoccupied with suicidal notions (B21: 818-819), someone who in childhood was moved from one situation to another, who experienced various depressive periods and who even today takes anti-depressants (B7: 224-227), someone who as an adolescent went through a crisis period, became depressed and as a result of a break-up of relationships turned suicidal (B11: 405-407); someone who points to her parents' divorce as the reason she had ideas of suicide for the first time. Her present situation recalls those notions of the past, but to a lesser extent than during the period of divorce (B15: 181-185), someone else who because of depressive feelings during her student days has attempted suicide but who also describes her current unemployment situation as a possible trigger to a renewed attempt (B44: 298-307). There is also the subject who puts forward her long-term unemployment, but particularly the financial problems resulting thereof, as the cause of her suicidal notions. The fact that she has two children keeps her from really making a serious attempt. (B23: 236-243). Still, there is no simple for this. In the fourth grade of junior high, she had to drop her training as an elementary school teacher because of her tendency to faint regularly as the result of an accident. She was forced to change into a sector she wasn't comfortable with at all. That sector was not really for her for the same reasons. Even during her school days she was advised to look for work in a protective environment, but she didn't really accept that because, with the exception of a few instances when she fell victim to fainting spells, she felt good about herself.

The common factor that unites these six individuals in their suicidal ideation is hopelessness. They are caught in a very problematic situation and have the feeling that their situation is without prospects. They suffer from the sense that they have lost control over their social circumstances. It is therefore not possible in this sample to assume a direct causal connection between "long-term unemployment" and "suicidal ideation". These results are closest to the "non-causal model" of Jones (Jones et al., 1991) which states that the relationship between "unemployment" and "suicidal behaviour" is either completely or partially a sham and manifests itself because both unemployment and suicidal behaviour are influenced by common or correlated factors (as a child, a very problematic situation at home, depression, low coping skills - the antecedent variables of unemployment) that precede both results and thus are linked to unemployment as well as to suicidal behaviour.

A study in 1993 (Van Heeringen & Jannes) observed the association between employment status (stratified to economic inactivity, unemployment and employment) and attempted suicide in a case-control study. Data on a random sample of the 1981 Population Census records for Gent (n=1608) were compared to the records for all attempted suicide referrals, residents of Gent city (n= 508), referred to the University Hospital during the period 1986-1990, aged 15 years or older. Unemployment was identified as a risk factor for attempted suicide in both males (15-34 years old and 35-49 years old) and females (35-49 years old). Economic inactivity was not identified as a risk factor, except in people with chronic illness. Moens et al. (1988) found that youth suicide is less associated with socio-economic variables such as unemployment than with indicators of anomie and social disintegration in both males and females.

5.2 Germany: The concept of "victimisation"

The loss of the work place and lasting unemployment usually result in considerable psychosocial stress for those individuals affected. The health-related consequences result especially from the principal social importance of paid unemployment. Psycho-social stress from unemployment begins at different levels. Various forms and causes of psycho-social stress coupled with unemployment are summed up by the concept of victimisation and are put into a chronological series as a step-by-step model (Kieselbach 1998, 1997). This model represents a compilation of different theoretical approaches to psycho-social consequences of unemployment (Deprivation Theory: Jahoda; Agency Theory: Fryer & Payne; Critical Life Events: Dohrenwend et al.; Daily Hassles Concept: Lazarus). It therefore tries to bring together the various psychosocial effects unemployment can have on the affected person. As one of the major stressors within today's labour societies, unemployment is a serious threat to the individual which over time not only leads to an increase, but also to a change in the predominant risk factors, and subsequently to their accumulation. The concept of victimisation takes this into account, and distinguishes, therefore, three different phases (primary, secondary, tertiary victimisation) which in chronological order affect the person as the length of his or her unemployment increases. At the same time each of these phases is related to different types of stressors.

Primary victimisation

In the initial phase of unemployment, primary victimisation can be experienced in three different ways. At first, it is important to consider the effect the non-existence of the social features of work (financial security, social integration, time structure, external goals, etc.) has on the personality development of the affected young people (when compared to their employed peers). Secondly, the uncontrollability of the situation and the possibility of a chronicity of the unemployment situation inheres an immense stress factor. Finally, the effect of reduced financial possibilities must be considered.

Primary victimisation means that, with unemployment, the elements of economic security, social integration, self-esteem, structuring of time as well as external demands are weakened or lost. These factors, however, have a significant influence on the formation and stabilisation of identity. Psycho-social impairment can consequently result from constant unemployment (long-term unemployment) because of the absence of these aspects which contribute to one's identity. In reference to young people, primary victimisation achieves principal importance insofar as they are in a sensitive phase of development. In developmental psychology, youth is considered a phase in which adolescents are making a greater effort toward orienting them-

selves and in which, in an active confrontation with their environment, they form their personal and social identities. This explains the exceptional vulnerability of young people. Education and work fulfil important functions in the process of becoming an adult, enabling the development of individual perspectives for life, values and orientation for action as well as an independent way of life. Furthermore, positive self-assessment and self-esteem result from experiences of successful independent action and meeting role demands made in places of training and employment. As these pre-conditions to identity formation do not or no longer exist for the long-term unemployed young people of our survey, the risk arises that they will not be able to complete important steps in identity formation and consequently will remain in an artificially lengthened youth phase (Klink & Kieselbach, 1990). For the young people in our survey who have thus far not been integrated into training or the labour market, psychosocial consequences relative to primary victimisation are caused chiefly by the withholding of work and the disappointment in their expectations for the future.

As the results from our empirical study show, many young people can be defined experiencing primary victimisation. Of main importance to the young unemployed in all countries is the question of the financial means available to them – an aspect which seems to be strongly influenced by their housing situation. Especially according to the northern European country studies, many of the young people have moved away from home and have in most cases more constraint personal finances than the youth who continue to live at home with their parents. In general, the loss (in case of having worked before) or the non-existence of economic security is often combined with feelings of (economic) dependence on the welfare system and/or one's own family. Along these experiences is often a feeling of being a burden to the family, of lack of control, and of uncertainty regarding the future.

The second main stress factor is the missing lack of a daily time schedule and the lack of externally given goals, leading to an inability to structure daily life. Free time seems to be a problematic issue. Especially lower qualified young persons reacted to their situation with fatalism and a lack of enthusiasm. Having job applications, repeatedly turned down also (negatively) affected their self-confidence. The aspect of social integration/isolation within the context of primary victimisation seems to be less prevalent among the unemployed youth. In southern Europe loss of social relations due to unemployment generally does not seem to occur that often due to the close contact with the family of origin. Work and the subsequent social contacts within the submerged economy is also available, whereas in the northern European studies most of the interviewees had a network of friends outside of work.

Secondary victimisation

With the increasing length of unemployment, aspects of secondary victimisation come into play. In this regard, stress is experienced due to (1) an increase in so-called daily hassles (smaller everyday problems related to unemployment), (2) feelings of loss of autonomy due to dependence on social institutions and/or the family, and (3) lack of personal (ability to cope, level of activity, social commitment) and social resources (social support). In addition, the effect of unemployment on dependent family members (victim-by-proxy) could be an additional source of stress for the unemployed young person.

As briefly touched upon already in the chapter about primary victimisation, the feeling of dependence both on state institutions and the family of origin (mentioned in all studies) was very stressful for the young unemployed interviewees. Many interviewees expressed that the welfare support increasingly presents a stigmatising (experience), which seems to affect especially women, who feel controlled and put under pressure by the state institutions. Many

young people reported not being able to cope adequately with their situation (passivity, boredom, depression, feelings of inferiority, negative self-evaluation, and also general feelings of uncertainty regarding the future). The accumulation of daily problems was mainly related to the limited financial possibilities of the young persons (in the sense that the economic situation controls the amount and the type of problems experienced) which among others affects areas such as buying food, keeping up their apartments, paying bills, etc.

To sum up, secondary victimisation describes a phase in which unemployment develops into a permanent pressure experience. The situation of being unemployed as well as the stress factors coupled with it thus become an essential element in daily life. The problems occurring daily lead to the principle of acceleration from crises to an amplification of psycho-social stress. Among these daily problems (so-called daily hassles) are financial worries, insecurity about the future and social stigmatisation (Kanner, Coyne, Schaefer & Lazarus, 1981).

Tertiary victimisation

The third step of the victimisation model – tertiary victimisation – will aim at the evaluation of the individual's ability to cope with unemployment by his or her social environment. Theoretically, two reactions towards the unemployed young person are possible. Those affected by unemployment are blamed for forms of coping considered as socially unacceptable. In this respect, the social environment monitors the unemployed person. First, those unemployed affected by tertiary victimisation are those who cannot adequately cope with their situation because of a lack of personal and social resources and who are characterised by grave psycho-social problems. Tertiary victimisation is thus present when the unemployed person is viewed as a victim who copes very poorly with his or her situation (in the sense of being "unable to cope with a critical life event"). Second, those able to cope with unemployment are affected by tertiary victimisation when they cope with the situation "too well" and are therefore accused of being at fault and of misusing the social security system (in the sense of "parasites", "welfare scroungers", "work-shy", "lazy" etc.). This means therefore that even an individual's satisfactory coping with his or her own unemployment (pro-activity) can be viewed negatively by the social environment.

When comparing experiences of tertiary victimisation, it becomes obvious that the accusation regarding misuse of state support is predominant in northern Europe especially. Due to this accusation, the young unemployed are often made to feel responsible for their own situation with the idea that they are not willing to work and that they are not putting enough energy into finding a job. In some instances, however, it is not clear whether this is a real experience or a subjectively felt threat when: A large number of the young people are worried that people surrounding them will regard them as lazy. These worries might originate from a sense of guilt the jobless person has about his situation. Another type of blaming could be found, which is a more general pressure exerted mainly from the parents, and only to a lesser degree from the own circle of friends. As opposed to this aspect of tertiary victimisation (being blamed for coping too well), with the own situation does not seem to be prevalent within the own social environment. All in all, tertiary victimisation is not as prevalent as the other two forms. It seems that, more and more, unemployment among young persons especially is not perceived as a personal failure, but as a societal problem which can easily affect anyone.

In summary, it can be said that primary, secondary and tertiary victimisation is of central importance in respect to long-term unemployed young people, as psycho-social stress can greatly influence the identity formation of this group. Young people's self-esteem is impaired

principally by primary and secondary experiences of victimisation, as these experiences result in a negative self-assessment and the impression of unsatisfactory coping.

5.3 Italy: Weak bands of the labour market

There are two reasons for wanting to introduce the concept of weak bands into the study of emerging employment phenomena. The first of these is the evidence we have of the emergence of new areas of social vulnerability linked to the fragmentation and weakening of traditional conditions of employment. The second is of a conceptual nature, and consists in the attempt to remedy the increasing inability of traditional sociological and statistical concepts (such as unemployment, under-employment, employment, etc.) to provide a *valid* representation of labour market conditions; employment conditions that are becoming increasingly more difficult to clearly define once and for all, but that fall into *grey areas* of fluidity and intermittence. The concept of weak bands, rather than any particular status, is here meant to describe those features that if present in the same individual may easily trigger off processes leading to the gradual weakening of that person's employment and social possibilities.

The concept of *weak bands* in the more general sense may (must) be subdivided into three different *conceptual types* of social weakness:

- the *traditional weak bands* (characterised by personal weakness);
- the *emerging weak bands* (characterised by social weakness);
- the *social areas of employment difficulties* (characterised by employment weakness).

Let us now look briefly at the “meaning” of the above-mentioned types.

The *traditional weak bands* may be defined as a collection of subjects characterised by some form of clearly visible, personal deficit and/or handicap that is usually recognised as such and provided for by law. Thus this category includes all those persons who, on the one hand, clearly find it difficult getting a job as a result of their own individual problems, but at the same time are socially acknowledged as having such problems, and are protected by the law which facilitates their finding some form of occupation.

The “problem” of the *emerging weak bands* is directly connected to the present processes of transformation of the productive world, and thus to the newly configured flexibility of the labour market. This flexibility, combined with a drastic reduction in the number of traditional jobs (i.e. industrial/manufacturing), tends to render a considerable segment of the active population no longer of use to the development of the present economic system. In order to fully understand the nature of this problem and to try and formulate a more precise definition of it, we first need to submit a further conceptual distinction. We now need to differentiate between those emerging situations of extreme weakness that lead to exposure to the risk of social exclusion, and those where the subjects in question are generally (or simply) incapable of stabilising or improving their presence in the labour market, and that do not therefore necessarily involve situations characterised by the risk of social exclusion (thanks to certain positive factors that influence this situation of weakness). In fact, if we look at the statistics and studies we have, we can see that in each productive context, there are distinct social areas that are potentially more exposed to unemployment and/or under-employment (in Italy, for example, these consist above all of young people, and in particular of young women). Only a certain percentage of these people, however, will find themselves in a position where they really risk social exclusion, for a series of reasons we will be looking at a little further on. Thus we

should distinguish between those persons who only have problems finding work, and those who on the other hand have problems of finding employment and also run the risk of social exclusion. The former are going to be included in the *social areas of employment difficulty*, while the latter are part of the *emerging weak bands*, as defined above.

Therefore, in defining the emerging weak bands account has to be taken of the fact that their weakness is of an economic nature (their difficulty gaining a position in the labour market and thus of obtaining satisfactory income), but it is only when this problem is associated with other relational, normative and cultural deficits the subject may have (horizontal inequalities) that this may lead to a situation of serious social weakness. Social subjects belonging to the same age group (in our specific case that of young people) do not therefore experience their being difficult employment situation in the same fashion, and the distinction we have made above aims to provide a useful criterion with which to distinguish those subjects at risk from social exclusion from within the overall statistical aggregate. These observations show how nowadays it is becoming increasingly difficult to understand labour market exclusion in terms of homogeneous classes of risk: each “excluded subject” tends to constitute a special case, characterised by his or her own specific weaknesses³⁴.

Thus the problem gets shifted towards the attempt to identify which, in our case, may be considered the factors that contribute towards the creation of significant inequalities in people’s freedom to achieve personal objectives, and towards the formation of *emerging weak bands*. The *capacity* (as inspired by the thoughts of Amartya K. Sen) of avoiding one’s labour market precariousness becoming chronic, and thus of not moving towards situations of risk of social exclusion, in fact depends on an incredibly complex series of factors that we believe can be explained in terms of certain significant sub-*inabilities*³⁵ :

Inabilities which when combined lead to social weakness in a person:

- The inability to satisfy one’s own economic needs (economic weakness)
- The inability to effectively “manipulate” the symbolic universe characteristic of advanced modernity (cultural weakness)³⁶
- The inability to exploit the support of primary and secondary social networks (relational weakness)
- The inability to get the weakness of the labour market acknowledged in normative terms (political-institutional weakness).

There is no hierarchical order to the above list of inabilities: it is the possible combinations of factors, and the relationship of the one to the other, that determine the degree of weakness with regard to the labour market, and thus the consequent risk of social exclusion. This table also shows how it no longer possible to analyse social inequality using an inflexible approach based on income or a selection of other significant primary goods: such an evaluation can

³⁴ “In general all exclusion phenomena lead to the same conclusion: they cannot be suitably understood using traditional statistical analysis”, Rosanvallon, 1997 – and also Marazzi, 1994.

³⁵ The chosen inabilities can be used not only to calculate the chance of finding suitable employment, but also to calculate the risk of social exclusion run by each person. The idea is that the two conditions are closely linked, albeit not in a linear fashion.

³⁶ For example, even in cases where educational qualifications are the same, this can be due to the fact that certain subjects adhere to cultural models and/or models of minority, marginal values and refuse to have anything to do with those values expressed by the logic of competition, or are unprepared for them; or due to a particularly strict or antiquated cultural background.

only be used to orientate specifically targeted, personalised forms of public intervention with regard to the long-term unemployed³⁷.

As far as the results of Yuseder research are concerned, the empirical material we have gathered clearly shows how in Italy the ability to get some relational support to positively mediate a situation of youth unemployment, and thus to ward off the threat of social exclusion, has emerged as a fundamentally important “capability”. Hence the central role played by the family, among others, in the structuring of the level of social risk of the persons in question. This role has been of particular importance given the “negative” state of protection against unemployment offered by the Italian welfare system, which provides for no specific form of intervention in this area of social hardship.

To give an example, let us now consider the emergence of relations between the various different inabilities of one person. The relationship between economic weakness and cultural weakness will probably lead to the emergence of a situation of economic difficulty combined with the difficulty of building up social status other than that tied to the workplace, an invariably distorted vision of employment opportunities, and will render the reconversion of now obsolete professional skills more difficult. The relationship between economic weakness and relational weakness, on the other hand, often indicates a family and/or a relational context incapable of absorbing and/or positively mediating the economically difficult situation of unemployment or under-employment, thus exacerbating the psychological aspects and the material poverty of the subject in question.. The relationship between economic weakness and political-institutional weakness, on the other hand, raises the question of the emergence of the recognition and legislative “care” needed to be taken of those persons who not having the professional skills required by the current-day market, tend towards a chronic form of exclusion from the labour market. Clearly the greater the related, simultaneous factors of weakness, the greater the risk of social exclusion. Thus to conclude, we may define the *emerging weak bands as that group of subjects who share an extremely difficult position within the labour market as a result of various combination of social weakness. The degree of risk of social exclusion of such subjects will depend on the joint presence of economic, relational, cultural and political-institutional inabilities as defined in the above table.*

Thus the identification of exactly who are the subjects that make up the population of the emerging weak bands is far from being an easy, straightforward task. While the idea of considering those subjects who are in the worst position with regard to the labour market, for example the long-term unemployed, seems the most straightforward direction to take, this clearly cannot be enough, at least not in Italy. In fact, the risk is that of leaving out a huge number of subjects who do jobs that cannot be monitored as they are either hidden or even illegal, as well as the majority of casual or under-employed workers. Therefore, we also need to think of interpretative approaches that take account not only of the official position of the person in the labour market, and of the income that person receives, but also of the person’s life-story and socio-economic background.

Final thoughts in the light of empirical research results

The analysis and interpretation of the empirical material we gathered during the course of the field research stage of the YUSEDER project allows us to put forward a number of important theoretical considerations. In particular, regarding the relationship between long-term youth unemployment and social exclusion, the first fact that emerged was that this relationship is no

³⁷ Shaping the aid provided to the inability in question: carefully calibrating intervention according to the identified needs of the person in terms of professional training, subsidies, family support, legislative support in securing employment.

longer definable simply in terms of cause and effect, with the first phenomenon leading to the second. In other words, the figures show how the chronic unemployment of a young person does not lead automatically to a high risk of social exclusion. In fact, within these two conditions there are a number of different factors which play either a negative or positive role in mediating the social status of that person's employment difficulties³⁸. Moreover, an analysis of the empirical research has also shown that, given the increasingly complex nature of the labour market and the possible forms of employment, the conceptual label "unemployment" in Italy, and especially in the case of the younger generation, no longer describes a homogeneous, uniform condition of no work, but rather a series of highly differentiated personal situations, some more serious than others, involving job insecurity. In other words, the figures show that a chronic situation of lack of work clearly does lead to a risk of social exclusion, but that the seriousness of this risk depends on other social factors which must be taken into account if we want to have a true picture of the situation.

In the light of this, we believe that it is necessary to introduce certain new conceptual differences that, taking greater account of the complexity of the labour market, are capable of focusing our theoretical attention on the social factors of mediation (key mechanisms) that govern the risk of slipping from a condition of job insecurity to a more serious one of social exclusion. To this end, we have developed the concept of weak bands, as we are convinced that this concept can help to describe the terms of the new social vulnerability processes currently in evidence here in Italy.

5.4 Spain: Social inequities and health

The study of relationships between social inequity and health is a subject which has been much analysed from the different areas of the social sciences, such as economics, sociology, psychology, epidemiology, etc. The contributions of these scientific disciplines have shown that there are social inequities in health, even in countries with the highest levels of welfare and that, for example, people from a lower socio-economic level tend to present a worse state of health. The concept of inequality or inequity has changed over time and has been used both to indicate a sense of injustice and to refer to differences. The World Health Organisation used the term inequity to refer to the differences in health which are unnecessary, avoidable and unjust. The concept of injustice may also vary considerably, but one criterion used is the level of freedom a person has to choose his or her living conditions. (Whitehead, 1990).

In order to study social inequities, sociology has articulated different theoretical constructions of the concept of social class. The indicators of social class which are most used tend to be job category, level of income and level of education, both individually and in the form of a compound index. To these indicators could be added others, such as geographic area of residence, owning a dwelling, prestige, possession of other significant goods, etc. On the other hand, the indicators of health most commonly used tend to be mortality, morbidity, use of health services and behaviour related to health.

Unemployment is an indicator which has been widely used to study inequities. As well as having been used to create privation indices, unemployment has been more related to different illnesses and also to an increase in mortality, even adjusted for social class. Some studies have compared the utility of some socio-economic indicators in detecting associations with health variables and found a high correlation between employment indicators and education and level of income (Abramson et al., 1982). It is also thought that the level of education provides

³⁸ See the Italian project report for a description

access to a specific job and hence to a level of income, but it is also considered to be related to cultural level and to influence behaviour and practices with regard to lifestyle and social support (Liberatos et al., 1988).

For the YUSEDER study, a total of 299 long-term unemployed people between the ages of 20 and 25 were interviewed. The sample set was structured by gender, qualification level, and geographical area. These variables make it possible to observe the existence of relevant social inequities among the sample members and can furthermore be related to the health inequities they present.

Data from the six countries participating in this project shows that in all countries women are more exposed to unemployment than their male peers, a ratio even more extreme in the southern (2 women to 1 man) than in the northern countries (4 women to 3 men). The south-north division in the distribution of socio-demographic data is even more extreme with regard to the qualification level, so in the northern European countries primarily young persons with lower educational levels have difficulties in accessing the labour market (with a ratio of almost 2:1), whereas in the southern countries the same is true for young persons with a higher educational background (with a ratio of almost 4:1). However, the health situation of long-term unemployed youth and health-related effects resulting from unemployment are to be considered very heterogeneously in the different countries. It could be said that cultural and social differences between northern and southern countries affect the health conditions.

In the interpretation of the YUSEDER data, it was possible to identify three types of young long-term unemployed people, according to their level of risk of social exclusion: youths at high risk of social exclusion, youths at increasing risk of social exclusion and youths at low risk of social exclusion. The most numerous and important health problems were detected in the group with a high risk of social exclusion, and the fewest effects appear among the young people with a low risk of social exclusion. The group of young people with an increasing risk of social exclusion also show few health problems, especially in the countries of the south. The general situation in terms of health problems, taking into account the differences by country, is as follows:

Health situation of young people at high risk of social exclusion: A multitude of psycho-social strains were reported for the Northern European countries, especially financial stress is considered the crucial stress factor, but also fear of the future, missing perspectives for life and feelings of dependency. In the southern countries, the diversity and intensity of psycho-social strains is lower than in the North. With regard health behaviour, most of countries shows a higher consumption of tobacco due to unemployment. An increased consumption of alcoholic beverages can be observed in Spain, Sweden and Germany as well. In comparison, medicine and drug abuse are a minor problem.

Health situation of young people at increased risk of social exclusion: In some cases there are no health effects at all. In the southern European countries, the fact that young people are supported by their parents has a major influence on their health; thus, for instance, financial stress can be avoided. In the northern European countries, an important psycho-social stressor is financial burden or financial insecurity. Minor health problems can be observed, but there are also a lot of cases for which positive effects are reported.

Health situation of youths at low risk of social exclusion: This is the group in a better health condition. The young people are described as being active, having high self-esteem and good communication skills. No case of dangerous health behaviour is reported.

In conclusion, it can be stated that for all countries, it is among the young people with a high risk of social exclusion where most health problems are detected, at a level considerably higher than the other groups, and that these health problems are related to their social situation. It does not appear to be coincidental that the characteristics of the young people with a high risk of social exclusion, those with the highest level of health problems, are very similar in all countries: young people with poor or very poor qualifications (with the exception of some qualified young people in Italy), from families with different social problems (destructuring, etc.), from lower social classes, with few economic resources and with a poor level of social support. In this situation, there is also a dimension of injustice which reinforces the notion of inequity in the sense proposed by the World Health Organisation, derived from the fact that these young people cannot choose their living conditions and, structurally, can do little to change them. Unemployment further complicates the situation of these young people as it obstructs their future plans, hence keeping them inactive without allowing them to develop their skills and making changes in their career difficult.

The analysis which can be made of social inequities and their relation with health from the YUSEDER study confirms the main hypotheses suggested by the bibliography in this area of research. In general, the worst health indicators are present among young unemployed people from the lowest social classes, who live in problematic family situations, with lower levels of education, greater economic deficiencies and increasing lack of social support. The main indicators of health detected consist particularly of psychosocial problems and unhealthy behaviour. In all these variables and indicators there are qualifications by countries, especially between those of the north and the south of Europe. Nevertheless, the problems of health presented by these young unemployed people are not as frequent nor of the same nature as those which may be present among the unemployed of other age groups. However, the prevalence of psychosocial problems among the young population may be of sufficient concern due to its possible effect on the future of the young people and their social environment.

5.5 Argentina: Economic and social development regarding youth unemployment¹

Enrique Grote² & Mariel Zamanillo

In this chapter a brief outlook of the characteristics of urban unemployment in Argentina is presented, as well as some references to youth unemployment.

In Argentina as well as in other Latin American countries, important social and political transformations related to the opening processes of international commerce and economic liberalisation have been witnessed during the last decade. These transformations have also affected the adjustment processes and influencing the reform of state institutions, thus influence the population's living conditions. This new scenario brings about serious consequences in the increase of unemployment and in new forms of precarious employment affecting different social strata, particularly women and young people.

From the 1990s, an increase in unemployment and underemployment and the presence of new categories such as "invisible underemployment" formed by low income and low productivity occupations without social benefits, have been verified. This has led to a broadening of the so-called "informal sector" of the economy. Temporary working contracts have become normal, and the presence of clandestine salaried people has increased (Beccaria, 1995). The new conditions imposed by the present phase of global capitalism state that the labour market assumes peculiar characteristics: there are really heterogeneous working situations with regard to both working insertions and quality of life. There is a highly integrated working sector, with qualifications, payments and rights connected to areas of great development, high productivity and optimal working conditions. Another working sector is characterised by extended working hours, with low technological support, low salaries, underemployment and precarious working conditions, as well as temporary working contracts. Some other groups of workers are engaged in activities decentralised by the large enterprises of each sector; they take the form of "independent workers", are paid according to time and task. Their quantity of work and payments fluctuate according to the segmented demands of the market.

Employment and unemployment in Argentina today³

The estimated number of Argentine inhabitants for the year 2000 is 37,000,000; the economically active population is made up of 13,081,000 people, *the level of unemployment* in 1999 was 13.8%; *the underemployed that claim more working hours* represent 9.1%, and *the underemployed that do not claim more employment* represent 5.2%. The *employment rate* at the same date is 36.8%.

¹ Paper presented by Enrique Grote to the Workshop of the YUSEDER project, coordinated from Prof. Dr. Thomas Kieselbach, which took place in Sorano, Italy, in June 2000. Our participation in this project was the result of an invitation by Thomas Kieselbach in 1999, to study the Argentine case through the cities of Rio Cuarto and Cordoba. Our interest to work with YUSEDER is mainly to understand the development of unemployment and social exclusion from the perspective of young unemployed people and to analyse the psychosocial and institutional interventions that counteract this situation in our country. This allows us to make comparisons with the general YUSEDER results and to progress in the search for alternatives to face the problem of youth unemployment.

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³ The data for the present report come from the Permanent Household Survey (PHS), which is carried out twice a year in the 28 main urban groups in Argentina; the PHS is generated by the Census and Statistics National Institute (INDEC).

In 1999, a World Bank report stated that 1,300,000 families whose heads are unemployed are under the poverty line (i.e., they are poor because their incomes are below the minimum estimated to support a “normal” family⁴). Those homes are headed by unemployed urban or rural workers with extremely low incomes, or without any income. These people have great trouble finding a job. The area with the highest index of inequality is the city of Buenos Aires. While in Buenos Aires the difference in incomes between 10% of the richest and 10% of the poorest of the population is 89%, at national level the difference is only 23.7%.

In the 90s, income fell in the poorest homes in Buenos Aires 14% per capita, while in richer families income increased more than 16% in the same period. Consequently, the difference in mean incomes between the poorest and the richest families was 25 times greater between 1991 and 1997. In 1999 the average income for workers and employees was 650 USD per month. More than 3,000,000 non-registered workers⁵ earned 40% less \$650 and received none of the usual social benefits. These people do not receive a salary receipt, have no access to medical health services (consequently, Public Health Care is saturated), and no access to benefits such as family salary, school subsidy, bonuses, paid holidays or sick leaves. Because they are not registered, they have no accident insurance. Moreover, as they cannot justify their incomes legally, they are not eligible for loans, and they have to pay high interests when they get one. On the other hand, Argentine executives are paid twice as much as Chileans, and 30% more than Brazilians (Andalle, 1999, p. 58).

As to the answers provided by the State, the present active labour market policies are of low impact, and have a minimal reach. With respect to *unemployment benefits* (created in the early 90s), in 1999 122,000 unemployed people benefited from them, each of them receiving on average 210 USD per month, over a period of 4 to 12 months (depending on the period of time the person had worked before becoming unemployed). Nearly 17% of the unemployed that were registered workers in the private sector were covered by this unemployment benefit. However, if we take into consideration both registered and non-registered unemployed workers, the coverage of this benefit is reduced to only 5.4%. As to age, the data show that in 1999 71% of those receiving this benefit were between 25-49 years old.

Some characteristics of youth unemployment

In 1999, approximately 800,000 young people in the whole country are unemployed. Out of this total, 46,000 live in Cordoba city and are 15-25 years old. This group constitutes 49.3% of all the unemployed people in the city.

If we compare the relative influence of young people on the economically active population and their share in the unemployment rate, it can be observed that they constitute the most affected social stratum and obviously, the ones with the lowest income. For people aged between 15 and 25 years, unemployment is a very important problem. It can be estimated that the youth unemployment rate is approximately twice as high as that of the economically active population as a whole. In Argentina, nearly 30% of the young people have been unsuccessful in finding jobs. In some interior cities, this percentage is even higher. By the end of 1999 the unemployment rate at national level is 13.8%. While 19% of young men 20-24 year old are affected by unemployment, the percentage of 20-24 year old unemployed women is 24.9. Approximately 32% of unemployed young people are heads of families.

⁴ By “normal” family we mean: father, mother and two children.

⁵ By “non-registered workers” we mean: workers who are not registered in official records, who do not have employment contracts and, as a consequence are not eligible for social benefits.

For young people qualification, and employment are closely related. Of 20-24-years-old unemployed people 22.4% have not finished high school. This is a very high index in view of the present conditions demanded by the labour market, for which having a high school degree is a minimum, indispensable requirement. In Argentina, the problem of the lack of qualification is worsened by the social condition. Ninety percent of the young people coming from poor homes with unsatisfied basic needs are out of the educational system and of the labour market. The school system does not offer learning alternatives truly adequate to the conditions, necessities and interests of the most vulnerable - from the social point of view - groups of people. The participation of young people in the labour market, mainly those from families with the greatest economic difficulties, is connected with the possibility of entering and remaining in school and the level of educational performance achieved.

During the last decade, it was much harder for adolescents between 14 and 19 years who came from homes with low incomes to attend school. This tendency has become stronger in the last years. While primary school (between the age of 6 and 12 years) is practically universal, the first years of secondary school are crucial for their permanence at school. This exclusion from school takes place at a moment when holding a good educational level, -“cultural capital”-, will determine the occupational position and the “place” that individuals will occupy in the distribution of relevant social benefits, such as income and power. In other words, it is probable that “being excluded” from the educational system will trigger other “exclusions”, harder to reverse, that will challenge necessary social integration.

In this way, we come across new phenomena to analyse: overexploitation is a usual condition for some young people who are inserted in the labour market, as well as irregular working contracts, excessive working hours per week, high flexibility. Among young people who are not able to enter the labour market the rate of drug addiction increases⁶. Until a few years ago, overexploitation was not common in our study area, due to state control and social protection laws. This was in marked contrast to other Latin American countries, where this phenomenon was present among young people. Drug addiction was thought to be an issue more related to highly developed, more socially complex countries.

Nowadays, the present socio-economic transition shows two important negative aspects: on the one hand, the deterioration of the integrating role of the educational institutions that protected young people; on the other hand, drug consumption among young people, which is alarmingly rising in Argentina. It can be stated that, in recent years, there has been a regression in institutional activities that have been previously modernised while simultaneously, there has been a deterioration of traditional cultural norms and values which, objectively, preserved young people from the “false paradise” offered by drugs (Sidicaro & Tenti, 1998).

A future problematic situation is manifested in the youth unemployment rate. Young people who have not yet received professional training, begin their search for work. Some get started in the labour market in conditions where they have resigned their rights and are both unprotected by social legislation and outside union organisations. These losses in social citizenship are reflected in young people’s standings with relation to politics and state institutions. Young people feel that they not well represented by political parties, and these have serious problems in recruiting young people for them. They equate politics with corruption. With respect to political institutions, they are perceived as distant from the aims of common people as well as from young people’s aims. Young people are not requiring measures about employment, training or information.

⁶ Other colleagues and research teams are investigating the youth phenomenon and youth unemployment. We are referring here to some of their statements (Sidicaro & Tenti, 1998; Demoskopia, 1999).

*Youth unemployment in Rio Cuarto and Cordoba*⁷

Our study was carried out, as previously stated, in the cities of Rio Cuarto and Cordoba. From the interviews made so far, it is possible to make a preliminary statement regarding different perspectives foreseen by the YUSEDER project.

Young people seem to have internalised in their representations and perceptions some features of a “naturalisation”⁸ mechanism in view of their unemployment. They say, for example, “*I am another jobless young person*”, or, “*This is happening to a lot of young people in our country*”. Through their schemes of perception, estimation and evaluation of the labour market, young people incorporate and accept as “natural” conditions, the following statement: “*...The fewer job opportunities for everyone, the harsher the working conditions for everyone...*”. Unemployment produces this doubly paradoxical effect: on the one hand, the objective conditions of the labour market, when salaries decrease, the “active” working people are incited to work longer hours to make up for the lower earnings. On the other hand, these young people, due to these conditions, find themselves impotent, accepting this state of affairs: “*...This is how things are...*”

The same feelings are present when young people speak about their difficulties finding a job. They imagine that the only way to generate income is through some sort of independent job⁹ in the submerged economy, which they define as unstable; that is, although they do not have a lot of working experience because they are young, they intuitively define this independent job as highly flexible. They give practical reasons in the sense of Bourdieu (1997): impersonal “laws” of the market are irresistibly exerted, because the laws are anonymous, on dispersed individuals who compete against each other. They explain that the new forms of paid jobs take the form of contracts in view of the tasks, or independent jobs.

Young people define themselves as “potentially” unemployed, “potentially” underemployed, “potentially” precarious. At the same time, this situation, though similar to all these individuals, does not turn into a shared consciousness. This happens because of their extremely low participation in juvenile institutions, associations or movements. Such a phenomenon is observable in those who have already finished high school, or have dropped out, as well as in those who are still studying. What characterises these young people is that though they see unemployment as a social problem, they believe they should find their own solutions.

It might be hypothesised that this condition of unstable, unprotected youth employment could become a new longed-for way of life, socially appreciated, as a driving force behind new cultures, liberties, and new forms of socialisation. As expressed by Gorz: “...it could be everybody’s right to choose discontinuities in their job without undergoing discontinuities in their income” (Gorz, 1997, p. 121). However, it is not perceived this way, but rather as an precarious way of living in which it is impossible to imagine a clearly defined future. All this ex-

⁷ Rio Cuarto is a Mediterranean city in the centre of Argentina which has 162,000 inhabitants. It is considered an agricultural city, like other middle-sized cities in the Argentine “pampas”. From a historical point of view, it has developed in accordance with the agroexporting model of the southern region of the province of Cordoba, and offers many service activities; food industries derived from agricultural products have been developed.

The city of Cordoba is also in the centre of our country. Because of the number of inhabitants - 1,700,000 - and economic, social and cultural expansion, it is considered the second most important city in Argentina. It is also the second most industrialized city. The process of industrialization here began in the 50s, and this had a strong influence on fast demographic growth. The oldest Argentine university, and the third oldest in America, is situated in the city of Cordoba (founded 387 years ago in 1613).

⁸ We use the terms “naturalisation” and “trivialisation” in the sense employed by Kieselbach (2000).

⁹ By “independent jobs in the submerged economy” we mean: jobs in which workers are both self-employed and non-registered in official records.

plains the influence that the idea that work as connected with stability, continuity and security has in our society.

At the same time, the social mechanism of “naturalisation” is reinforced with a change in the “work ethics”, “the pride at having a good job”, which are highly appreciated values among Argentine adult people. This would lead to a generalised demotivation towards work, as a new cultural expression. “*Let’s look for other ways of feeling good,...with the family,...with friends...*”, or, “*I wonder what our parents meant when they said that having a job was the answer to everything*”. These are some of our interviewees’ reflections. They interpret the breaking of the causal chain, that is, from efforts to get a job to personal growth, as “natural”. This state of affairs is worsened by the presence of new social ingredients, such as everyday insecurity and aggressive personal relationships. This phenomenon is most evident in young people who are uncertain about their future; from the same perspective, adults are also uncertain about the changes in the labour market.

In Argentina, unemployment is a recurrent topic in different surveys, in the mass media, and in politics. This reinforces the risk of “trivialising” the problem: the interviewees’ answers coincide with the “trivialised” view expressed by the means of communication: “*...it is a one world problem...*”; “*...jobs should be first offered to Argentinians, and be restricted for foreigners (Bolivians, Chileans, Paraguayans, etc)*”. Both mechanisms, “naturalisation” and “trivialisation”, may have permeated the minds of the unemployed young people, who accept their situation and thus do not actively search for alternatives. On the other hand, it has been observed that unemployed people blame themselves for their situation, and there are differences according to the type of family they come from: “*...you may be better off if you have some contacts...*”; “*...my parents are unable to help me because they do not know how to...*”. The sense of guilt is shared almost exclusively with the family.

Amidst severe economic changes, together with extremely high unemployment rate, it is natural and logical that uncertainty pervades family life, and parents are unable to advise children on what strategies to adopt to build up their confidence and consequently their future. Beyond individual differences, the context provides more questions than answers. All social classes have doubts. A young university student has different problems from those of a young unemployed worker, but both are equally uncertain. The values and ambitions that young people have elaborated during their socialisation processes - oriented towards solidarity, companionship, honesty - seem not to coincide with the ones valued by society. This contradiction is expressed, once again, when they affirm that family values bear no relation to those appreciated by society as a whole, that is to say, goals such as success, achievements and symbols of economic power (prestige, money, image). From their social position, they want to create a society that is organised around solidarity, with greater life opportunities, where there is room for everyone.

These interpretations go as far as this point. This group of general visions allows us to move towards an understanding of the youth unemployment phenomenon, from the perspective of the “actors” involved. It also allows us to detect that it is the condition of being young and unemployed that places them as actors who know a lot about this problem that is *their problem*. It is from this position and condition -unemployed young people- that they examine, sensibly and sharply, most of the dilemma of present social life. They question society as a whole and rehearse small -or big- ethical and mutually supportive claims. But this appeal does not take the form of organised, sustained claim; instead, it is substantially anonymous, individual, isolated.

They resort to the substantial condition of belonging to the category named “youth”. And they pose new questions. We wonder if the definition of “youth” as a period of transition is still valid; transition from the original family to the constitution of a new family, transition from the educational system to the labour market, from dependence to autonomy, from the socialisation in primary groups towards a social and political participation in traditional institutions. And now, none of these transitions or changes of status seems to remain standing. The challenge lies in knowing and incorporating those new contexts of socialisation, their constituting principles and functional logic, in order to understand -and not forget- that these young people are in search of jobs, and, at the same time, are in the search for their own identities.

This state of affairs is summarised by the expressions of two Argentine colleagues:

“The future of a country can be perceived in the youngest generations. What do they think of politics, public institutions, education, work, leadership? What do they accept? What do they reject? It would be mistaken to consider that young people will maintain, in the years to come, the same attitudes and points of view. But the reasoning and experiences at this age leave traces that cannot easily be ignored by those who are interested in facilitating their access to full citizenship and to an integration into a fairer and freer society” (Sidicaro & Tenti Fanfani, 1998).

Table 1: Rates of activity, employment, unemployment and underemployment for the total of Argentine urban groups and some selected groups (in percent).

	Activity rate ^(a)	Employment rate ^(b)	Unemployment rate ^(c)	Job seeking under-employment rate ^(d)	Non job-seeking under-employment rate ^(e)
Argentine urban groups (total) (1)	42.7	36.8	13.8	9.1	5.2
Buenos Aires City (2)	50.7	45.5	10.3	6.5	5.1
Cordoba City (2)	40.9	35.4	13.6	7.5	4.6
Rio Cuarto City (2)	36.8	33.2	10.3	4.2	7.3

Source: Permanent Survey (EPH), October 1999, Census and Statistics National Institute (INDEC), Argentine.

(1) It corresponds to 28 urban groups -large and medium size- where the Permanent Homes Survey (EPH) is made, twice a year, in May and October.

(2) To show in the table, we have selected some large groups, and Rio Cuarto, that belongs in the medium size groups.

(a) percentage of economically active people from the total population

(b) percentage of employed people from the total population

(c) percentage of unemployed people from the economically active people (*Underemployment rate per hour*: percentage of job-seeking underemployed population from the economically active population)

(d) percentage of job-claiming underemployed population from the economically active population

(e) difference in percent between non-job-seeking underemployed population and economically active population

Basic definitions

The following definitions aim at a better understanding of the above-mentioned data:

Economically active population: employed people or those actively looking for a job. It is composed both of the employed and the unemployed population.

Unemployed population: those unemployed, who are actively looking for a job in the sense of open unemployment. The term does not include other forms of labour precariousness (also surveyed by EPH), such as people who have odd jobs while looking for a regular job, those who unwillingly work under abnormal conditions, those unemployed who have given up the

search for a job due to lack of working opportunities, those employed in jobs earning less than the minimum salary, or in jobs below their qualifications, etc.

Visible underemployed population: employed people *unwillingly* working less than 35 hours a week and who want to work longer.

Job-seeking underemployed population: underemployed people who are actively looking for a job.

Non job-seeking underemployed population: underemployed people who are not looking for a job.

6 Conclusions and policy implications

This final chapter will summarise conclusions of the country studies in regard of the empirical analysis of the interviews with long-term young unemployed and the conducted expert interviews for institutional solutions against youth unemployment. An overview about innovative elements in projects combating youth unemployment is presented. The results of this interdisciplinary comparative study represent an important basis for conceptualising future intervention measures in the European Union which could reduce the risk of social exclusion for young people.

The three types of social exclusion in six countries of the EU

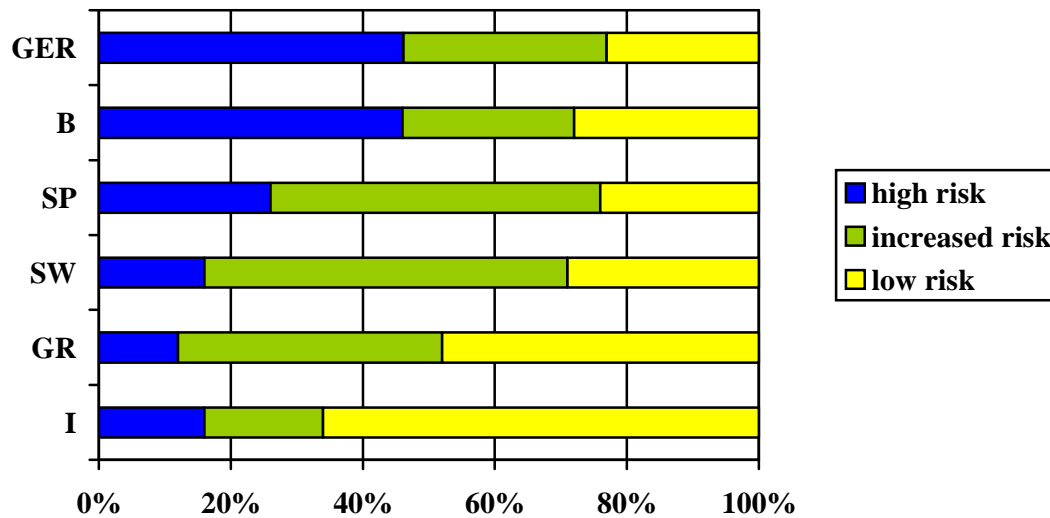
For the group at *high risk* of social exclusion, the duration of unemployment is longer in all countries compared to the other groups. The qualification of the affected persons is quite low. Furthermore, they come from lower social classes or from families with major social and financial problems. A higher level of qualification can be observed in the group at *increased risk* of social exclusion in all studies except in Greece. The duration of unemployment is the same (Germany) or somewhat lower than for the group at high risk (Sweden). Compared with the other two groups, the young people at *low risk* of social exclusion in all studies are younger, are more highly qualified and have been unemployed for a shorter period of time.

In the Belgian and German studies the cases at high risk of social exclusion prevail. In contrast, most of the young people of the sample in the Swedish and Spanish study are part of the middle type with an increased risk of social exclusion. In the Greek study, apart from the type "increased risk of social exclusion" people at a low risk of social exclusion make up the biggest group. In the Italian study, too, low risk cases predominate.

Type "high risk of social exclusion"

In most of the national studies, a high risk of social exclusion arises for long-term unemployed youth if they experience a high risk of labour market exclusion, economic exclusion, and social isolation at the same time. In the Belgian, German and Swedish studies, persons of this group also experience cultural exclusion, for the Greek and Italian studies the risk of spatial exclusion is characteristic. Due to financial and other problems in their family of origin, these young unemployed are disadvantaged from childhood on. Their qualification level as well as their self-esteem is low, they are not sufficiently supported by their social environment and governmental institutions and they tend to be passive or in some countries even tend toward problematic behaviour such as drug dependency and deviant behaviour. The main factor that increases the risk of social exclusion is the *low qualification* of the persons affected. Lack of qualification becomes an obstacle in building a professional career, and to overcoming the situation of unemployment. They have access only to poor and precarious jobs. The young people also exhibit high passivity toward the labour market. It was observed in all countries that *personality related factors* such as low self-esteem and poor mental health can increase the risk of social exclusion.

Figure C-1: Extent of social exclusion in six countries of the EU
(each country N=50, in %)¹



Type "increased risk of social exclusion"

The group of young people at increased risk of social exclusion seems to be a relatively heterogeneous one in all studies. In all national studies an increased risk of social exclusion comprises the risk of labour market exclusion. Further relevant exclusion dimensions of this type vary in each country: institutional exclusion, spatial exclusion (Greece) as well as economic exclusion (Sweden, Spain). With regard to qualifications, all in all a lack of educational resources could be found. The risk of social exclusion for this group is mainly counteracted by the high degree of family support (Greece, Italy, Sweden, Spain) or support from the social environment (Belgium, Germany). Furthermore, general activity is at a high level, which must also be regarded as a protective factor.

A strong link to the social surrounding (friends and family) counteracts the risk of social exclusion. The dimension that makes the difference between high and increased risk of social exclusion is social isolation. The strong link to the family described in the Italian, Greek and Spanish studies, however, is often not only regarded as positive: The relation between economic exclusion and exclusion due to social isolation is very ambivalent because the existence of good social networks (especially family, but also friends) reduces exclusion, whereas a feeling of economic dependence on the family is detected which favours the appearance of exclusion. The youth of this group are not as much affected by problems as youth at high risk of exclusion – a small number of exclusion dimensions applies – but nevertheless the situation is vulnerable from the perspective of exclusion.

Type "low risk of social exclusion"

Long-term unemployed youth in this group are at maximum affected by only one (not a central one) dimension of social exclusion. The risk of labour market exclusion for this group is low because they regard unemployment as a temporary moratorium, and also as a time for

¹ The rank order of national studies is given according to the weighted types (high risk=3, increased risk=2, low risk=1).

personal development and planning. In the Belgian and Italian studies, this group also includes young persons who are not primarily aiming for integration into the working world. People at low risk of social exclusion neither feel socially isolated nor economically excluded. In southern Europe they receive sufficient financial support from their families and in northern Europe from state institutions. Compared to the other groups, youth at low risk of social exclusion have higher qualifications, are more actively seeking for a job, are in a financially relatively secure situation, and are supported by their social environment. Besides that, they are satisfied with the support benefits from the governmental institutions. Many persons of this group are socio-culturally active and have a high self-esteem.

Vulnerability factors and protective factors

Altogether, for long-term unemployed youth at *high risk of social exclusion* the following vulnerability factors contribute to the risk of exclusion: low qualification, passivity at the labour market, precarious financial situation, low or missing social support, insufficient or non-existent institutional support, low self-esteem as well as drug dependency and deviant behaviour in some cases.

Contrary to that, for the type at *low risk of social exclusion*, the following *protective factors* reduce the risk of social exclusion: high qualification, active behaviour at the labour market, secure financial situation, social support, institutional support, high self-esteem and high level of socio-cultural activities.

While the key mechanisms for the two extreme types high and low risk of social exclusion are similar in all studies of the YUSEDER project, the intermediate type at *increased risk of exclusion* shows different key mechanisms for social exclusion and inclusion varying over countries and consisting of vulnerability and protective factors. The level of social support, however, is a protective factor which determines this type in all country studies.

Health situation of the three groups

All studies report in general that long-term unemployed youth at *high risk of social exclusion* face multiple health problems. Nevertheless, the diversity of psycho-social strains is greater in the northern European studies than in the studies from Greece, Italy and Spain. The health of those at *increased risk of exclusion* is better than of youth at high risk of exclusion. The fact that in the Southern European countries young people are economically as well as emotionally supported by their parents has a major influence on their health. Integration into the family is seen to be a decisive protective factor. Compared to southern European studies, financial problems are important psycho-social stressors in Belgium, Germany and Sweden. In these country studies, family integration is a less important protective factor. Northern European unemployed youth attaches more importance to the support they receive from their friends. Furthermore a higher qualification and a positive and optimistic orientation towards the future are to be highlighted.

In all studies youth of the group with *low risk of social exclusion* differ considerably from the two other types of social exclusion. All countries report cases that are relatively free from strain. The young people are described as being active, having high self-esteem, and good communication skills. No case of risky health-related behaviour is reported. In all three northern European studies, social support and financial protection are equally important pro-

tective factors for preventing social exclusion. For some young people with low risk of social exclusion unemployment was a deliberate choice (Belgium, Italy), some use their unemployment as a time for orientation (Sweden, Germany). Thus, they assess the strain resulting from unemployment as being rather low.

Measures against youth unemployment

In the comparison of measures against youth unemployment and social exclusion, all of the countries display a large government influence, but with different levels of emphasis. In Sweden, the activities are confined almost exclusively to government institutions where a series of approaches is directly aimed at combating youth unemployment. Very important in Sweden is the legal agreement by which every young person who has been out of work for at least 100 days is eligible to receive an offer of employment, training or another form of work. In contrast, in Belgium, concrete actions against youth unemployment and social exclusion are to be found primarily on the regional level. On the national governmental level, only programmes exist which treat the general problem of unemployment. The programmes are carried out on the local level, with directives from the national level.

To be emphasised is the German government's Instant Programme to combat youth unemployment; in addition to the funds for regular labour market programmes, it provides for one thousand million Euro for projects which are to promote young people's integration into the labour market and to minimise the risk of social exclusion. In contrast, less government influence could be found in Spain. Many projects and initiatives are supported by the European Social Fund. The same applies to Greece, even though there is a much smaller number of projects than in Spain. Only in the last few years Greece has been developing projects and initiatives which are frequently initiated by the government.

The experts in all of the countries are of the opinion that, in respect to concrete measures against youth unemployment and social exclusion, labour market integration alone is insufficient to protect unemployed young people over the long term from unemployment and social exclusion. Many experts point out that training and qualification are decisive for a long-term integration into the labour market. But that is also not enough to prevent processes of exclusion in a long-lasting way for long-term unemployed young people. In Sweden, the improvement in the levels of training as well as of competency of unemployed young people is viewed as an approach of basic importance. This approach is to be pursued as early as at the school level, in order to prevent later risks of exclusion. Young people who have grown up under difficult conditions and already display manifold problems at school are to receive fostering and emotional support at an early stage. In Sweden, projects and initiatives emphasise individual counselling and supervision for the unemployed young people. Those affected are to be introduced to work by practical work experience. A basic approach is to create contact points especially for those who are at high risk of social exclusion. In Belgium, it is emphasised that personal support during an initiative is viewed as the most effective method for the success of a project. Germany points to three main features which are being undertaken to combat youth unemployment and social exclusion: qualification, networking of the various mediators and organisations and personality development of those affected.

In its approaches, Spain is similar to Sweden and Germany. The experts from Spain point out that projects concentrating merely on training unemployed young people fall short. They

formulate as their goal institutional measures, projects and initiatives in which, on the one hand, elemental capabilities and qualifications are taught and, on the other hand, young people are encouraged to achieve more independence and self-assurance in structuring their vocational future. The young people are to be enabled to go their own vocational way. With this, however, labour market integration is not the primary goal; rather the first goal is to foster the young people's social integration, so that the first steps toward a long-term, stable integration into the labour market is possible.

In comparison to the other countries, the Greek situation is characterised by the fact that activities on the national level are only in the beginning phases. With respect to national plans of action, it is attempted to attain specific aims. Especially unions and management are attempting in common with the government to develop approaches to combat youth unemployment. For example, small and medium-sized businesses are to be subsidised, in order to hire unemployed young people.

Policy recommendations: Innovative strategies and elements

The success of institutional strategies requires differentiated approaches, ones based on target-group analysis, in order to offer well-directed help to those concerned.

In general, the main institutional answers to (long-term) youth unemployment are: (1) training and qualification, (2) cooperation and networking, (3) psychosocial stabilisation and personal development.

(1) Training and qualification

These qualification and career training approaches can be based only on the cooperative relationship with those young people concerned. In this regard, the experts mentioned a fundamental problem: frequently in these projects and measures, decisions are made "over the heads" of the young people. This process starts with frustration and leads to dropping out of the project and, not least, to a progressive dissatisfaction all the way to resigned behaviour among young people. So-called project careers are not uncommon, in which unemployed young people are passed from one qualification measure to the next without seeing any concrete benefit for their personal development.

Innovative aspects in the projects are:

- a concrete career developmental plan designed in cooperation with each individual, in which the individual's wishes for career and goals have strong priority;
- the drawing up of this kind of plan accompanied by counselling, support and oversight by experts which avoids the risk of dropping out and raises at the same time the individual's personal responsibility;
- realistic career perspectives developed together with the young people in various counselling sessions;
- the introduction of intermediate qualification steps;
- activating young people and enabling them to put these ideas into practice independently step by step;

- markedly innovative elements found in qualification chains linked systematically to one another, affording the young people the opportunity to achieve certified partial qualifications (modularising, qualification pass), in which their abilities and experience are documented;
- allowing partial qualifications such as work experience or short-term employment to be documented as well as significant interim successes;
- adequate qualification achieved by conducting real work projects which combine a direct benefit with possibilities for identification.

One of the unresolved problems in this area concerns young people who refuse any contact with the labour institutions, because of negative experience they may have had. In some projects, social workers try to approach these young people (e.g. by visiting them at home, by calling them at home), in order to integrate them into a project (“outreach concepts”).

(2) Networking and cooperation

Some projects demonstrate in an impressive way the specific contribution of networking. Individuals are selected for a certain training or job placement who fulfil the specific requirements for that training or employment position.

Innovative elements are:

- the cooperation of businesses and counsellors in the responsible institution;
- this cooperation accompanied by regular meetings of the project organisers in which an intensive discussion about problems and placement possibilities among the cooperating partners takes place;
- an approach requiring mutual trust and enthusiasm by those concerned;
- the appeal for social responsibility on the part of the businesses, without whose active cooperation such concepts would otherwise be condemned to fail.

(3) Psychosocial stabilisation and personal development

The two above-mentioned approaches aim at integration and qualification, career training or employment activities. Some projects have the primary idea that specific measures are useful before an integration into training or qualification is possible. Young people in critical social and financial situations must first be stabilised (strategies for reducing debts, treatment for drug addiction etc.). After a re-stabilisation phase, young persons can be offered career-oriented assistance and can be supported in their career plans.

These elements surely will not solve the structural problem of unemployment, but for each unemployed youth experimental inroads can be made toward qualification and employment as well as learning, in order to reduce the risk of social exclusion for long-term unemployed young people.

Further examples of innovative aspects in projects combating youth unemployment:

- city district projects and other strategies in order to *improve access to young people*;
- approaches especially for *youth with low qualifications* which include short-term qualifications, practical work experience and the offer of jobs not requiring specific qualifications;
- connection of learning in school with work activity: *new forms of learning* are to be applied;
- stimulation of young people's creativity in order to help them to discover and formulate *their own actual interests* (e.g. theatre role-playing);
- networking between businesses and applicants in order to close *the wide gap between supply and demand for job training places for young people*;
- giving the opportunity to experience under real conditions what it means to cope with the everyday world of work, which includes deadline pressure and quality requirements: projects that are conducted under *realistic conditions relating to the labour market*.

7 Dissemination and exploitation of results

Presentations at conferences or workshops

Overall results and German results

- Beelmann, G. & Kieselbach, T. (1999). *Jugendarbeitslosigkeit und Gesundheit: Der Forschungsstand in der Bundesrepublik* [Youth unemployment and health: state of research in Germany]. Paper presented on a conference of the Society for Health Research and Epidemiology: "Children and Youth. Social and health development", Naumburg (Saale), 25 - 26 June, 1999.
- Beelmann, G. Kieselbach, T. & Traiser, U. (1999). *Jugendarbeitslosigkeit und soziale Ausgrenzung: Ergebnisse einer qualitativen Studie* [Youth unemployment and social exclusion: Results of a qualitative study]. Paper presented on the conference "Unemployment. Ways out of the crisis", Nuremberg, 9 - 10 September, 1999.
- Beelmann, G., Kieselbach, T. & Traiser, U. (2000). *Jugendarbeitslosigkeit und soziale Ausgrenzung: Ergebnisse einer qualitativen Studie in Deutschland* [Youth unemployment and social exclusion: Results of a qualitative study in Germany]. Paper presented on the 13th Congress for Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy, Berlin, 25 February - 1 March, 2000.
- Kieselbach, T. (2000). *Jugend und soziale Integration Ein internationaler Vergleich* [Youth and social integration: An international comparison]. Conference „Gesellschaft im Wandel - Sozialstaat neu gestalten“ [Changing society - To create a new welfare state]. Ministry for Women, Youth, Family and Health (North-Rhine-Westfalia), Cologne, Congress Centre, 29 - 30 March, 2000.
- Kieselbach, T. (2000). *Youth unemployment and social exclusion*. Paper presented to the European Conference „Unemployment and Mental Health“, Deusto University Bilbao, 18 - 19 May, 2000.
- Kieselbach, T. (2000). *Living, working, learning: The work and qualification association and the construction project „Waller Dorf“ Germany*. Paper presented to the European Conference „Unemployment and Mental Health“, Deusto University Bilbao, 18 - 19 May, 2000.
- Beelmann, G. & Kieselbach, T. (2000). *Finding good practices for interventions to combat long-term youth unemployment*. Paper presented to the International Workshop on “Monitoring and Evaluation”, Helsinki, 15 September, 2000.
- Kieselbach, T. (2000). *Youth unemployment, social exclusion and social injustice*. 9th International Conference on Social Justice Research, Tel Aviv, 18 - 21 September, 2000.
- Beelmann, G., Kieselbach, T. & Traiser, U. (2000). *Langzeitarbeitslose Jugendliche in sechs Ländern der EU: Ein qualitative Analyse zu Risiken sozialer Ausgrenzung und deren Entwicklungskontext* [Long-term unemployed young people in six countries of the EU: A qualitative analysis about the risks of social exclusion and their conditions]. Paper presented on the 42th Congress of the German Association for Psychology, Jena, 24 - 28 September, 2000.
- Borghi, V. & Kieselbach, T. (2000). *The submerged economy as a trap and a buffer: Comparative evidence on long-term youth unemployment and the risk of social exclusion in Southern and Northern Europe*. Workshop on Unemployment, Work and Welfare. European Commission (DG Research), Brussels, 9 - 11 November, 2000.
- Kieselbach, T. (2000). *Long-term unemployment among young people: The risk of social exclusion*. Workshop on Unemployment, Work and Welfare. European Commission (DG Research), Brussels, 9 - 11 November, 2000.
- Beelmann, G. & Kieselbach, T. (2000). *Innovative institutionelle Antworten zur Vermeidung von sozialen Ausgrenzungsrisiken bei jugendlichen Langzeitarbeitslosen in Deutschland* [Innovative institutional responses to the risk of social exclusion of long-term unemployed young people in Germany]. Paper presented to a workshop arranged by the "Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung (IAB) der Bundesanstalt für Arbeit", Nuremberg, 23 - 24 November, 2000.
- Kieselbach, T. (2000). *Public Health and the results of unemployment research in Europe*. European Conference on Public Health (EUPHA), Paris, 14 - 16 December, 2000.
- Kieselbach, T. (2001). *Arbeitslosigkeit und soziale Exklusion* [Unemployment and social exclusion]. 17th Symposium on Methodology of Social Psychology in Hamburg: "Sozialpsychologie wirtschaftlicher Prozesse", University of Hamburg, 12 - 13 January, 2001.

- Kieselbach, T. (2001). *Policy recommendations on youth policy for the European Union. Dissemination conference of YUSEDER*, Commission of the European Community, Brussels, July 2001.
- Kieselbach, T. (2001). *Youth unemployment and social exclusion: A comparison between 6 European countries and Argentina*. Conference of the University of Rio Cuarto/Prov. Cordoba. Presentation of the results of the associated study in Argentina "Youth unemployment and social exclusion" (YUSEDER-AR), University of Rio Cuarto, April 2001.
- Kieselbach, T. (2001). *Youth unemployment and social exclusion: A comparison between 6 European countries and China*. Conference of the Hsinhua University Beijing (People's Republic of China) and the Social-Psychiatric Service Wuhan. Presentation of the results of the associated study in China "Youth unemployment and social exclusion" (YUSEDER-CH), Beijing, September 2001.
- Kieselbach, T. (2001). *The stress impact of psychosocial transitions*. EU conference on Mental Health „Tackling Stress and Depression Related Problems in Europe“ (Organisers: Belgian presidency of the EU, European Commission DG Sanco, WHO/EURO), Academy of Medicine, Brussels, 25 -27 October, 2001.
- Kieselbach, T. (2001). *Youth unemployment and the risk of social exclusion: Recommendations for activation policies*. International Conference of the European Trade Union Institute on „Activation Policies for Young Unemployed People in Europe“, Brussels, 6 - 8 November, 2001.
- Kieselbach, T. (2002). *Youth unemployment and the risk of social exclusion in Europe: Results from the YUSEDER project*. Cluster meeting Unemployment, Work, and Welfare“, Nuffield College, University of Oxford, 20 - 22 March, 2002.
- Kieselbach, T. (2002). *Unemployment and health: Future perspectives of coping with occupational transitions*. Korea University, College of Business and Commerce, Jochiwon/Chungnam, Dept. of Business Administration, 21 May, 2002.
- Kieselbach, T. (2002). *Long-term Youth Unemployment and the Risk of Social Exclusion: Qualitative Data from the YUSEDER project*. European Conference for Researchers and Policy Makers „Young People and Transition Policies in Europe“. Madrid, Spanish Youth Institute, 6 - 8 June, 2002.
- Beelmann, G. & Kieselbach, T. (2002). *Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit bei Jugendlichen und das Risiko sozialer Exklusion in Europa*. [Long-term youth unemployment and the risk of social exclusion in Europe]. Paper presented to the European conference “Regional structures for empowerment in Europe – Networking and the development of competencies for young adults” 30 September – 01 October 2002 at the TU Dresden.
- Kieselbach, T. (2002). *Youth unemployment and the risk of social exclusion: Policy recommendations on youth policy for the European Union*. Conference on „Youth Unemployment and Activation Policies“ of the Standing Committee on Social Inclusion of the Commission of the European Community, Brussels, 11 October, 2002.
- Kieselbach, T. (2003). *Long-term youth unemployment and social exclusion: The role of the submerged economy*. Conference „Informal/undeclared work: Research on its changing nature and policy strategies in an enlarged Europe.“ European Commission, DG Research and DG Employment and Social Affairs, Brussels, 21 May, 2003.
- Borghini, V. & Kieselbach, T. (2003). *Submerged economy in Southern Europe and youth unemployment*. Conference „Informal/undeclared work: Research on its changing nature and policy strategies in an enlarged Europe.“ European Commission, DG Research and Employment and Social Affairs, Brussels, 21 May, 2003.
- Kieselbach, T. (2003). *Youth unemployment and health: Future perspectives of counteracting the psycho-social effects of unemployment*. Warsaw High School for Social and Economic Sciences (WSSE), 9 - 10 June, 2003.
- Kieselbach, T. (2004). *Unemployment, health and social exclusion: The need for a social guidance in occupational transitions*. Fudan Medical University, Shanghai/China, 23 August, 2004.
- Kieselbach, T. (2004). *Health effects of unemployment or risk of social exclusion - New trends in unemployment research?* Conference „Persistent Unemployment and Precarious Work - Research and Policy Issues“, 3rd International Conference on Unemployment and Health, Scientific Committee Unemployment and Health of the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH), University of Bremen, 23 – 25 September, 2004.
- The Coordinator and the German team (Thomas Kieselbach, Gert Beelmann, Ute Traiser) have addressed the overall and national results of YUSEDER in a series of radio and TV communications (approximately 25) between 1999 and 2004; The presentation in Warsaw (9-10 June, 2003) was shown as a full presentation of the lecture in the National Polish Educational TV channel.

The overall results of YUSEDER will be presented as a background paper to the *WHO European Office for Investment for Health and Development in Venice* in 2005. The WHO office focuses on Social Determinants of Health and was established in December 2003 under the direction of Erio Ziglio. The Venice office was explicitly interested in the results of YUSEDER and proposed to formulate the health impact of our research and to integrate it associated with the results from our case studies into the future work of this office.

Belgium

- Willems, T. & van Heeringen, K. (1999). Youth Unemployment, Social Exclusion and Suicidality. Paper presented to the "20th Congress of the International Association for Suicide Prevention", Athens, 6 – 10 November, 1999.
- van Heeringen, K., Willems, T. & Portzky G. (2000): *National Report: Youth Unemployment and Social Exclusion*. Presentation of national results to employment offices and employment organisations.
- Willems, T. (2000). *Youth Unemployment and Social Exclusion in Flanders*. Interview for a regional radio station on 23 May 2000. The Belgian team organised a press conference about "Social exclusion and youth unemployment: Results of an European study. EU-project: Youth Unemployment and Social Exclusion: Dimensions, experiences and institutional responses" (YUSEDER) at the University of Gent, 23 May, 2000.

Sweden

- The YUSEDER-project was the theme of a one day conference organised by The Swedish Association of Local Authorities in the County of Varmland, June 2000.
- Rantakeisu, U. (2000). Open lecture, organised by the Social and Welfare Institution and the research project "Welfare – old and new routes" in Norrköping, May 2000.
- Starrin, B. (2000). *The concept of social exclusion*. Paper presented at a conference on Social Capital and Social Exclusion, arranged by Swedish Council for Planning and Coordination of Research, May 2000.
- Starrin, B. (2000). *Om begreppet social exclusion* [On the concept of social exclusion], Paper presented at the meeting "Individual, society and health – Social welfare, social capital and the civil society". Stockholm, Swedish Research Council, 6 March, 2000.

Greece

- Sokou, K., Bayetakou, D., Papantoniou, V., Bada, E. & Kieselbach, T. (2000): *Youth Unemployment: A Factor of Inequality, Social Exclusion and Mental Health Disturbances*. Paper presented to the conference "HEALTH 21" organised by the National School of Public Health, Athens, 21 - 23 February, 2000.
- The results of the YUSEDER project regarding issues of mental health and delinquency of young unemployed were presented in the European Conference "Violence and Promotion of Child and Young People Mental Health", Lisbon, 1 - 3 June, 2000, together with a presentation on the link of schools to the labour market.
- The results of the Greek YUSEDER project were presented to the *Health Promoting Schools Meeting*, organised by the World Health Organisation, Copenhagen, 14 - 16 June, 2000. It was proposed that the role of the school in the preparation of young people for the labour market should be an issue for action of the health promoting schools.
- A conference was organised on the premises of the Institute of Child Health in June 2000 with the participation of twelve persons working in the employment offices of OAED and in local authorities and of five young long-term unemployed persons. YUSEDER researchers presented the results of the study and there was a fruitful exchange of ideas and information among participants. In addition a two hours training on the needs of the young unemployed persons and on how to deal with them in everyday practice was delivered.
- The Greek researchers organized a conference on *Youth Unemployment, Health and Social Exclusion: The Consequences from the Existence and Non Existence of Policies and of their Implementation in Europe* in Athens, May 2001.

- Sokou, K. (2001): *Youth Unemployment and Health in Greece*, Paper presented to the European Expert Meeting "Unemployment and Health in Europe", sponsored by the European Commission, 6 - 7 July, 2001, Berlin, Germany.
- Sokou, K. (2003): *Mental and Social Health Promotion: A Prevention Policy Counteracting Violence*. Paper presented to the international conference, KLIMAKA NGO, 1 November, 2003, Athens.
- Sokou, K. (2003-2005): Unemployment and its impact in the economy and society's wellbeing, articles presented in the newspaper BHMA including information of the Greek project of YUSEDER.
- Sokou, K. (2004): *Youth Unemployment and Social Exclusion*, paper presented to the conference "Social Inclusion-Towards a European Best Practice?", Royal Ministry of Social Affairs, FAMI, GIV, 5 - 6 February, 2004, Oslo, Norway.
- Sokou, K. (2005): *Unemployment –youth unemployment and its impact on the family*, paper to be presented in the international conference on "Family in Crisis Condition", KLIMAKA NGO, 14 - 16 May, 2005, Athens.

Italy

- Borghi, V. & Kieselbach, T. (2000). *The submerged economy as a trap and a buffer: Comparative evidence on long-term youth unemployment and the risk of social exclusion in Southern and Northern Europe*. Workshop on Unemployment, Work and Welfare. European Commission (DG Research), Brussels, 9 - 11 November, 2000.
- Borghi, V. (co-participation with T. Kieselbach), as YUSEDER research team, to the *Workshop on Unemployment, Work and Welfare*, (co-ordinated by Duncan Gallie, Oxford, 18 – 20 March, 2002).
- Borghi, V. & Kieselbach, T. (2003). Submerged economy in Southern Europe and youth unemployment. Conference „Informal/undeclared work: Research on its changing nature and policy strategies in an enlarged Europe.“ European Commission, DG Research and Employment and Social Affairs, Brussels, 21 May, 2003.
- Chicchi F. (2001). Trasformazioni del lavoro e forme emergenti di debolezza sociale. Alcune considerazioni teorico-metodologiche sulle pratiche di inserimento lavorativo dei soggetti a rischio di esclusione sociale [Transformations of work and emerging forms of social weakness. Some considerations on the employability of people at risk of social exclusion]. Paper presented at the conference "*Politiche e percorsi di inserimento lavorativo per cittadini in situazione di svantaggio sociale*" [Policies and pathways of work placement for disadvantaged citizens] organized by the Provincial Council of Forlì-Cesena, Forlì, 19 October, 2001.
- Chicchi F. (2003). L'attivazione delle capacità per affrontare la vulnerabilità sociale [Capabilities' activation to cope with social vulnerability]. Paper presented at the series of conferences "Luoghi di idee e progetti" [Places, ideas and projects] organized by the Autonomous Provincial Council of Trento, Trento, 13 March, 2003.

Spain

- Espluga, J. (1999). *El projecte Yuseder: Atur Juvenil i exclusió social a sis països europeus* [The YUSEDER Project: Youth Unemployment and Social Exclusion in Six European countries]. Presentation at the 3rd Catalan Congress of Sociology. Lleida, 20 – 21 March, 1999.
- The Spanish team participated in a workshop organized by the researchers of three European TSER projects: YUSEDER (Youth Unemployment and Social Exclusion), SOSTRIS (Social Strategies in Risk Societies) and ESOPO (Evaluation of Social Policies against Social Exclusion at the Local Urban Level). The event was addressed to professionals of social policies, social workers, local politicians and NGOs working in the field of social exclusion. Barcelona, 16 December, 1999.
- The Spanish team presented the YUSEDER project in a workshop organized by the "Escola universitària de Treball Social 'Creu Roja' de Lleida" [University School of Social Workers 'Red Cross' of Lleida]. Lleida, 10 – 12 May, 2000.
- Espluga, J. (2000). Trabajo, desempleo y salud en jóvenes [Work, Unemployment and Health among Youths]. Communication presented to the I *Encuentros entre Humanidades y Ciencias Sociales: Pensar el trabajo: historia y reconceptualización de una idea en transformación*. [First meeting among Humanities

- and Social Sciences: Thinking the work: history and reconceptualization of a idea on transformation] Institut Universitari de Cultura, Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona, 18 - 20 December, 2000.
- Espluga, J. (2001). Proyecto YUSEDER :Desempleo Juvenil y Exclusión Social: El caso español: Cataluña y Andalucía. [Yuseder Project: The Spanish Case]. Communication to *Jornadas de Investigación "Desempleo Juvenil y Exclusión Social"*, organized by the Universidad Nacional de Río Cuarto (Argentina) and Bremen University (RFA), in collaboration with the *Scientific Committee "Unemployment and Health" of the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH)*. Río Cuarto (Córdoba-Argentina), 19 - 20 April, 2001.
- Espluga, J.(2001). Riesgo, salud y trabajo: La atribulada vida del fakir en la sociedad del riesgo. [Risk, health and work: The active life of fakir in the risk society]. Communication presented to the *V Congreso Vasco de Sociología [5th Basque Congress of Sociology]*, organized by the Asociación Vasca de Sociología. Bilbao, 1 – 3 March, 2001.
- The Spanish team participated in a radio debate in Barcelona (Radio Pica) in 2001, discussing about Youth Unemployment (and showing some results of YUSEDER).
- The Spanish team participated in a debate with others social researchers in the III Catalan Congress of Youth (8 October 2002) about youth unemployment and health issues (also showing results of YUSEDER).

Book publications for the overall project

- Kieselbach, T. (Ed.) in collaboration with van Heeringen, K., La Rosa, M., Lemkow, L., Sokou, K. & Starrin, B. (2000). *Youth Unemployment and Health: A Comparison of Six European Countries* (Psychology of Social Inequality, vol. 9, YUSEDER publication no. 1). Opladen: Leske + Budrich (232 pp.).
- Kieselbach, T. (Ed.) in collaboration with van Heeringen, K., La Rosa, M., Lemkow, L., Sokou, K. & Starrin, B. (2000). *Youth Unemployment and Social Exclusion: A Comparison of Six European Countries* (Psychology of Social Inequality, vol. 10, YUSEDER publication no. 2). Opladen: Leske + Budrich (320 pp.).
- Kieselbach, T., van Heeringen, K., La Rosa, M., Lemkow, L., Sokou, K. & Starrin, B. (Eds.) (2001). *Living on the Edge – An Empirical Analysis on Long-term Youth Unemployment and Social Exclusion in Europe* (Psychology of Social Inequality, vol. 11, YUSEDER publication no. 3). Opladen: Leske + Budrich (476 pp.).
- La Rosa, M. & Kieselbach, T. (Eds.) (1999). *Disoccupazione giovanile ed esclusione sociale. Un approccio interpretativo e primi elementi di analisi* [Youth Unemployment and Social Exclusion. An Interpretative Approach and Initial Elements of Analysis] (Sociologia del Lavoro – Teorie e Ricerche). Milano: Angeli (191 pp.).
- Espluga, J. Lemkow, L. Baltiérrez, J. & Kieselbach, T. (2001). *Atur juvenil, Salut i Exclusió Social. Recerques, experiències i accions institucionals a Espanya*. [Youth Unemployment, Health, Social Exclusion. Research, Experiences and Institutional Actions in Spain]. Barcelona: Servei de Publicacions de la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.
- Chicchi F. (2001). *Derive sociali. Precarizzazione del lavoro, crisi del legame sociale ed egemonia culturale del rischio* [Social drifts. Precarisation of work, crisis of social ties and cultural hegemony of risk]. Milano: FrancoAngeli.
- Espluga, J., Lemkow, L., Baltiérrez, J. & Kieselbach, T. (2004). *Desempleo Juveni, Exclusion Social y Salud. Investigaciones, Experiencias y Acciones Institucionales en Espana* [Youth Unemployment, Social Exclusion and Health. Research, Experiences and Institutional Actions in Spain]. Barcelona: Icaria (197 pp.).
- Kieselbach, T., Beelmann, G. & Traiser, U. (2006). *Jugendarbeitslosigkeit und das Risiko sozialer Ausgrenzung in Deutschland. Dimensionen, subjektive Erfahrungen und institutionelle Antworten* [Youth Unemployment and the Risk of Social Exclusion in Germany. Dimensions, Subjective Experiences and Institutional Responses]. (Psychology of Social Inequality, vol. 13). Wiesbaden: VS – Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

Dissertations (based on the respective national results of YUSEDER)

- Chicchi, F. (2001). *Crisi della società industriale, trasformazioni del lavoro e rischi di esclusione sociale. Un'analisi interpretativa, una scelta metodologica ed un'indagine empirica sulle nuove forme di debolezza sociale* (Crisis of industrial society, work transformations and risks of social exclusion. An interpreta-

- tive analysis, a methodological choice and an empirical research on the new forms of social weakness). Ph.D. thesis submitted to the Department of Sociology of the University of Bologna.
- Espluga, J. (2001) *Respostes socials al risc tecnològic*. [Social responses to technological risks. PhD Dissertation. Department of Sociology. Autonomous University of Barcelona.
- Rantakeisu, U. (2002). The faces of unemployment - Four studies of the social and health related expressions of unemployment. Ph.D. thesis . Department of Social Work, Gothenburg University, Gothenburg.
- Beelmann, G. (2003). *Langzeitarbeitslose Jugendliche in Deutschland. Eine handlungsorientierte Analyse personaler und situativer Faktoren* [Long-term unemployed youths in Germany. An action-orientated analysis of personal and situative factors]. Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, University of Bremen. Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovac.
- Sokou, K. (2005): *Youth Unemployment, Health and Social Exclusion in Greece*, PhD Thesis, submitted to the University of Bremen (2005).

Articles in journals and edited books

Overall results and German results

- Beelmann, G. Kieselbach, T., & Traiser, U. (2000). Jugendarbeitslosigkeit und soziale Exklusion: Eine empirische Studie in West- und Ostdeutschland [Youth unemployment and social exclusion: An empirical study in West and East Germany]. *Verhaltenstherapie und Psychosoziale Praxis*, 32 (3), 369-378.
- Kieselbach, T (2000). Jugend und soziale Integration: Ein internationaler Vergleich [Youth and social integration: An international comparison]. In B. Blanke (Ed.), *Gesellschaft im Wandel - Sozialstaat neu gestalten* [Changing society - To create a new welfare state]. Ministry for Women, Youth, Family and Health (North-Rhine-Westfalia).
- Beelmann, G. & Kieselbach, T. (2001). Finding good practices for interventions to combat long-term youth unemployment. In S. Mannila, M. Ala-Kauhaluoma & S. Valjakka (Eds.), *Good Practice in Finding Good Practice. International Workshop in Evaluation*. Helsinki: Rehabilitation Foundation.
- Kieselbach, T. (2001). Jugend und soziale Integration: Ein internationaler Vergleich. In Ministerium für Frauen, Jugend, Familie und Gesundheit in NRW Hrsg.), *Gesellschaft im Wandel - Sozialstaat neu gestalten* (S. 179-201). Düsseldorf: Ministerium für Frauen, Jugend, Familie und Gesundheit in NRW.
- Beelmann, G., Kieselbach, T. & Traiser, U. (2001). Jugendarbeitslosigkeit und soziale Ausgrenzung: Ergebnisse einer qualitativen Analyse in Ost- und Westdeutschland. In J. Zempel, J. Bacher & K. Moser (Hrsg.), *Erwerbslosigkeit - Ursachen, Auswirkungen und Interventionen* (S. 133-148). (Psychologie sozialer Ungleichheit, Bd. 12). Opladen: Leske + Budrich.
- Borghì, V. & Kieselbach, T. (2001). L'economia sommersa, trappola o risorsa? *Impresa Sociale*, no. 59, Sept./Oct., 21-31.
- Kieselbach, T. (2001). Atur juvenil i risc d'exclusió social des d'una perspectiva comparada europea. In J. Espluga, L. Lemkow, J. Baltiérrez & T. Kieselbach (2001), *Atur Juvenil, Salut i Exclusió Social. Recerques, Experiències i Accions Institucionals a Espanya*. [Youth Unemployment, Health, Social Exclusion. Research, Experiences and Institutional Actions in Spain] (pp. 7-22). Barcelona: Servei de Publicacions de la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.
- Kieselbach, T. (2002). I rischi della disoccupazione giovanile. Un bilancio della ricerca YUSEDER. *Impresa Sociale*, no. 61, Jan./Febr, 69-80.
- Kieselbach, T. (2002). Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit unter Jugendlichen: Das Risiko sozialer Ausgrenzung. In H. Reuter & M. Stadler (Hrsg.), *Lebenswelt und Erleben. Beiträge zur Erfahrungspsychologie (Festschrift zum 65. Geburtstag von Gisla Gniech)* (S. 125-141). Lengerich: Pabst.
- Kieselbach, T. (2002). Disoccupazione di lunga durata e rischi di esclusione sociale tra i giovani: uno studio in sei paesi europei. In V. Borghi (Ed.), *Vulnerabilità, inclusione sociale e lavoro: Contributi per la comprensione dei processi di esclusione sociale e delle problematiche di policy* (pp. 145-174). Milano: FrancoAngeli.
- Borghì, V. & Kieselbach, T. (2002). Disoccupazione giovanile e lavoro irregolare: Nord e Sud Europa a confronto. In V. Borghi (Ed.), *Vulnerabilità, inclusione sociale e lavoro: Contributi per la comprensione dei processi di esclusione sociale e delle problematiche di policy* (pp. 175-186). Milano: FrancoAngeli.
- Kieselbach, T. (2003). Youth unemployment and a social convoy for occupational transitions: Two European research projects. In European Commission and World Health Organization (Eds.), *Final Report of the*

- Joint Conference „Coping with Stress and Depression-Related Problems in Europe“, Brussels, 25-27 Oct 2001. Brussels: Federal Ministry of Social Affairs. Public Health and the Environment.
- Kieselbach, T. & Beelmann, G. (2003). Arbeitslosigkeit als Risiko sozialer Ausgrenzung bei Jugendlichen in Europa. Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte (Beilage zur Wochenzeitung „Das Parlament“) B 6-7/2003, 32-39.
- Kieselbach, T. (2003). Youth unemployment and the risk of social exclusion: Comparative analysis of qualitative data. In A. Lopez Blasco, W. McNeish & A. Walther (Eds.), *Young People and Contradictions of Inclusion. Towards Integrated Transition Policies in Europe* (pp. 43-64). Bristol: Policy Press.
- Kieselbach, T. (2003). Long-term unemployment among young people: The risk of social exclusion. In D. Dooley & R. Catalano (Eds.), *Unemployment and Health (Special Issue)*. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 32(1-2), 69-76.
- Kieselbach, T. (2004). Mlodzi zagrozeni solectnym wykluczeniem (Youth at risk of social exclusion). *Oswiata i Wychowanie (Bildung und Erziehung)*, Nr.1 (755), 3-8.
- Kieselbach, T. (2004). Ryzyko nie rozklada sie równo (The risk of social exclusion is not distributed evenly). *Oswiata i Wychowanie (Bildung und Erziehung)*, Nr.2 (756), 11-17.
- Kieselbach, T. (2004). Psychology of unemployment and social exclusion. Youth unemployment in six European countries and the risk of social exclusion. In D. Gallie (Ed.), *Resisting Marginalization: Unemployment Experience and Social Policy in the European Union* (pp. 54-80). Oxford: University Press.
- Kieselbach, T. & Traiser, U. (2004). Long-term unemployment and the risk of social exclusion among young people in Europe: Recommendations for activation policies. In A. Serrano (Ed.). *Are Activation Policies Converging in Europe? The European Employment Strategy for Young People* (pp. 415-450). Brussels: European Trade Union Institute (ETUI).
- Beelmann, G. & Kieselbach, T. (2004). Innovative Konzepte zur Bekämpfung der Jugendarbeitslosigkeit: Ergebnisse einer Expertenbefragung im Rahmen eines EU-Projektes. *Jugend, Beruf, Gesellschaft*, 55(1), 50-62.
- Kieselbach, T. (2004). Desempleo juvenil de larga duracion y riesgo de exclusiion social en Europa: informe cualitativo del proyecto de investigacion YUSEDER. *Revista de Estudios de Juventud (Special issue: Politicas de Juventud en Europa: un contexto de flexibilidad e incertidumbre)*, No.85, Junio 2004, 31-50.
- Kieselbach, T. & Beelmann, G. (2005). Programme zur Bewältigung von Jugendarbeitslosigkeit. Ergebnisse eines EU-Forschungsprojektes zu Jugendarbeitslosigkeit und dem Risiko sozialer Exklusion. In B. Röhrle (Ed.), *Prävention und Gesundheitsförderung für Kinder und Jugendliche*. Tübingen: DGVT-Verlag (forthcoming).
- Kieselbach, T. (2005). Health effects of unemployment or risk of social exclusion: New trends in psychological unemployment research? In Kieselbach, T. & Winefield, T. (Eds.), *The health impact of occupational transitions*. Sidney. Australian Academic Press (forthcoming).
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Internet

The project goals, participants and results are presented on the following three web sites:

- Web Site of Coordinator and German team: www.ipg.uni-bremen.de/Yuseder/
- Web site of Italian team: www.spbo.unibo.it/bologna/dipartim/dsoc/tser/index.html
- Web Site of Swedish team: www.cff.kau.se/forskningsomraden/euproj1.htm

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ANNEX I: OPENING SPEECH TO THE FINAL WORKSHOP

BOROUGH OF SORANO
Province of Grosseto, Toscana/Italy
The Mayor
Onorevole Ermanno Benocci

Opening speech to the Workshop
“Youth Unemployment and Social Exclusion: Dimensions, Subjective Experiences and Institutional Responses in Six Countries of the EU” (YUSEDER)
 Research Project supported by the European Commission, Directorate General Research in the Programme
“Targeted Socio-Economic Research” (TSER)

Castello di Sorano, 4-6 June, 2000

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to welcome you on behalf of the Borough of Sorano, and to thank you for having chosen our town for your conference.

I would like to say that the topics you are going to deal with during the course of the conference are not only of general interest, but are also of particular pertinence to the problems of development of Sorano and of the Maremma in general.

Our local area is blighted by a series of problems which failed to be resolved during the years of Italian economic expansion in the 1960s. On the contrary, the crisis suffered by the traditional rural economy led to thousands of local people leaving Sorano for the big cities, and within the space of 40 years the population was literally halved. Despite this, however, the local community did not collapse altogether, largely thanks to agricultural reform that saw hundreds of acres of land being assigned to local farm workers, and encouraged the setting up of farm co-operatives such as the Cheese-makers Co-operative in Sorano, and the Wine-producers Co-operative in Pitigliano which were to prove of vital importance to the transformation and sale of local products.

Thus the local economy continued to be essentially a rural one, and the lack of industrial development meant that the local area remained for the best part intact. On the other hand, the local schools were little involved in the question of employment, and there is to this day a significant level of unemployment, especially among young people and women.

Recently, greater investment has been made in the area's historical and cultural heritage (the Orsini Castle (Fortezza Orsini), the historical town centres, the Archaeological Park at the “Tufa Town”), thanks largely to considerable funding from the EU, and this has marked the beginning of tourist development in the local area. This is undoubtedly the right choice, but it is not, however, enough to create a sufficient number of new jobs.

We believe that a further step towards economic development must involve:

- continued investment in local agriculture, with the emphasis on quality products, in order that young people find it worthwhile, both economically and culturally, to remain in, or return to, farming in the future;
- a different form of organisation designed to improve the management of cultural resources, together with tourism of a certain quality;
- educational reform designed to create schools that finally face up to the problems of local development;
- improved professional training, the lack of which often lies at the roots of local unemployment.

I apologise for this “intrusion” in your work, and would like to thank you once again and wish you a productive and enjoyable stay in this Etruscan land.

Onorevole Ermanno Benocci
 Mayor of Sorano

ANNEX II: PRESS RELEASE

"Youth Unemployment and Social Exclusion: Objective Dimensions, Subjective Experiences, and Innovative Institutional Responses in Six European Countries" (YUSEDER)

supported by the

Research Directorate General of the European Commission (DG XII)

**Targeted Socio-Economic Research Programme (TSER)
of the 4th Framework Programme**

**International Research Workshop at the Comune of Sorano,
Castello di Sorano, 4-5 June 2000
hosted by the Mayor of Sorano**

Press Release: Monday, 5 June, Castello di Sorano

An European Research consortium held its Final Workshop in the Castello di Sorano in the Province of Grosseto from June 4-5.

Youth unemployment has become one of the most crucial social problems in many EU countries. In the 90s it can be observed that in most Western countries, the rates of youth unemployment have risen dramatically, in some of these countries the unemployment problem can be considered primarily a problem of refused entry to the labour market for members of the younger generation. This development increases the risk of psychosocial impairment to the individuals affected as well as to the social fabric in general.

The European Commission had launched a call for proposals looking for new knowledge of the key mechanisms linking the experience of long-term youth unemployment to various dimensions of social disintegration, conceived of in the theoretical framework of social exclusion. In this context, not only the mechanisms exacerbating the stress of unemployment (vulnerability factors) but also the protective mechanisms preventing or reducing the risk of social exclusion have to be taken into consideration. The second research question relates to new options of institutional and political intervention and counteraction in different national contexts.

The project *„Youth Unemployment and Social Exclusion: Objective Dimensions, Subjective Experiences, and Innovative Institutional Responses in Six European Countries., (YUSEDER)* is supported by the Research Directorate General of the European Commission (DG XII) within the Targeted Socio-Economic Research Programme (TSER) of the 4th Framework Programme.

The consortium of the research project is coordinated by Prof. Dr. Thomas Kieselbach (University of Bremen, Germany)¹ and is composed of the following national partners: Prof. Dr. Kees van Heeringen (University of Gent, Belgium)², Prof. Dr. Michele La Rosa (University of Bologna, Italy)³, Prof. Dr. Louis Lemkow (Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain)⁴, Katerina Sokou, M.A. (Greek Network of Health Promoting Schools and Institute for Child Health Athens, Greece)⁵ and Prof. Dr. Bengt Starrin (University of Karlstad, Sweden)⁶.

The research project is organised around three tasks:

¹ Members of the German research team: Thomas Kieselbach, Gert Beelmann, Ute Traiser, Andrea Stitzel

² Members of the Belgian research team: Kees van Heeringen, Tine Willems, Wouter Vanderplasschen, Gwendolyn Portzky

³ Members of the Italian research team: Michele La Rosa, Vando Borghi, Federico Chicchi, Roberto Rizza

⁴ Members of the Spanish research team: Louis Lemkow, Josep Espluga, Josep Baltierrez

⁵ Members of the Greek research team: Katerina Sokou, Demetra Bayetakou, Valentine Papantoniou, Katerina Christofi

⁶ Members of the Swedish research team: Bengt Starrin, Erik Forsberg, Marina Kalander Blomqvist, Ulla Ranta-keisu

Task 1:

- empirical evidence on youth unemployment and health in each country
- clarification of the concept of social exclusion
- description of social exclusion of different groups of young people at risk of social exclusion

Task 2:

- qualitative analysis of 300 long-term unemployed young people (50 in each country) with regard to
- variables facilitating long-term unemployment among young people,
- the main factors contributing to social exclusion / inclusion (vulnerability factors and protective factors), and
- the health effects associated with social exclusion.

Task 3:

- innovative institutional responses on a local, regional and national level in various societal sectors to counteract the risk of social exclusion as a consequence of long-term unemployment.

The research project has analysed and compared empirical evidence on youth unemployment from a comparative perspective for three Northern European countries (Sweden, Germany, Belgium) and for three Southern European countries (Spain, Italy, Greece). The empirical research in the six countries is, on the one hand, dedicated to different national problems of youth unemployment, and on the other hand follows different scientific orientations and methodologies, namely sociological, psychological, psychiatric, and cultural. For each country a specific national report is presented. The comparative section describes and attempts to explain the similarities and dissimilarities between countries having rather diverse historical and social understandings of being in and out of work for young people.

The youth unemployment rates (- under 25 years) varied considerably among the YUSEDER countries between 10 % (Germany) and 39% (Spain) with an average rate of 20% in EU-15 (approx. double than the average unemployment rate in 1998) thus forming an extremely diverse social background to the individual experience in the respective countries.

Theses in regard to the specific health problems of youth unemployment

1. Youth is a sensible developmental phase where long-term unemployment can create longer lasting damages.
2. Denied entry into the labour market may lead to a decomposition of the capacity to work not easily to be reversed in the future.
3. Age-dependent differential stress profiles: Young people display more feelings of anxiousness, anger, helplessness, guilt and shame and often suffer more from domestic tensions and attributions of blame than older unemployed people
4. Widening developmental gap between unemployed and employed young people: employed young people improve their psychosocial health compared to school whereas the health of those becoming unemployed deteriorates.
5. The better health status of young people compared to persons of median age may delay the health damages of unemployment (despite a riskier health behaviour of young unemployed compared to employed ones).

We have analysed the empirical results of studies on youth unemployment and health in six European countries and come to the following conclusion:

Unemployed young people have distinctly higher risk of health related problems, this holds especially true for mental health and psychosocial problems, an increase of depressive disorders as well as a deterioration of their quality of life. At the same time they suffer from a deterioration of objective health indicators e.g., in the area of suicidal behaviour.

Especially when the situation of being unemployed is experienced as shameful feelings of inferiority, worthlessness and vulnerability are shown that can exert more severe health effects in the long run.

Long-term youth unemployment and the risk of social exclusion

The dimensions of social exclusion are:

- **Labour market exclusion** describes primarily situations where people are facing structural barriers to (re-)enter the labour market. However, important are also forms of "self-exclusion" in the sense of a retreat of the affected person leading to resignation regarding (re-)employment.

- **Economic exclusion** describes a situation of poverty. Poverty refers not only to culturally defined standards of living, but includes also the subjective feeling of being poor due to on the one hand financial dependency upon the welfare state or a socially not accepted income, and on the other hand the loss of ability to financially support oneself or the own family.
- **Social isolation** can be found in the way of either a retreat of the wider social network or an own retreat in the sense of a self-isolation. Both situations can lead either to a reduction of social contacts (isolation) or a concentration of the remaining contacts to only one specific group of people (e.g. family of origin or peers who are in the same disadvantaged living situation).
- **Cultural Exclusion** refer to a situation that a person – usually as an effect of exclusion from the labour market and / or economic exclusion – has been cut off from the possibility to live according to the socially accepted norms and values, and to take part in the dominant patterns of behaviour – especially with regard to consumption patterns. This can lead to an identification with deviant norms and behaviours (in the sense of a self-exclusion from society).
- **Institutional exclusion** can be described as lack of support both before and during phases of unemployment, but also institutional dependency leading to shame and passivity. Firstly, schools and other educational systems are increasingly important for the future social positioning of the person. Secondly, state support can have a counterproductive effect in the sense of an exclusion of unemployed persons through their inclusion into a stable system of welfare support or intervention schemes. Thirdly, a withdrawal of public and private services from unemployed persons can take place.
- **Spatial exclusion** can arise through the spatial concentration of persons with limited financial possibilities within a specific neighbourhood. These residential areas often lack an adequate infrastructure (e.g. lack of transport, shops, schools, recreational facilities, health and other services, but also cultural events, etc.) leading to or reinforcing e.g. low qualification level, poor health status, low community integration, etc. In addition, being a resident within such a locality is often also linked with stigmatisation processes. Spatial exclusion is only relevant in Greece and Italy

These dimensions of social exclusion built the theoretical construction of a typology of different groups of long-term unemployed youth common for each country:

- high risk at social exclusion,
- increased risk at social exclusion and
- low risk at social exclusion.

Which are the vulnerability factors that increase the risk of social exclusion:

low qualification	all countries
passive job search behaviour	all countries
low chances of employment (objectively and subjectively)	all countries
precarious financial situation	all countries
low social support	all countries
low institutional support	Belgium, Germany, Sweden (relevant only for youths in Northern Europe, in the Southern countries the expectations are lower due to the relative lack of respective institutions)
deviant behaviour	Germany, Sweden, Spain
low self-esteem	all countries
psychosocial strain	all countries

Which are the protective factors that reduce the risk of social exclusion?

high qualifications (scholastic and occupational)	ambivalent in Southern Europe (esp. Italy and Greece)
active job search behaviour	all countries
economic support	all countries
social support	- Northern Europe: integration into social networks - Southern Europe: family support
institutional support	all countries
socio-cultural activities	all countries
high self-esteem	all countries

In Northern Europe (Belgium, Germany) we find a higher risk of social exclusion (due to social isolation, stronger work ethics, and greater selection of unemployed) with the exception of Sweden where a different societal understanding of social responsibility for youth unemployment seems to reduce this risk.

Summary

The results of the comparative analysis show that complex social factors play an important role in buffering or reinforcing the driving forces toward social exclusion in these young people, e.g.

- the supporting role of the family of origin,
- the presence of helping institutions like labour market counselling or
- the availability of irregular work in the submerged economy.

The normalisation of youth unemployment and the prolongation of the youth period - although not meeting central developmental demands of maturing young people - as well as a widely accepted shadow economy strongly influence the individual experience. These factors moderate tendencies of blaming oneself, considerably lower the risk of social exclusion and concomitantly reduce ill-health effects associated with long-term unemployment and social exclusion.

The distribution of these three risk types of social exclusion varies widely among the six countries: The highest risks of SE are to be found in the Northern European countries, with the exception of Sweden. The relatively low SE profile in Sweden may be attributed to the fact that the Swedish society with a rather new phenomenon of youth unemployment having risen in the first half of the nineties expresses in a much more profound way than other Northern European countries the social responsibility for youth unemployment creating a relative sense of security in young people in a restricted labour market (concept of social guarantee).

Deviant reactions were observed only in Eastern Germany where youth unemployment developed as part of the system transformation affecting especially the social channels of integration for young people.

What should be the focus of interventions schemes for young unemployed?

The last phase of the YUSEDER-project was concerned with institutional responses to combat long-term youth unemployment and social exclusion. In the participating countries there are different approaches in regard to this issue. One common aspect pointed out by several experts from different institutions is that the target of labour market inclusion alone is not sufficient for a permanent protection against long-term youth unemployment and social exclusion.

Most experts made clear, that for a sustainable integration into the labour market besides specific occupational qualifications the personality of the young unemployed has to be stabilized and psycho-social characteristics like competence, personal initiative and self-esteem should be developed and enhanced.

There are some very interesting projects described, which go in line with the Employment Guidelines 2000 from the EC issued in March this year. The European Commission assumes that in order to tackle youth unemployment, "every unemployed young person is offered a new start before reaching six months of unemployment, in form of training, retraining, work practice, a job or other employability measure with a view to effective integration into the labour market". In addition to this the Council of the European Union formulates, that "all young people should have the opportunity to gain an entry into the world of work before completing six months of unemployment".

In Sweden one project includes for young people the guarantee of work, training or employability schemes before reaching 100 days of unemployment. This should be in the future from the political point of view a central programme for all European countries.

From the psychological point of view, the main point that we want to stress is that projects and activities which are based only on qualification and training schemes are not sufficient. But on the other hand projects which include only the stabilisation of the personality of the unemployed seem to be not an adequate preparation for the entry into the labour market.

We have to pursue approaches in the European Union which take into account both aspects. Especially for young long-term unemployed it is essential, to initiate projects which combine concrete occupational training with personal development schemes in close cooperation with social institutions, employers and unions and last not least self-help groups.

Book publications for the overall project

Kieselbach, T. (Ed.) in collaboration with van Heeringen, K., La Rosa, M., Lemkow, L., Sokou, K. & Starrin, B. (2000). *Youth Unemployment and Health: A Comparison of Six European Countries* (Psychology of Social Inequality, vol. 9, YUSEDER publication no. 1). Opladen: Leske + Budrich (232 pp.).

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