



CITISPYCE

Combating inequalities through innovative social practices of, and for,
young people in cities across Europe

Work Package 2:

Ten country reports on the current ‘state of play’ in the partners’ countries

Work Package Leader:

MAH – Malmö University

This project has received funding from the European Union’s Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no 320359.





Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across
Europe

Cities in their national contexts

ATHENS

Symptoms and causes of inequality affecting young people

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KMOP

This report is part of Work Package 2 of the research project entitled “Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across Europe” (CITISPYCE). CITISPYCE has been devised against the back drop of research which shows the disproportionate impact of the global economic crisis on young people across Europe. This includes excessively high rates of youth unemployment (particularly amongst those who face multiple social, economic and cultural disadvantages) and threats to the social provision enjoyed by previous generations. CITISPYCE partners are working on a three year multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral programme to examine the current state of the art and ideas concerning social innovation against inequalities faced by young people, explore socially innovative practices being developed by and for young people in urban areas, and test the transferability of local models of innovative practice in order to develop new policy approaches. The CITISPYCE consortium covers ten European countries and is funded by the European Commission (FP7, Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities).

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1. The city of Athens - a presentation of the city

Athens has been the leading city of Greece since Antiquity; one of the oldest cities in the world, tracing its existence 7000 years ago. One of the most crucial periods for Athens and its literal rebuild in order to become again a leading, prosperous city, was the 19th century when Greece won its independence from the Ottoman rule (1827) and proceeded to great reforms, including land reforms under the governance of Ioannis Kapodistrias.

During the Second World War and the sequent civil war, Greece was devastated and left in an extremely poor state in the early 1950s; i.e. collapsed monetary and banking system, poverty, famines and massive unemployment (Woodhouse, 2002). Also, agricultural production was significantly affected, industrial production totally annihilated and national infrastructures were severely damaged (Stergiou, 2006). Nevertheless, Greece managed to recover quickly; achieved monetary and banking stability, boosted the exports of agricultural products and increased the per capita income (Fragkiadis, 2007). Within that framework, Athens continued to be the most densely populated region, with the most adequate infrastructure and the most powerful administrative and economic activity in the whole country that attracted the majority of young people and the highly educated and skilled workforce. In addition, the city met a rapid spatial expansion in the 1950s and 1960s.

During 1960-1970s, and particularly during dictatorship (1967-1974), the phenomenon of ‘urbanization’ became more apparent; the farming population largely decreased and a wave of migration at the time led to the total abandonment of certain remote regions and the even bigger increase of the population in urban areas (Fragkiadis, 2007). Despite a subsequent economic crisis during the 1980s, due to the expansionary fiscal policies implemented in the previous years, Greece managed to overcome quickly again the difficulties and was able to dramatically improve its finances during the 1990s. An unexpected growth

throughout the 1990s, also continued into the new millennium,¹ involving a major improvement in employability, welfare and citizens' living standards and providing immense opportunities to young people at the time (Lolos, 1998). Unfortunately, these glorious signs of prosperity only lasted for less than two decades, until the final blow of the new economic crisis (2009), which brought the country in its current economic and social situation.

Based on the last census in 2011, the total population of Greece is 9,903,268 people, a number which has significantly diminished during the last decade (10,206,539 based on the 2001 official census). The aforementioned decrease in numbers is especially apparent in the urban space, especially in Athens, and is even greater with regard to the young population, as compared to other countries. Today 3,089,698 people are officially living in Athens – in contrast to 3,165,823 in 2001, and the rest are spread throughout the country (Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2001; Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2012).² With special regard to young people (aged 15-29), their percentage among the total population has fallen by as much as a fifth during the last decade, below 18% (European Commission, 2012a).

Table 1: Percentages of young people in Greece, aged 15-24

Proportion of population aged 15-24 years											
2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
14.3	13.8	13.3	12.9	12.4	12.0	11.6	11.2	10.8	10.6	10.3	10.2

Table 1 indicates data derived by Eurostat, referring to the proportion of population aged 15-24 from 2001 until 2012 (Eurostat, 2012). The decrease of younger people in Greece could be the direct result of various social causes that mostly revolve around low fertility rates and an astonishing increase in the mobility of young people from Greece towards other countries. Between 2010 and 2011 emigration from Greece increased by 90% - the most notable increase within the southern EU countries (European Commission, 2012a), which led to this emerging type of immigration after the onset of the crisis. The majority of emigrants are well educated young people who move to other European countries in search of employment and better living conditions.

Demographics in Greece, especially in Athens, were strongly influenced by the last great flows of immigration, since a really high number of young immigrants are currently residing in the country and mostly in the capital. Based on the census in 2001, approximately 7% of the total population in Greece were immigrants, (most of them non EU citizens), 45% of whom were women and the majority were from Albania (Mediterranean Migration Observatory, 2004; Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2009).³ Although statistical data on immigration in Greece are not consistent and sometimes not available (Mediterranean Migration Observatory, 2004; OECD, 2011b) it is estimated that about 7% of all

¹ This was the highest growth in Europe (4% average) at the time

² Census results are under constant analysis. Results indicated above are based on the HSA press release in July 2012

³ These numbers are for many much higher in reality, since thousands of undocumented immigrants enter the country every year and are now residing in Athens, thus it is impossible to trace them and document them accurately without official registers.

employed people in Greece in 2008 were immigrants, in contrast to less than 1% in 1989 (Karamessini, 2012). Despite the recent financial crisis, the huge numbers of immigrants who enter the country have not decreased, including a lot of young foreigners who leave their homeland in search of a better future. This could be well explained by the fact that a large number of those immigrants do not have Greece as their final destination, but rather use it as a transit point in order to reach other European countries (Kitsantonis, 2007).⁴ In such situations, Athens and other big cities in Greece tend to be a point of temporary residence and departure for many undocumented immigrants. Also, the majority of them come from non-EU countries or/and the Balkans. As the European Commission has aptly observed for Greece as well as for other receiving or/and transit countries: ‘The steady decline in the youth population over the last decade has been partially offset by the increase in net immigration flows’ (European Commission, 2012a, p.13).

At the city level, as already mentioned, a great number of those entering Greece end up living and working in the centre of Athens, which has become the major attraction for international immigrants. Nevertheless, due to the increasing problem of undocumented immigrants, official data on the exact number of young non-nationals is not available. It was found that half of the 797,000 officially documented immigrants were residing in Athens in 2001 (Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2001) and this number is estimated to be even bigger today. As in most European countries, the majority of immigrants are gathered in very specific urban areas, contributing to the segregation and marginalization as well as to the ‘ghettoization’ of these areas. In contrast to most north European countries, however, the areas where most international immigrants are gathered inside the city are not isolated regions but rather specific areas in the centre of Athens, creating a different type of ‘ghetto’ (Kalandides et al., 2007). The majority of undocumented immigrants are mostly working in an ‘informal labour’ status, thus without any social insurance, and are sometimes forming networks of illegal trading (Megaloudi, 2012). Based on the available numbers of the population census in 2001, 44% of immigrants in Athens are residing in the municipality of Athens, especially at the so-called ‘historical centre’, as well as 5% in Piraeus municipality, 3,2% in Peristeri municipality and 2,9% in Kallithea municipality (Karaiskaki, 2007). These areas have subsequently been seriously downgraded and during the last few years there is much talk about the extreme deprivation of the previously prosperous historical centre of Athens (Tracha, 2012). Overall, the degradation of certain areas in Athens along with the financial crisis, have undoubtedly had a great impact on young people’s lives within the city context. Some of the major impact that the current status of the centre has involve increased criminality rates, devaluation of property or even the abandonment of certain historical buildings in the area, as well as the reduction of economic activities and investments in the said areas.

⁴In 2010, based on FRONTEX, 9 out of 10 immigrants who have illegally entered Europe have done so via Greece and many of them stayed in Greece for various reasons (Kitsantonis, 2007). This is also one of the most significant dimensions of Greece’s immigration problem, as immigrants remain in Greece because of an apparent lack of borders’ regulation and communication between all EU member States.

As mentioned above, the accumulation of most people in the city is also accompanied by a remarkable spatial expansion and the incorporation of more and more areas in the city of Athens. Athens is one of the most densely populated cities in Europe, a metropolis in constant transformation and urban expansion to the wider region of Attica. In addition, the recent administrative reform project "Kallikratis" has introduced many changes at local government level, involving mergers of several municipalities and their respective services. Currently, municipalities in Athens are divided in four sectors: a) Northern sector, comprising 12 municipalities, b) Central sector including eight municipalities, c) Western sector including seven municipalities and d) Southern sector comprising eight municipalities. Piraeus is a distinct regional sector comprising five municipalities.

The age groups that are basically considered as 'youth' in Greece range between 15 and 35 years old. This is evident in all structures and official practices of Greek society, as observed for example in the official proclamations for new recruits in the public sector and in the new programmes set by the State for the employment of young people (by the Manpower Employment Organization) which are all addressed to young people aged 18-29⁵ or 18-35 years old.⁶ This age range will be further divided in other sub-groups, i.e. 15-24, 18-24 or 15-30 years old, since most available official data are focused on the specific age groups.

In addition to the centre of Athens, Piraeus is also an area that faces great difficulties, having an impact on young people living in the area. Piraeus is the biggest port in Greece, accumulating great industrial and touristic activity, and yet not one of the most prosperous areas. Piraeus is a densely populated district comprising five municipalities (Piraeus, Keratsini-Drapetsona, Korydallos, Nikaia-AgiosIoannis Renti and Perama). According to the 2011 census, the regional sector of Piraeus had 394.454 permanent residents, whereas the municipality of Piraeus had 155,263 permanent residents (Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2012). Nonetheless, as in most municipalities in Athens, it has similarly undergone a notable decline in its population, especially since 1991. Furthermore, the demographic profile of the area is characterized by bigger percentages of young people and correspondingly smaller percentages of older people; i.e. most residents in Piraeus are within the age range of 20-34 (Interdisciplinary group of the project of the municipality of Piraeus, 2007). Piraeus is a pole of attraction for many immigrants as it is an industrial centre and a centre of transportation for national and international destinations. With regard to unemployment, Piraeus is one of the municipalities within Athens that are highly affected by it, especially concerning young people between 15-24 years old (Interdisciplinary group of the project of the municipality of Piraeus, 2007). The municipality of Piraeus encompasses approximately 30 neighbourhoods. Some of these areas are of high touristic interest, such as Kastella, Zea-Pasalimani and Mikrolimano, and other areas that are highly degraded, such as Troumba, Lemonadika etc.

⁵ For youngsters aged 15-18 there are specific working regulations

⁶ See for example the recent community service programs for the recruitment of unemployed university graduates until 35 years old: http://www.oaed.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1176:2012-02-08-17-45-18&catid=28:2011-11-21-08-34-19&Itemid=152&lang=en

Another area in the Western region of Attica that is of utmost importance for the specific study is the municipality of Elefsina. Elefsina has 26,204 permanent residents according to the 2011 census (Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2012). According to 2001 available data, the largest proportion of the population fell under the age range of 25-39 years old. Elefsina is a municipality of cultural and archaeological interest but also a heavily industrialized area of Attica, where the establishment of factories, refineries, cement factories and shipyards have largely destroyed the environmental zone, resulting in residents' health complications and the gradual devaluation of the area. The protests of citizens have partly restored the situation since protective and remediate measures have been put in place to diminish air and water pollution in the area. The industrial character of Elefsina was a pole of attraction mainly to internal migrants in the past, and immigrants at present, as it ensured working places.

2. Inequality in the city and the response to it

2.1. Economy and Labour Market

One of the most crucial aspects of inequality that strongly affect young people's lives in Greece, and especially in Athens, is unemployment which has reached unprecedented levels and, based on numerous predictions, they will further increase in the near future. In general terms, labour market and employment are vital factors that determine the dynamics of growth and the level of prosperity of a region. In order to proceed to a more thorough analysis of unemployment in Athens, it is imperative to give some initial information on the type of economy that prevails in Greece and its distinct characteristics. Greece is included in the countries of 'peripheral capitalism', as it was introduced in industrial development with an obvious delay, and subsequently led to a dependent integration into the world market, in the late 20th century. In contrast to the countries of the Capitalist centre, it did not develop a 'Fordist accumulation model'⁷, but rather the so called 'peripheral Fordism' (Becker & Weissenbacher, 2012).⁸ The country entered the European Union in 1981 with a prospect of integration and monetarist orientation of economic policy. Nevertheless, national malpractices and international economic transformations inevitably led the country into the crisis. Furthermore, as it has been observed 'the smaller the industrial base is, the more devastating has been the crisis', since EU integration, that has not actually proved helpful in increasing viable production structures (Becker & Weissenbacher, 2012: 10).

During the last decades the general image of the labour market in Greece is characterized by a rapid expansion of the public sector, developing slowly but gradually an ineffective public administration. According to the OECD report regarding policy recommendations for Greece (OECD, 2010), one of the key factors for the widening economic deficit was the striking rise of public expenditure by

⁷ The economic and social system which primarily aimed at mass production and mass consumption models. Key features are the accumulation strategies and macroeconomic pattern of growth.

⁸ Peripheral Fordism refers to economies with a big but inadequate agricultural sector and a limited manufacturing sector, as well as a less developed financial and banking sector in contrast to the 'core countries'.

approximately 9% of GDP between 2006-2009. On the other hand, the efficiency and quality of public services is below average. In addition to this, the private sector tended to sustain an extremely complex bureaucratic approach (OECD, 2010). With regards to the afore-mentioned division, the national labour market is also divided in two highly differentiated working regimes, the one identified in the private sector and the other intertwined with the public sector. These regimes tended to provide different life opportunities to potential employees, reinforcing in this sense aspects of inequalities in the labour market. Traditionally, the public sector tended, until recently, to offer high stability to its employees, since no layoffs were able to take place after the entrance and 'stabilization' to the public employment system, and wages were generally stable. On the contrary, employees in the private sector were never fully protected from dismissals or from possible wage reductions, which were at the discretion of the employer; although in certain cases of prosperous businesses wages could be higher than those offered in the public sector and professional development easier. Hence, until recently, the majority of youth tended to prefer finding and secure a place in the public sector and to enjoy the life-long stability that it could offer; Work in public services was actually for years the 'Greek dream' regarding employment.

At this stage, it is interesting to have a look on the officially recorded percentages of unemployment among young people in Greece. First of all, it should be noted that since the onset of the crisis Greece, as with the majority of EU countries, has experienced a notable decrease in youth employment levels and a gradual disengagement of young people from the labour market. Correspondingly, the youth unemployment rate in the country has increased even after the crisis, with equally woeful consequences for the life of young people. Although during the past decade youth unemployment rates were gradually decreased in combination with a decrease of NEETs, showing a positive turn for Greek society and its near future, these trends were abruptly overturned again at the dawn of the crisis in 2008 (European Commission, 2012a). The situation is even more dramatic when focusing on those aged 15–24. While the average unemployment rate in Greece is currently around 27% (and 27% of all unemployed are residing in Athens) the young unemployed (aged 15-24) reached 64.2% of the active population (Eurostat, 2013). Moreover, women appear to be in a more dreadful position than men, with a percentage of 57.24% of all registered unemployed, in contrast to 42.7% for men (OAED, 2013). Along the same lines, youth unemployment ratio, i.e. the share of young unemployed people aged 15-24 among the total population of the country (employed, unemployed and inactive) reached 13% in 2011, which is among the highest ratios in the EU. More particularly, women between 15-29 seem to be primarily affected by unemployment.

In addition, the percentage of young unemployed (15-24) without a job for at least 12 months or more exceeded 40% in 2011, and in 2013 reached 42.2%. Furthermore, 36.43% of all long-term unemployed aged 15-24 are residing in Attica (OAED, 2013). Among those, women are again over-represented. The specific age group presents the most dramatic recession, not only in relation to the total population, but also in relation to the age category 25-29, which despite facing considerable problems as well, is still in a better situation than younger adults (unemployment rate: 39.4%) (Tubadji, 2012). This gap could be

explained by the fact that more young persons (15-24) nowadays are seeking employment in order to help their families to cope with everyday difficulties; a practice that tended to operate in the opposite way in Greece before the crisis, when most youngsters were financially supported by their parents until the end of their studies. Furthermore, young adults in the specific age group appear to be low skilled in comparison to those aged 25-29, who are apparently more experienced and better educated, and thus have decreased chances to acquire a job. In addition, in 2011, 23.800 Greeks emigrated to Germany in search of a better future, which corresponds to 90% increase from 2010 (Papachristou & Elgood, 2012).

Regarding the region of Attica, 64,370 young unemployed (under the age of 30) were officially registered in December 2012. The majority of young unemployed in Greece are identified in Attica and especially in Athens. Additionally, among all unemployed in Attica, 260,743 are Greek nationals, 5,898 are EU nationals who live in Greece and 24,485 are third country nationals (OAED, 2012). In reality however, unemployment figures are much higher since official data capture mainly registered employees and do not include self-employed and unemployed who are not registered in OAED records (Papadimitriou & Smagadi, 2012).

As far as temporary employment is concerned, it should be noted that the 1990s were a point of reference for the recognition of contract work. The strong opposition and pressures by the Unions led to the establishment of some 'protective' laws, such as the presidential decree 180/2004⁹, which put some restrictions in the use of fixed-term contracts. Thus, in 2007 Greece's rate of fixed-term contracts was below the EU27 average (Institute of Labour GSEE/ADEDY, 2011). Nevertheless, after the eruption of the crisis, temporary employment came dynamically to the forefront and permanent employment declined, within the general measures taken for the enhancement of "flexible work". Young people (15-24) in temporary employment reached 30% of all employed in the country in 2011 (10 percentage points higher than in 2006), and the corresponding percentage of youngsters in temporary employment because they could not find a permanent job climbed to almost 70% (Eurofound, 2012). While under normal circumstances, temporary contracts used to help young people in the transition from education to the employment terrain, by providing working experience or training opportunities, the excessive use of temporary employment can also be indicative of unstable jobs and insecure prospects. A great number of young people in Athens are nowadays working in temporary jobs in order at least to ensure the coverage of current outgoings.¹⁰ These young temporary employees face more precarious working conditions and an increased instability, however, which in turn prevents them from living independently (Giolmas, 2010). The excessive use of fixed-term contracts towards young people, is also accompanied by the extension of the maximum duration of their renewal (until they become permanent contracts); i.e. now the

⁹ Presidential Decree 180/2004: Amendment of the P.D. 81/2003 "Regulations for the employees with fixed term contracts" (Official Gazette 77/A')

¹⁰ This is also evident from the constantly emerging unions-networks for the protection of temporary employees based in Athens, such as the "Network of Precarious Workers-Unemployed" or "Association base of Precarious Workers-Unemployed"

three continuous renewals can convert the fixed-term contract to permanent, not after 24 months as it was happening until recently, but after 36 months (Kouzis et al, 2011).

It should be noted that in the aftermath of economic recession the public sector tended to cope better in terms of employment than the private sector, the latter being the first to be hit by the impetuous repercussions of the crisis (massive dismissals, tremendous wage reductions etc). The specific areas that 'job destruction' was most intense were the construction and manufacturing sectors (Hurley et al, 2013). The public sector did not, however, remain immune from the impact of the financial crisis. As a consequence, public servants have already seen notable reductions in their wages, layoffs in those with fixed-term work¹¹ as well as further possible redundancies of the permanent staff, planned for this year in several public services (Ministry of Administrative Reform and E-Government, 2013).

Other recent relevant policies and legislative regulations that tend to intensify young people's insecurity within the job sector, include the facilitation policies for dismissals, which facilitate employers to proceed in dismissals. The most widespread practice of this in Greece is the reduction of severance pay and the increase of the limit of monthly permitted dismissals in private businesses and companies (Kouzis et al, 2011).

Also, another characteristic feature in Greece's labour sector, is the extensive informal work flourishing within the context of the "grey economy", which was especially intensified since the 1990s with the mass flow of undocumented immigration (Karamessini, 2012). The informal labour regime that tends to be widespread in Greece, is flourishing in Athens particularly, in all types of work, especially in blue-collar work. Correspondingly, employment data for unregistered people and immigrants can only be roughly estimated. On the other hand, even registered immigrants entering the country are usually exploited by employers who take advantage of their need to find work and very often informally employ them in temporary jobs, without any social security. As a consequence relevant 'grey economy networks' are even more strengthened in the whole city, creating especially precarious working conditions for a significant number of young people (Agorastakis, 2004).

Despite its considerable population size, Athens level of economic activity is low compared to Western standards (OECD, 2004). Especially, since the outburst of the crisis, job availability in Athens is extremely limited as compared to previous years. Taking also into account the high living cost in Athens, many young people prefer to stay (or return) in their place of origin (other provinces etc) and share daily expenses with their families than staying in Athens.

With regard to the relevant State policies to combat or at least inhibit, the growing phenomenon of unemployment among young people, Greece has undertaken intense, nevertheless surface, measures, which are mostly characterized by their short-term nature and have not yet managed to steadily decrease unemployment levels and deal with the causes of the problem. These State initiatives basically revolve around specialized programmes implemented by Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) for the

¹¹ Fixed-term contracts were introduced to the public sector also before the crisis.

opening of new job positions for young people in different sectors, such as tourism, social work, culture, entrepreneurship etc. Three main projects are currently implemented by OAED and are both addressed to young people below 35 years old (OAED, 2013). The first one is an extension of a previous programme for new hires of University degree holders that provides 7,200 job positions. The second programme concerns the subsidy of 7,000 young unemployed entrepreneurs aged 18-35, with priority given to those who are active in innovative fields of the economy. Another important programme called "Beneficiary work in the culture sector" is funded by the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF), in collaboration with several public bodies such as the General Secretariat of Culture of the Ministry of Education and other relevant non-profit organizations in order to open up new positions for a fixed term employment (7 months) for young people below 35 years in security services of archaeological sites and museums or maintenance of cultural infrastructures.¹² Furthermore, within the framework of the Operational Programme "Human Resources Development" of the Ministry of Employment, a new initiative has started for the employment of young people (18-29) as interns for 5 months (580 hours) in tourism (hotels, car rental companies etc), co-funded by NSRF and other European sources. Nevertheless, these initiatives do not include less qualified young people or those who have not got tertiary education and are short-term solutions that will provide job opportunities only for limited periods, without ensuring any kind of employment prospect for the future.¹³ Furthermore, OAED supports the Centres of Employment Promotion in all municipalities to design and promote innovative employment policies as well as supportive services for the unemployed, which provide vocational counselling and guidance. Other institutions also provide a series of services in order to prevent youth unemployment, such as the non-profit organization IEKEP – Institute of Training & Career Guidance, which is certified by the Ministry of employment and provides careers guidance and vocational training to unemployed people and groups at risk of social exclusion.¹⁴ In that case as well it should be noted that training and qualification alone are not able to guarantee integration of unemployed young people in the labour market. More organized efforts with regards to strengthening the private sector and creating working positions, holistic help to unemployed young people regarding professional and personal development should be combined with guidance and training in order fully to integrate these people into the labour market (Hawley et al., 2012).

2.2. Welfare Regimes

The Greek welfare system is linked to the creation of the National Health System in 1982, and the general transformations of the healthcare system further to the political changeover after 1974 (Sotiropoulos, 2003). One can argue that the national welfare regime falls mostly under the Southern European Welfare State, which places great emphasis on contributions and strongly relates health care with employment,

¹² See details at: <http://www.espa.gr/el/Pages/ProclamationsFS.aspx?item=2337>

¹³ See relevant programs in: http://www.oaed.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1176:2012-02-08-17-45-18&catid=28:2011-11-21-08-34-19&Itemid=152&lang=en

¹⁴ http://www.iekep.gr/index_en.html

which displays relatively low social spending by the independent public organizations. As Rhodes aptly notes, Greek welfare regime is inevitably linked with “entitlements related to the employment and contribution record” (Rhodes, 2009: 3).

2.2.1. Access to Social Income, Social and Health Services

Before proceeding to the elaboration and reflective analysis of the relevant corresponding indicators, it is imperative to make some further clarifications regarding the welfare system under which the country functions. The foundation of IKA in 1934 (Social Insurance Foundation) – the biggest insurance fund in Greece -was a crucial step in the history of the Greek welfare system as it ensured welfare coverage for all waged workers. Along the same lines, the creation of the Agricultural Insurance Organization – OGA – in 1961 sealed the right to compulsory social insurance specifically for farmers (Doulkeri, 2005). In the following years a series of other insurance funds were established in Greece, for the social protection and insurance of specific employment categories, such as lawyers, employers in maritime (NAT), engineers and public contractors (TSMEDE), doctors (TSAI), self employed people (OAEE) etc. A large number of insurance funds existed until recently, providing different benefits and health care insurance services. Thus, all social services - benefits, pensions, healthcare and emergency social services were and still are to a great extent (despite the recent merger of many insurance funds) administered by several different agencies with different rules, conditions and criteria which obviously creates a certain imbalance (Sotiropoulos, 2003; Roupakiotis, 2005). The authority for the general management of health policy issues, i.e. organization, implementation, monitoring and assessment, is the Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity. Within the afore-mentioned context, young people can until a certain age have free health insurance under their parents’ corresponding insurance funds; however the age limit and the healthcare services provided differ depending on the fund. Nevertheless, due to poor organization of certain funds many people were not able to receive health services on time (notoriously long waiting lists for medical examinations) or received poor quality of services, urging those people who could afford it to turn to private health care and private health insurance. At this point it needs to be mentioned that private health insurance has a complementary role in Greece and that the primary source of health and social insurance is state policy. As a result, the national welfare system has a mandatory public health insurance policy necessitating all people registered in the labour market to be insured by a public insurance fund-according to their profession and the type of work (and consequently, pay the corresponding contributions). Nevertheless, based on a ministry decision (KYA 139491/16 November 2006) people who have a very low income and do not have health insurance can apply for health insurance and obtain a ‘destitution booklet’.

The foundation of the National Health System in 1982 was intended to establish public free health services, however, great administrative loopholes, mismanagement, lack of monitoring, evaluation and opportunity costs resulted to bad operation and poor public health services. As for medicines, these are covered only if they are included in the ‘approved’ list of insurance funds, and even then, a financial

contribution by the insured person is requested. Despite the great expectations of several legal provisions since the foundation of the National Health System, social protection mechanisms remained ineffective, due to various reasons mainly related to the inability of the state to enforce monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (Papadimitriou & Hadziyiannakis, 2013).

Unemployment benefits and insurance were established in 1954, when Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) was founded. These are not given in the traditional contributory way, as for instance pensions - but rather as a fixed amount, the same for all eligible beneficiaries. These benefits are only granted for almost one year and require the beneficiary to have a certain prior working history in order to receive them.¹⁵ Moreover, other benefits for disabled people and families with many children have been established since the 1950s (Petmesidou, 1996). Emergency social support services are, however, marginal and limited benefits for at-risk of poverty and people below poverty level are provided.

It is a fact that the dysfunctional social welfare state in Greece has contributed to the increasing rates of at-risk of poverty or social exclusion¹⁶, especially among young people. In Greece, people who are at high-risk of social exclusion fall under a combination of labour market exclusion, economic exclusion, social isolation and spatial exclusion; Speaking in numbers, the at-risk of poverty or exclusion rate¹⁷ of the whole population in Greece actually revolves around almost the same levels since 2004, with roughly one third of citizens being at risk of poverty (31% in 2012) and women with low qualifications being in a more disadvantaged position than men (European Commission, 2012b; Eurostat, 2010). Nonetheless, the situation is rather different when focusing on young ages and especially on the age group of 18-24 years old. As in most European countries, young adults in Greece were the most affected group by the crisis, not only in terms of unemployment but also regarding the risk of poverty and social exclusion rates, which noted a serious increase of 6-7 percentage points between 2008 and 2011 (European Commission, 2012a).

In more specific terms, young people (18-24) who live in a household with very low work intensity reached 10%. The specific indicator clearly indicates the changes in the labour market after the crisis (i.e. the significantly decreased wages and high unemployment), with an increasing number of young people living in a jobless, or near to joblessness household. Although, no formal statistical data are available at the city level, this dimension is observable in Athens, due to its very high concentration of young residents, combined with the recorded high unemployment rates. Along the same lines, the percentage of Greek citizens who are at-risk of poverty after social transfers, meaning that their equivalised disposable income was below the national at-risk of poverty threshold,¹⁸ was 21.4% in 2011 although official data on

¹⁵ It has been found that less than half of the officially registered unemployed claim benefits in Greece (Ferrera, 2005).

¹⁶ Exclusion refers to people who lack basic competences and life-long learning opportunities (European Commission, 2012b)

¹⁷ I.e. the percentage of people who are at least in one of the three following conditions: at-risk of poverty, living in households with very low work intensity or severely materially deprived.

¹⁸ The national at-risk of poverty threshold is set 60% of the national median equivalised disposable income (after social transfers). It is worth mentioning that these thresholds vary significantly among EU Member States. Specifically the Greek threshold has seen a decline by 8% between 2008 and 2010 and is now equal to 6.500 euro annual income.

this aspect are limited and no corresponding information is available specifically for young age (Eurostat, 2012a). The specific percentage is amongst the five highest percentages in the EU as a whole. Taking also into account the decline in the national threshold, the importance of these findings is even greater. Besides the deteriorating changes in the labour market, other sources of income, such as social benefits are even more reduced or completely abolished after the onset of the crisis and thus reduce individual incomes even more (Gatos, 2012). Finally, the number of young people aged 18-24 who are severely materially deprived¹⁹ climbed to 15.2% in 2010, which is also among the highest corresponding rates in Europe, but also significantly higher than the corresponding percentage of the total population in Greece, indicating the serious difficulties faced by young people (European Commission, 2012a). It is true that the rising number of youngsters that they are not able to cover basic needs specifically in the city of Athens is associated with increases in other factors, such as increased taxation on personal income, increased property taxes and utility bills (European Commission, 2012b).

Another really important finding is the appearance of a new social group in Greece, which can be especially met in the urban space of Athens. This is the so called "new poor", which differs from the traditional profile of poor people - i.e. marginalized groups in the city or the 'forgotten' ones in the provinces – it includes people who may be still in work, however, having disproportionately low incomes in relation to the increased expenses and higher cost of living in the city. A constantly increasing number of young people aged 20-30, who cannot afford a 'decent' living in Athens are falling under the specific category. It can be easily maintained that, besides high unemployment, high taxation and a dysfunctional social welfare, another crucial cause of the increase in at-risk of poverty rates among young Greeks is the excessive accumulation of people in the cities, especially in Athens, where living costs are high and as a result insufficient incomes do not support living costs. The situation gets even worse with regard to the high number of undocumented young immigrants residing in Athens, who live under the poverty level (Kohli, 2002).

The nature of the Greek welfare system as a whole has never managed to diminish poverty rates, let alone in the period of crisis, since reliance on employment and the 'contributory policy' has, as Ferrera aptly notes: 'little provisions for non-insurable risks, such as poverty' (Ferrera, 2005: 38). Moreover, within this type of "pay-as-you-go" policy, various social groups cannot pay the necessary contributions to the state through a legal or stable job. For instance, young individuals who have completed their studies and are not yet employed, individuals who are part-time employed, long term unemployed people, undocumented immigrants, individuals working in informal labour regimes and others, are inevitably left out and at risk of being socially excluded. The existing model obviously entails great disparities in the levels of social coverage and in the access to healthcare among the various population groups, since a lot of people from the aforementioned categories cannot receive any financial support, such as unemployment benefit, neither can they enjoy free public health services through a National Health

¹⁹ That means that they cannot afford at least three of the following items: 1) to pay their rent, mortgage or utility bills, 2) to keep their home adequately warm, 3) to face unexpected expenses, 4) to eat meat or proteins regularly, 5) to go on holiday, or cannot afford to buy a: 7) TV, 7) Refrigerator, 8) Car, 9) Telephone.

System (Karamessini, 2012). Similarly, the reduction of welfare benefits (pensions, disability allowances etc) and unemployment benefits,²⁰ implemented in order to reduce public expenditures, made living conditions unbearable for people in need.

Furthermore, the recent crisis has brought substantial changes in the welfare system, deteriorating its already weakened structure and operation. In particular, the financial crisis manifested the enormous deficit of insurance funds. In an effort to manage the situation the State merged nine insurance funds, including the biggest ones under one single public fund, called EOPY (National Organization for Health Care Provision). This effort, however, has had questionable results on the objectives for the collaboration, the actual administrative improvement and the quality of services provided to beneficiaries. Even today EOPY faces debts and issues regarding payment delays of contracted physicians, pharmacists etc.

The State's response to the aforementioned phenomena is inadequate, within the wider climate of recession and austerity. On the contrary, the reform in the National Health System has brought even more fundamental problems to young people with regards to health care access. Among the few examples of good practice, is the operation of Social Supportive Service Offices in several municipalities in Athens, as for example the Centres for Social Support of E.K.K.E (National Centre of Social Solidarity), which are, however, insufficient for covering the increasing needs of the high number of socially excluded youngsters in the city (E.K.K.A, 2009). Moreover, NSRF has funded a programme for the enhancement of the country's social structures, aiming at providing social services to poor individuals and those who are at-risk of poverty. Within this framework funding is provided to municipalities who are interested in establishing additional municipal social services such as: social groceries, social pharmacies (providing free medicines to poor and uninsured people), social medical centers etc. Such social structures and initiatives are established also in collaboration with NGOs, creating a number of social services and subsequently creating new job positions for young people until 30 years old.²¹ Furthermore, OAED recently announced the establishment of a new programme for providing 5-month employment to unemployed persons who live in a household with no work intensity. It aims to ensure that all households will have at least one employed member so as not to fall at the risk of poverty.

2.2.2. Housing

It should be noted that young Greeks tend to move out of the family home at a pretty late stage in life, similar to most Southern European countries and in comparison to the northern countries, mainly due to the well-rooted traditional cultural patterns that are still dominant in Greek society, placing family bonds at the high scale of life principles. Overprotection of Greek parents and lack of experience in independent living by young people combine with the vast economic recession in recent years, creating the conditions for further delaying the transition from family home to independent "self-funded" living. Indeed, besides cultural habits, financial difficulties, stemming from the hard conditions in the labour market, increased

²⁰ The monthly unemployment benefit has fallen to 360 euros

²¹ See details at: <http://www.espa.gr/el/Pages/ProclamationsFS.aspx?item=2274>

property taxes and lack of relevant social benefits (i.e. housing benefit), seriously hinder young people from taking such a decision and have thus contributed to the increase of the average age of home-leaving in comparison to previous years. Even though house rents have considerably decreased in the last 3-4 years of the crisis, tenancy rates keep declining, including Athens, a phenomenon particularly observed in younger tenants. Moreover, as in all European countries, Greek women tend to take the step of 'independency' earlier than men. Specifically, based on the last available data from 2010, the average age of young women leaving the parental home was 26 years old, while the corresponding age for men was in their 30s (Ward & Ozdemir, 2012). In the case of Athens, the number of young people who live on their own is much higher than in other areas of Greece, since many young people move to the city from the provinces in order to study and/or work.²² Additionally, after the eruption of the crisis, many young Athenians in their 30s returned to their parental home because they could not cope with daily expenses or they abruptly remained without a job (Van der Ziel, 2011). In the worst scenario, a notable number of young people who were working and living independently in Athens with limited social networks and no parental home to return to, found themselves on the streets, changing the stereotypical image and traditional profile of homeless. Based on field research by a Greek NGO (Klimaka), many 'new-homeless' in Athens are well educated (one out of five) and they were almost all working until the crisis (iefimerida, 2012).

In particular, in spite of the deepening financial crisis, the cost of maintaining a house has increased. Although property prices have fallen, an additional tax on property was imposed on Greek citizens in 2012 (paid through the electricity bill) which is varied according to the size of the property as well as the area in which it is located, based on the 'objective' value of the property (Ministry of Finance, 2013). Thus, higher such taxes are identified in Athens and other urban areas, than in other Greek regions/provinces with lower merit factor, putting an additional burden on young residents/owners already encumbered expenses.²³ Finally, although property rents have also fallen in specific areas of Athens, utility bills have considerably increased especially heating oil and electricity and were further increased in January 2013 (Solidarity for all, 2013). As a result, many houses remain locked up or abandoned due to inability to pay bills and property taxes.

Unfortunately, the State appears totally inert on the issue of housing, since it does not provide any relevant benefits (e.g. housing benefits) for unemployed youth in order to support them in independent living. Furthermore, shelters for homeless people are obviously insufficient, particularly in Athens, where the majority of homeless people are identified; services to homeless people are mainly provided by voluntary initiatives and NGOs in Athens, which with frugal means try to help youth and people in need.²⁴ Specifically, the municipality of Athens has a Reception and Solidarity Centre (KYADA), which

²² Thus, we should make a distinction here between young adults who live on their own sources and those who live away from family home as full-time students, usually supported by their families. 13% of young Greeks aged 18-24 live in their own household as students, mostly accumulated in Athens.

²³ Around 40% of households in the country delayed their financial obligations to the State or banks last year because of this new tax (Solidarity for all, 2013).

²⁴ Indicative examples of relevant NGOs include: "Solidarity", "PRAKSIS", "Klimaka", "Greek Red cross" and others.

includes two shelters and also provides food and clothes to those in need; in addition, the municipality of Piraeus has another shelter with similar services. In total, there are approximately 10 shelters for homeless people in Athens, most of them being supported by NGOs. Additional centres also exist providing services to homeless people, such as coverage of basic needs, counselling, psychological support, legal aid and health care services and are mainly initiated and supported by NGOs, such as the 'Centre for Homeless Support' of "Klimaka". Overall, a lack of a systematic policy approach can be identified on the issue of 'housing,' as the State's response is inadequate to cover the needs of the people.

2.2.3. Education and Training

In the 1960s education became mandatory for a minimum of 9 years minimum in Greece and is still free for all people (up to the University degree level), regardless nationality, socio/economic origin or gender; however, with great deficiencies in its practical operation, especially after the eruption of the crisis.

In general, during the last decade the duration of studies has been extended in the whole of Europe, with an average of 17 years expected to be spent on education, and Greece is following this pattern (European Commission, 2012a). There is a steady decrease within the last decade (2000-2011) in the percentage of young people aged 18-24 who have left school early, i.e. achieving only primary, lower secondary or a short upper secondary education of less than two years; 18.2% in 2000 and 13.1% in 2011. It is interesting to notice that males in the specific age group seem to be more prone in leaving school early, with a percentage of 16.1% in 2011, than girls who are more focused on their studies and present a much lesser percentage of about 10% (European Commission, 2012a). By the same token, rates of young individuals aged 20-24 who have completed at least upper secondary education in Greece have increased, exceeding 85% in 2011; 85% was actually set as a national target since 2008 (European Commission, 2012d). Within that percentage there appear to be slightly more men than women. Nevertheless, there are some specific groups of youth in Greece that present significantly high levels of ESL (early school leavers) in relation to the total young population. The most notable examples are migrants and ethnic minorities. As in the majority of European countries, young non-nationals in Greece, and especially ROMA, are more prone to drop out from school early, presenting three times higher ESL rates than natives. Accordingly, a difference of 34.5 percentage points between native and non-native ESL rates has been recorded (European Commission, 2011 & European Commission 2012d). The greatest imbalance is observed in Athens, due to its high concentration of population and immigrant families.

With regard to the category of NEETs the percentage in Greece has been rising since the onset of the crisis, following the general trend across Europe. Of course financial difficulties and labour market segmentation strongly contribute to this increase. The percentage of NEETs aged 15-24 in Greece is above 17% which, based on the European official standards, is among the highest rates. Moreover, the percentage of women NEETs is higher than that of men, with a difference of 2.8 percentage points. Among the young NEETs in Greece many of them could well have completed secondary education and few (around 10%) even hold a University degree – especially regarding young residents in Athens -

however they find themselves in a situation where they cannot find a job after school or University and without the adequate means to extend their studies or get a vocational training and thus remaining in a totally unstable situation. Consequently, the NEET rate in Greece appears to be considerably higher among those aged 20-24 (i.e. having completed school or University) than those aged 15-19 years old (Eurofound, 2012). Although no official data is available on the exact number of young NEETs in Athens, it has been repeatedly noted that the groups mostly identified in the specific category of concern are young persons from a poor family background or/and with an immigration background. As already mentioned, great numbers of young immigrants and ethnic minorities are long-term unemployed while simultaneously face increased difficulties in completing compulsory education, remaining in a state of total idleness for long periods.

The obvious imbalance observed in immigrants and ethnic minorities is mainly related to the inability of the educational system to integrate them; lacking inclusion policies and innovative educational approaches (Greek NGOs Network for Children Rights Convention, 2011). As a result, young immigrants with lower socioeconomic status have limited access to sufficient learning support. With special regard to Romani youngsters, besides the general mentality and cultural habits of the specific communities that do not place the necessary emphasis on education, there are also other factors that contribute to their increased ESL rates. For example, increased poverty rates and the need to work and financially support the family, insufficient access to schools, language difficulties, deficiencies in material resources and supplies for the school as well as discrimination and prejudice on behalf of other students, parents and teachers are some of the crucial factors (Greek NGOs Network for Children Rights Convention, 2011). Currently, the total number of intercultural schools in the whole country is 26 (13 primary schools and 13 secondary schools). Intercultural schools are based on the intercultural model approach founded on the principles of communication, interaction, collaboration, understanding and acceptance of cultural differences. Intercultural schools aim to improve the learning process by accepting and acknowledging individual and cultural differences. In Athens the number of those schools is only six, where additional bureaucratic issues create serious obstacles for non-native youngsters to attend them. On top of that, based on an empirical research in schools in Athens municipality, it was found that 80% of primary and secondary education teachers were not using various available supportive material on issues concerning the integration of foreign students and many of them declared that did not know how to deal with this vulnerable group of children and help them in overcoming their difficulties (Kottaridi et al, 2007). In a country where the number of immigrants has been rapidly increasing over the last decades such problems obviously indicate failure to answer real educational needs and prevent students from abandoning education early.

Other problematic aspects of the educational system include limited connection with the labour market and the private sector, particularly with regards to the implementation of joint research projects (OECD, 2011). On top of that, additional material and human resource deficiencies such as lack of books, teaching materials and adequately trained and competent staff (i.e. teachers and administrative staff) as well after

the onset of the crisis, caused serious deterioration of the educational system. Another crucial challenging factor is the establishment of ‘shadow education’ (i.e. additional private lessons in private educational centres or at home), since ‘remedial education’ (free supportive teaching) in schools is insufficient in most municipalities of Athens (Greek NGO’s Network for Children Rights Convention, 2011).

Regarding the relevant State policies to reduce the increasing NEETs rates, although Greece has really low levels of participation in lifelong learning, some positive steps have been taken by the State in tackling this serious challenge. More specifically, ‘Second Chance Schools’ were first founded in Athens in 2000, and continued operating in the whole country, in order to provide the opportunity to people above 18 years old who have not completed compulsory education, to continue their studies through a flexible curricular. This was an initiative co-funded by the State and the European Social Fund within the framework of a renewed lifelong learning policy.²⁵ Furthermore the establishment of a legal framework for lifelong learning 3879/2010, set the target for bringing together the two sectors of employment and education, by organizing actions that would provide constant training and education to all various groups of society at any age and facilitate their entrance to employment. The said services are planned to be implemented by Vocational Training Institutes (IEK). Regarding immigrants, the Ministry of Education has established reception classes and preparatory courses for the children of immigrants and repatriated Greeks, who face difficulties with Greek language in order to facilitate their school integration. Finally, a recent programme funded by the NSRF, aims to provide training to young unemployed in specialized skills for using Information and Communication Technology. This programme is especially targeted to vulnerable social groups (e.g. immigrants, at-risk of exclusion etc), women and people with disabilities, in an effort to help acquire enhanced skills to enter the labour market. Overall, it can be noted that measures undertaken by the State are fragmented and fail to address the real causes of the educational problem. Furthermore, factors that contribute in the devaluation of the educational system, as well as the lack of a systematic policy approaches for the education and social integration of vulnerable groups of people (e.g. non nationals, children with disabilities etc.) tend to persist.

2.3. Power, democracy, citizenship and civil participation

Participation in politics as well as civil participation are vital components for young people’s social integration and the affirmation of the concept of social citizenship. Within the general political unrest in Europe, Greece is in a crucial turning point, with many exponential changes in its political map and an acute instability surrounding the whole political life. These significant political changes adequately reflect the apparent socio-political crisis in Greece as well as the unprecedented lack of trust and frustration by Greek citizens (especially the younger ones) towards the national political system.

²⁵ For further details and analytical program see at: <http://www.gsae.edu.gr/el/geniki-ekpaidefsi-enilikon/deyteri-efkairia/s-d-e-sxoleia-deyteris-efkairias/mathe-gia-ta-sxoleia-deyteris-efkairias>

Despite the growing frustration and reprobation by young people towards Greek political forces, their participation in elections is considerably higher since the onset of the crisis. Although no official data for young people is available, it was very apparent that during the last national elections, young people had a strong presence in the voting process. It was a crucial period for the country's future within the EU, since the unstoppable negotiations between the two urgently called for a stable government to take the stand and negotiate about the new austerity measures. On the other hand, at the last European elections, Greece reached its highest record of abstention, with the majority of young people refraining from voting. This great abstention however was not a random incident that represented a lack of interest by their side, but rather a deliberate and totally conscious choice that passed multiple messages. Particularly, based on a research conducted by Kapa Research company, the first explicit signs of the crisis alongside the lack of explicit proposals for the country's problems were the main reasons that young citizens chose not to vote for their representatives in the EP. Moreover, a number of young people declared their resentment and disagreement with the way Europe deals with its citizens' problems (In.gr, 2009).

As far as young people's active political participation is concerned, it is worth mentioning that youth associations of political parties inside Universities has been a widespread phenomenon in Greece for many years, that still attracts a lot of young students, who depending on their political orientation join these organizations and participate in various political actions, having that way their first substantive contact with politics.²⁶ A crucial factor for the motivation of young people to engage in political and civic activities is the perception of a direct response to their actions, i.e. the sense that their participation in the political terrain will actually have an impact on society and that they will be adequately supported by a trusted political system. Young citizens in Greece are, however, strongly discouraged by the current political scene and prefer to abstain from most established political schemes. Furthermore, participation of young people in labour unions is minimum in Greece, mainly due to the neglect and lack of good practices for attracting youth (Katsoridas, 2007.). Moreover, Greek trade unions are strongly criticized for establishing links with specific political parties, thus failing to offer a fresh view to young people.

Still, during this troubled and constantly changing period they more than ever feel the need to get politically informed and take action²⁷, they mostly participate in local organizations and self-organized private initiatives which aim to improve the life of people in local communities, rather than in official political parties or organizations. They have basically turned their backs to the disappointing political scene and developed new forms of political participation, based on solidarity among civilians and a common effort to resist and find alternative solutions to the austerity measures. Indicative, and probably the official signalling for this fresh type of political fermentation, was the socio-political movement that was born two years ago in Syntagma Square in Athens, which consisted primarily by young people who protested for months against austerity measures and economic recession.

²⁶ Some of these organizations are PASP (correlated with PASOK), DAP (correlated with New Democracy) and P.K.S (correlated with the Greek Communist Party).

²⁷ Young Greeks (15-30) appear within the EU to have the highest interest in politics and public affairs in all levels (national, regional and european) – 89% (Flash Eurobarometer, 2013).

Accordingly, statistics show that 12% of those aged 15-30 have participated in local organizations in 2011, while only 7% were active members of political parties. Accordingly, the percentage of young Greeks who participate in non-governmental organizations is equally low (7%), mainly because of the constant degradation of these organizations after the onset of the crisis; lack of funds, subsidies etc. (European Commission, 2012a). Indeed an increasing number of networks and local organizations based on solidarity, collective and volunteering initiatives are formed in Athens and in the wider country since the onset of the crisis, attracting more and more youngsters in their activities. These local organizations/groups include autonomous solidarity networks and open local communities for citizens in several areas of Athens, aiming to improve the area/city through a direct collective participatory approach. Furthermore, other collectives involve the elimination of intermediaries in agricultural product market, groups of teachers who provide free supporting teaching to children from poor families as well as environmentally oriented organizations etc.

3. Life for young people in the city

It is harsh describing the metabasis in young citizens' lives in the previously sparkling and flourishing metropolis, which has turned to a road of constant obstacles, creating notable inequalities and devaluing their living standards. Overall, young Greeks tend to find themselves at a crucial turning point and have come to realize that they will grow up without any prospects, in a state of uncertainty and potential impoverishment, since their life is now intertwined with uncontrolled expenses, hard austerity and simultaneously immense social insecurity. Generalized anger, hopelessness, insecurity (not only concerning their own future but also in relation to their family's status) and inability, are the most common feelings that currently embrace a huge part of Athens youth.

The vast deregulation in the labour market, i.e. great diminution of the private sector, employment "flexibility", compacting of labour costs, catalysis of the legislative labour framework which previously ensured employees' rights and the extremely high rates of unemployment, have primarily affected young people and have inevitably led to a great expansion of social inequalities at the latter's expense, without any guarantees for a future improvement. Strong feelings of frustration have thus been created to young generations who only see an uncertain future, unable to make long-term plans or start up an independent life. The situation is even worse concerning the increasing number of young NEETs in the city, who find no way out at any direction and see no prospects for their future. The dimensions of this disastrous image in youth unemployment are much deeper, as discussed in the previous chapter, and the effects on young adults even more fundamental. Besides the psychological implications mentioned above, livelihood issues and obstacles in meeting basic needs are much common among young city dwellers nowadays; a notable example is the hotly debated topic of the increased prices in heating-oil during the last 2 years, when hundreds of households remained without heating in winter because they could not afford it (Mindova, 2012).

Unable to find a job for long periods, in combination with the almost unbearable taxation and increased prices in products and goods, those youngsters de facto cannot sustain a private household. Thus, more of them are delaying their transition from family home to independent living, which in turn creates further feelings of inability and depression for many of them. On top of that, the apparently weakened and dysfunctional national welfare system, not only fails to support young adults' independent living, but also fails to protect them against the risk of poverty or exclusion in cases of very low or no income. A large number of young people are constantly complaining about the social welfare state in Greece, which intensifies their insecurity. Many young Athenians are found to be long-term unemployed or "new" unemployed (i.e. without prior working experience) and therefore, are not eligible of receiving the unemployment benefit neither do they have healthcare insurance. This subsequently intensifies inequality and creates even more stress and a growing feeling of abandonment by the State. Even for those in employment, who are eligible to receive health insurance, the substantial problems in the current supply and quality of services of the National Health System create insurmountable difficulties in actually receiving free healthcare services.

In general, the majority of youth in Athens seem confused and highly insecure, which in many cases leads them to consider leaving the country in search of a better future abroad. Similarly, an important shift in their general lifestyle and mentality has been observed, which is, inter alia, directed towards their engagement with politics and the formation of a political consciousness since very early ages. Their political interests, however, do not mainly involve participation in the country's dominant political structures, but rather in autonomous, local solidarity actions/initiatives to improve their lives and others', or in political expressions of massive protests and active reprobation of the established political scene and government.

Within this general framework, the most affected groups of young people in almost all different dimensions are women and immigrants. As we have seen, women appear to be in a worse position specifically regarding their access to labour market, whereas young immigrants face increased difficulties and additional obstacles both in the area of employment, education and welfare coverage, since, besides the same problems with natives, they have also to tackle with the absence of integration policies and insufficient social rights. From another point of view, it is worth mentioning that inequalities in the indicators under analysis differ among different social classes in Greek society. Specifically, young people in lower socioeconomic class face more increased risks of marginalization both in the labour market and in education. As for the Greek middle class, it is also highly affected by the crisis and has experienced a significant decrease of living standards in relation to previous status; we are actually standing in front of the 'death' of the Greek "petite bourgeoisie". The crisis has only left immune the highest stratum of the social scale, which corresponds to the elite minority of the Greek population. Nevertheless, it is important to notice that youth, have not yet resigned, but rather fight for their rights and all kinds of inequalities they are experiencing, through their calls for democracy and end of austerity measures on the streets and through various solidarity actions.

WP2 Athens

This newly emerged social solidarity approach, which has absorbed many young people with various different political ideologies and backgrounds, definitely provides a new social structure and a hope for the future. After all, who is going to eventually unwrap Ariadne's thread and rebuild our collapsing society if young generations do not?

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Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across
Europe

Cities in their national contexts

BARCELONA

Symptoms and causes of inequality affecting young people

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This report is part of Work Package 2 of the research project entitled “Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across Europe” (CITISPYCE). CITISPYCE has been devised against the back drop of research which shows the disproportionate impact of the global economic crisis on young people across Europe. This includes excessively high rates of youth unemployment (particularly amongst those who face multiple social, economic and cultural disadvantages) and threats to the social provision enjoyed by previous generations. CITISPYCE partners are working on a three year multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral programme to examine the current state of the art and ideas concerning social innovation against inequalities faced by young people, explore socially innovative practices being developed by and for young people in urban areas, and test the transferability of local models of innovative practice in order to develop new policy approaches. The CITISPYCE consortium covers ten European countries and is funded by the European Commission (FP7, Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities).

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1. The city – a presentation

1.1. Historical and cultural background

Barcelona, located in the North-Eastern part of Spain by the Mediterranean Sea, is the second largest city in Spain with about five million inhabitants in the Metropolitan area, and approximately 1.6 million in the city itself. The city is divided into ten districts, each consisting of a number of neighbourhoods of varying sizes.

Being the administrative, economic, and cultural capital of the autonomous region of Catalonia, Barcelona's population makes up approximately half of the population of the region. In order to understand the position of the city in Spain, it is essential to have some understanding of the political background of Barcelona and Catalonia in relation to the rest of Spain.

During the Spanish civil war, Barcelona was a republican stronghold, and a main war zone. After the republican defeat in January of 1939, the resistance of Barcelona had lasting effects. In addition to the wreckage of the city and the suffering of the population during the 2.5 years of war, the autonomous institutions of Catalonia were removed; the use of the Catalan language in public life was suppressed and a long and significant period of cultural, social and political repression commenced.¹ Barcelona remained the second largest city in Spain, part of a relatively industrialised and prosperous region. This resulted in a large-scale internal movement from poorer regions of the country – in particular Andalucía, Murcia and Galicia - in turn resulting in a rapid urbanisation process.

¹ Ajuntament de Barcelona. De Bàrcino a Bcn. Història de Barcelona, Capítol 41: Barcelona sota el primer franquisme. <http://www.bcn.cat/historia/>

Franco's death in November 1975 was a starting point for the transition to democracy. Two years later, in September of 1977, more than a million people took the streets of Barcelona to celebrate the Catalan National Day and a few days later the president of the Generalitat, the regional government of Catalonia, returned from exile.² During the transition period, the Catalan institutions and the Catalan language were slowly re-established and have now been reinforced over the years. In the last few years, the independence movement has grown stronger in Catalonia, and was more visible than ever in Barcelona on 11th September 2012, when about 1.5 million people from across Catalonia marched through the city calling for independence.³

Today the city is one of the world's leading tourist, economic, trade fair, cultural and sports centres. It can be described as a "Global City"⁴, characterised by processes of gentrification as well as tertiarisation⁵ of the economy (Fernández, 2012). Similarly, Gonzalez (2010) describes Barcelona as a "mecca for urban regeneration", having been transformed from a city of post-authoritarian regime to a "culturally vibrant magnet of visitors" during only a few decades, in large part due to the major infrastructure and urban regeneration processes⁶ taking place in preparation for the 1992 Olympic Games.

Another important characteristic of Barcelona and the surrounding Catalonia is its position as a gateway to Europe, through its closeness to France, facilitating the movement of people from outside of Spain to and from the city. Furthermore, the region is one of the richest in Spain, despite its lack of natural resources. Instead, Catalonia is traditionally a country of innovation and adaptation, which defines part of Catalan culture. Hence, the richness of the region and the city stems first and foremost from the creativity and innovativeness of its people, from Gaudí and earlier, until today.

1.2. Demography

Spain has until recently been a country of emigration. From the beginning of the 19th century until World War I people searched for a better life outside of the rural and poor Spain, moving predominantly to Central and South America (Reher, Requena and Sanz, 2011). Later on, during the dictatorship, millions of Spaniards went into exile, both to European countries, but also, yet again, to America. Once the dictatorship had been established, borders were closed, and migration was principally internal.

Larger numbers of foreigners started entering Spain only at the end of the 1990s. In 1997, a decade of great economic growth commenced - the "economic boom". This growth, which led to a great deal of new jobs, mainly in the construction and tourism sectors, attracted large numbers of immigrants to Spain, resulting in an increase in foreign residents from 923,879 in 1999 to 5,220,577 in 2008 (Pajares, 2009).

² Ajuntament de Barcelona. De Bàrcino a Bcn. Història de Barcelona, Capítol 43: En transició.

³ According to Guàrdia Urbana, Barcelona's Municipal Police; and 2 million people according to the organisers Assemblea Nacional Catalana <http://www.assemblea.cat/>

⁴ A concept popularised by Sassen (2001)

⁵ I.e. a growing importance of the service sector in the economy and employment.

⁶ There is a great deal of literature analysing and challenging this model of urban regeneration, see e.g. Degen and Garcia, 2008; Delgado, 2007; Monclús, 2003; Zusman, 2004.

During 2008, however, due to the economic recession, the net migration started decreasing and was in 2011 negative for the first time since the 1990s (INE, 2012).⁷

Regarding demography at city level, the natural growth trend of Barcelona has been negative due to low birth rates and ageing, leading to a loss of population from 1,906,998 people in 1980 to 1,615,448 in January 2011 although, from around the year 2000 and until 2009, immigration contributed to a slight population growth (Montagut, 2011). Hence, an important demographic transformation of the city refers to the ageing population. While in 1986 the life expectancy of Barcelona's population was 76.6 years, it had risen to 82.8 years in 2011 (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2012c). Between 1981 and 2011 the population aged over 65 increased from 13.65% to 20.8%, although a slight rejuvenation of the population has occurred due to immigration in the last decade (Montagut, 2011), with the mean age of the foreign population being 32.4 years (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2012a).

As we have seen, the immigration boom in Spain started at the end of the 1990s and this is also true for Barcelona. The ratio of foreign nationals living in the city has risen significantly, from 6.3% in 2001 to 17.4% in January 2012 (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2012a). Young people (15-24) make up roughly 12.4% of this group. With regard to origin, Latin American immigrants represent the largest continental group, constituting 41% of the immigrant population, followed by Europeans (29.9%) and Asians (21.4%). By countries, Pakistanis correspond to the largest group, followed by Italians. Regarding undocumented migrants, there are no numbers available at city level, but according to the Information Centre for Foreign Workers (CITE) of the trade union Comisiones Obreras, the number is estimated to around 200,000 people at the regional level of Catalonia, which would correspond to roughly 17.4% of the immigrant population (CITE, 2010).

Currently, the youth population (15-24) of the city is 144,105 persons or approximately 9% of the population, with 51% being male and 49% female (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2012c). Of these young people, 29.9% were born outside of Spain, and 23.6% have another nationality than Spanish. This highlights, as we have seen above, a rapid increase from the year 2000, when foreigners made up only approximately 3.9% of the youth population of Barcelona (Vilà, Chamorro and Llobet, 2012).

1.3. Social policy framework related to youth

With the different layers of government in place⁸, it may be difficult to grasp conclusively which organs are involved in the youth policy framework. In the following paragraphs, therefore, the governing institutions in relation to youth policies are briefly explained.⁹

⁷ I.e. the number of people leaving Spain was greater than that of people entering. Currently, this is not primarily due to immigrants returning to their countries of origin, but to a substantial amount of Spanish nationals who are leaving, and there is a current debate on youth searching for better opportunities abroad. It should be noted, however, that even before the crisis, there was movement of Spanish youth within the EU and many of those leaving now may have left anyway, regardless of the crisis.

⁸ City, region, province, autonomous region and state.

⁹ It should also be noted that youth policies in Spain and Catalonia generally include persons up to 29 years of age; however, in the case of labour market policies the definition of youth has recently been extended to 33 years of age.

The **Department of Youth and Adolescence** (Regidoria d'Adolescència i Joventut) of the City Council is in charge of youth policies in Barcelona. Recently, the Department has published their new **Plan for Youth and Adolescents 2013-2016** (Pla d'Adolescència i Joventut 2013-2016), which will be referred to throughout this report.

The **Barcelona Region** (Comarca Barcelonès) consists of five municipalities, including Barcelona. The **Regional Council** (Consell de la Comarca) has its own youth plan and offers some services for youth, mainly in relation to employment and housing.¹⁰

The next governmental level consists of the **Barcelona Provincial Council** (Diputació de Barcelona), the interim government of the Barcelona province, consisting of 311 municipalities. The Council has its own plan for support to the municipalities in youth issues, the **Provincial Youth Plan 2013-2016** (Pla Comarcal de Joventut 2013-2016).

The autonomous regions have exclusive responsibility for youth policies in relation to the national level. In Catalonia, therefore, youth policies are the responsibility of the **Directorate of Youth of the regional government of Catalonia** (Generalitat), and are collected in the **National Youth Plan of Catalonia 2011-2020** (Pla Nacional de Joventut de Catalunya 2011-2020). The Directorate has also established the **Catalan Youth Agency** (Agència Catalana de Joventut), which implements youth programmes in accordance with the Youth Plan, as well as the **Catalan Youth Observatory** (Observatori Català de Joventut), aiming to generate information about life conditions of young people in Catalonia.

Finally, at the national level, whilst there is no national youth act as such, the **Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality** of the Spanish government has established the **Youth Institute** (Instituto de la Juventud). This organ supports youth emancipation through the development of training, employment and housing programmes and signs annual agreements with regional youth organisations to promote equal opportunities.

2. Inequality in the city and the response to it

The following sections explain issues related to youth in several areas of life, and especially those which may lead to inequalities among young people, namely: economy and labour market; access to social income, social and health services; housing; education and training; and finally, power, democracy, citizenship and civil participation. Within each section, a subsection discusses a selection of policies and institutions involved, focusing especially on city level institutions and services.

¹⁰ Regional Youth Plan for Barcelona 2013-2016 (Pla Comarcal de Joventut del Barcelonès).

2.1. Economy and labour market

Spain experienced continuous economic growth for 14 years, from 1994 to 2008, and a veritable economic boom in the last decade of this period. This meant a strong employment growth mainly in construction, with the number of workers in this sector rising from 1,600,000 in 1999 to 2,800,000 in 2007. This sector was, however, the first to be severely affected by the crisis, and during the first two years of the recession alone, the number of employees in the sector decreased by approximately one million. To this has to be added a loss of almost 11% of jobs in the industrial sector (Bentolila et al, 2010), which to a large degree depends on a strong construction sector.

In contrast to many other EU countries, the crisis in Spain is firstly an employment crisis, affecting more severely, as we have seen, certain sectors closely related to the previous economic growth. From the start of the worldwide recession until the beginning of 2013, the unemployment rate in Spain has risen from 8% to a striking 27% (INE, 2013).

Currently, employment in Spain has to be understood in relation to the segmentation of the labour market and the tendency to rely on temporary work contracts, especially for young people. A key reason why temporary contracts do not lead to permanent employment in the Spanish context is the large difference between dismissal costs for temporary and permanent contracts, making companies reluctant to convert fixed-term contracts into open-ended ones. In 2011, 61% of youth between 15 and 24 employed in Spain had a temporary contract. A very high proportion, approximately 81%, reported being in temporary work because they could not find a permanent job (Eurofound, 2012). Furthermore, two years after having been on a temporary contract, more than 22% of 15-29 year olds were still either on temporary contracts, or worse, unemployed or inactive (Eurofound, 2013). This means that many young people are trapped in precarious employment or unemployment, with unfavourable effects for their long-term employability and large costs for society as a whole. Temporary workers have been the first category to be affected by the crisis and account for 95% of employment adjustments in Spain (EC, 2010).

Younger groups have been severely affected by the crisis¹¹ — in part because they are over-represented among temporary workers. In the first quarter of 2013, the unemployment rate of people under 25 reached 57.2% (INE, 2013). As a comparison, in 2008 this rate was 24.8%. On the other hand, the unemployment ratio¹² in the age group 16-24 amounted to 18% in Spain in 2011 (European Commission, 2012). Furthermore, long-term unemployment¹³ has also increased significantly among Spanish youth, with the highest increase in the 15–24 age group reaching 32.4% in 2011, a number which is three times higher than in 2007 (EC, 2012).

¹¹ However, it should be pointed out that youth unemployment has been a structural feature of the Spanish labour market since the 1980s, in the sense that the difference between the general unemployment rate and youth unemployment rate has been large, even during times of generally low rates of unemployment.

¹² The proportion of unemployed persons taking into account the entire population of this age category and not only the active population

¹³ The proportion of persons who have been unemployed for 12 months or more.

In terms of gender, unemployment has traditionally affected more young women than men in Spain; however, the difference has decreased in the last few years, and the trend has been inverted among 20-24 year olds, where men are now slightly more affected (48.7% vs. 47.2%). Still, the female unemployment in the youngest age group (16-19) is, however, somewhat higher than for men (People Matters, 2013).¹⁴

Looking at the link between educational level and employment, Spain's skill-distribution is characterised by a high share of youth (15-24) having attained at most lower secondary education. Until 2007, the unemployment rate of low-skilled workers was not much higher than that of skilled workers, indicating a great deal of low-skilled jobs in the construction and hospitality sectors in the past. These low-skilled youths were, however, the first to lose their jobs during the crisis resulting in unemployment of youth with at most lower secondary education almost tripling between 2007 and 2011 (Wölfl, 2013). These youth are also likely to be in a disadvantageous position in terms of accessing new jobs when the economy recovers, considering the growing demand of high and intermediate levels of skills.

Furthermore, Spain has a high proportion of youth population who are neither in employment nor in education or training, the so called NEETs. About 18.5% of 15-24 year-olds can be defined as NEETs, a number which has more than doubled since 2007 for those young people who are between 20 and 24 years old. The majority of NEETs are unemployed and not inactive. This can be explained by a high occurrence of young people moving from one short-term contract to another, with unemployment spells in-between (Wölfl, 2013).

There is also, however, quite a high share of university graduates in this age group. The polarisation of Spain's educational attainment has given rise to imbalances between the supply and demand of qualified workers, resulting in high levels of graduate unemployment compared with elsewhere in Europe and significant underemployment (or over-qualification) of youth with a university degree (Felgueroso et al. 2010).

Moving our focus to the city level, the labour market in Barcelona has been somewhat less affected by the crisis than most parts of Spain, in large part due to the service sector playing a significant role, representing almost 82% of employment (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2012). In relation to job temporality, however, in 2010 a noticeable 91.5% of all new contracts signed by persons between 16 and 24 in Barcelona were fixed-term (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2013a).

The total unemployment in the city reached 18.7% in the first quarter of 2013. Concerning youth unemployment at city level, as in the rest of Spain, this has affected the youngest group the most, with an unemployment rate of 76.6% for the youngest (16-19) and 37.1% for 20 to 24 year-olds (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2013b). In 2008, these numbers were 39.6% and 18.7% respectively, which clearly shows the disproportionate impact that the crisis has had on young people in Barcelona, and especially on the youngest group trying to find a way into the labour market.

¹⁴ With 73.1% compared to 71.2% among men.

An especially vulnerable section within the younger age groups is immigrants, among which almost half of the active population in Catalonia between 16 and 29 are unemployed (Observatori Català de la Joventut, 2013). The same phenomenon can be seen among the entire immigrant population, for which the unemployment rate has tripled in the last 4 years.¹⁵

Institutions, policies and services

In terms of employment services, the central government runs the State Public Service for Employment (SEPE – Servicio Público de Empleo Estatal), responsible for unemployment benefits and the coordination of policies implemented by the regional employment services. Meanwhile, the regional Catalan government has its own public employment service, Employment Service of Catalonia (SOC - Servei d'Ocupació de Catalunya), which is responsible for active labour market policies.

At city level the Youth Employment Office (Oficina Jove de Treball) aims to facilitate labour market access for people under 35, while in terms of employment advice at city and neighbourhood level, the Youth Information Offices (Punt d'Informació Jove), located in all city districts, have a work counselling service for young people.¹⁶ Also at city level, the municipal company Barcelona Activa is an important entity offering labour market orientation, training, inclusion programmes and work experience programmes. In collaboration with the City Council and the Employment Service of Catalonia, it runs several youth programmes: Youth for Employment (Joves per l'Ocupació)¹⁷; Houses of Professions (Cases d'Oficis)¹⁸; and the Professional Life Project (Projecte de Vida Professional).¹⁹

In a country subject to a deep economic crisis, the authorities should be aware of the difficulties for young people in entering the labour market and the growing precariousness for those in it. The socialist government's 2010 labour market reform included financial subsidies for new open-ended contracts for unemployed youth²⁰, together with incentives for the conversion of temporary contracts, attempting to balance out the duality of the labour market. In contrast, the reform by the conservative government in 2012 does not focus on these issues, but instead promotes self-employment and the development of a system of dual vocational training aiming to ease the transition from the educational system to the labour market. Likewise, at the city level, initiatives currently in place seem to focus mainly on vocational training for youth with a low level of qualifications, and on facilitating entrepreneurship and self-employment among youth. Nevertheless, the new City Youth Plan includes decreased job insecurity and

¹⁵ Meanwhile, for the indigenous population the employment rate has doubled.

¹⁶ Both in terms of help to write a CV, job search and career counselling, but also in terms of counselling on contracts, work conditions and rights.

¹⁷ A programme specifically aimed at low-skilled unemployed youth which provides hands-on experience in terms of training and employment of young people (16-25), combining vocational guidance, tutoring and individualised monitoring of professional training and experience in companies, with incentives to businesses to hire youth participating in the programme.

¹⁸ A one -year programme for to increase employability, offering practical training for different professions. At the moment the programme offers professions related to cultural events (e.g. sound/light technician; make-up artist) and to the environmental sphere (e.g. ecological gardener; environmental informer). It is aimed at unemployed youth under 25 and based in different neighbourhoods. Youth from some of the most deprived neighbourhoods are given priority access.

¹⁹ A programme implemented through schools in Barcelona promoting reflection on the students' professional future, analysing their motivations and their possible careers. Within the programme there is a special section promoting entrepreneurial values.

²⁰ Under 30 years of age with only primary education and at least 12 months in unemployment.

precariousness among its aims, but it remains to be seen how these objectives will be converted into practical measures.

2.2. Welfare regimes

The Spanish welfare state was developed late, in the 1980s, due to the previous era of dictatorship. The initial model built on an idealised solidarity, with wide reaching social safety nets. An important objective was to protect immigration, showing a clear focus on social integration and equality for all. This model did not last long, however, and changes started appearing in 1986 when Spain became a member of the EEC, making it important for the country to be perceived as an economically “modern” state, regardless of social costs, leading to the dismantling to a large extent of the initial welfare model.

Currently, in the classification of welfare regimes, Spain can either be defined as a version of the Continental welfare model (Esping-Andersen, 1990) or, as suggested by Castles and Obinger (2008), as an alternative type, the Southern European Welfare State.²¹ The Southern European Welfare States share some characteristics: they have smaller and less developed welfare programmes; a segmented social insurance model, building on the concept of an insider/outsider labour market; weak safety nets and a strong reliance on families for care and support (Aguilar, Escobedo and Montagut, 2011).

2.2.1. Access to social income, social and health services

The welfare state in Spain is based on a dual model: social security for workers and their families, and social assistance for the poor. Income maintenance, including pensions, unemployment benefits, sick pay and social assistance, is based on a central contributory system and a means-tested layer. Benefit schemes are split into those for people not active²² on the labour market and those who might be able to work (Aguilar, Escobedo and Montagut, 2011). Unemployment benefits are managed by the central government, and are contributory, i.e. the amount received depends on how much the individual has contributed to social security when working.²³ Conversely, minimum income benefits belong to the field of social assistance, managed by the regional governments, and aimed at those who do not have any income. Some requirements have to be met, however, such as proving that risk for social exclusion exists (Vilà, Chamorro and Llobet, 2012).

In terms of health care, basic regulations are established by the central government, whereas the management of the health care system falls under the responsibility of the regions. The National Health System was reformed and made less inclusive²⁴ in 2012 with the Royal Decree 1192/2012 determining the requirements for being a beneficiary of the Health System. The **National Institute of Social Security**

²¹ This is still a matter of debate, see e.g. Ferrera, 2010.

²² Persons over 65 or with disabilities above 65%

²³ The minimum time of contribution in order to be eligible for unemployment benefits is 1 year during the preceding 6 years. Three days of contribution results in one day of benefits and the maximum period to receive benefits is 2 years.

²⁴ This provoked much debate and reactions from local governments, NGOs, immigrant associations, etc.

(INSS – Instituto Nacional de Seguridad Social) is the organisation which recognises and certifies this status, based on the following requirements: an eligible person has to be employed or self-employed, affiliated to the Social Security; or, demonstrate pensioner status; or, be a recipient of any other periodic benefit from Social Security, including unemployment benefits; or have exhausted the benefit or unemployment benefit and be registered as unemployed. In addition to this, a person who is not a beneficiary in their own right can be insured through their partner, and similarly, children and youth can be insured through their parents until they are 26 years of age. Furthermore, undocumented migrants have the right to emergency care in case of accident or serious illness and to primary care if they are minors, pregnant, asylum seekers or victims of trafficking.

The regional Catalan public healthcare system is in principle a universal system. Medical visits are free for the user, however, to access public health services the user must have a health card, based on the Spanish state's INSS beneficiary requirements above. Nevertheless, the **Catalan Health Service** (CatSalut - Servei Català de la Salut) has established special procedures²⁵ to provide non-beneficiaries, e.g. undocumented migrants, with a health card, which are more inclusive than the national system.²⁶

In terms of inequalities among youth, among unemployed youth in Catalonia, only 16.5% are covered by unemployment benefits, due to not having worked enough days to obtain benefits or having run out of benefits (Observatori Català de la Joventut, 2012). Another vulnerable group in this respect are migrants who generally suffer from a lower level of coverage than the autochthonous population.

Looking closer at the risk of social exclusion, the complexity of this phenomenon is difficult to capture using only statistical measures and would need a more qualitative approach. Referring strictly to indicators used by the EC, however, we can present numbers telling us at least something about the extension of youth poverty: the at-risk-of-poverty rate is 30% for the 18-24 group at the national level, which means that it is slightly higher than for both the general population and under 18s (EC, 2012). Data on the at-risk-of-poverty rate for Barcelona is not available specifically for this age band.²⁷ Another indicator of poverty used by the EC is the severe material deprivation rate.²⁸ In Spain in 2010, this rate was slightly higher for the 18-24 year-old group (5%) than for the rest of the population (approx. 4%), but lower than for persons aged under 18 (EC, 2012).

One of the negative repercussions of poverty and social exclusion may be psychological distress. Again, this is not easy to capture with the exclusive use of statistics; however, referring to indicators used by the EC, we can point to the extent of this phenomenon among youth. The most current numbers are from the

²⁵ 09/12 Instrucció 10/2012 CatSalut

²⁶ Undocumented migrants can obtain access to primary care, if they have been registered in a Catalan municipality for a minimum of 3 months, and to primary and specialist care if they have been registered for a minimum of 1 year. To register in a municipality ("empadronamiento"), legal residency is not a requirement. This was an initiative by the Catalan government as a response to the 2012 national healthcare reform by the People's Party (Partido Popular) government, which took away the previously existing much more extended coverage.

²⁷ However, statistics show that the poverty risk for the entire 16-64 group is the lowest, 13.7%, while the risk for children and adolescents up to 15 years of age reaches 22% (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2012b).

²⁸ This is defined as the percentage of the population that cannot afford at least four of the following nine pre-defined deprivation items: 1) to pay their rent, mortgage or utility bills, 2) to keep their home adequately warm, 3) to face unexpected expenses, 4) to eat meat or proteins regularly, 5) to go on holiday, or to buy a: 6) TV, 7) refrigerator, 8) car, or a 9) telephone.

outset of the crisis in 2008: according to the European Health Interview Survey, 86% of Spanish youth between 15 and 24 years of age had felt psychological distress during the month leading up to the survey, with a slightly higher proportion of males than females affected (EC, 2012). The corresponding data is not available at city level and it would also be interesting to examine how the numbers have changed during the crisis.

Institutions, policies and services

There is a municipal plan for social inclusion, Pla d'Inclusió Social de Barcelona 2012-2015²⁹, which in relation to youth briefly diagnoses the state of young people in Barcelona as marked by a lack of opportunities, which has an impact on identity problems, and on other aspects (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2012b).

In terms of city level institutions, the **Municipal Social Welfare Council** is a consultative body in the field of social welfare, aiming to issue reports; strengthen coordination between institutions; and promote a wide discussion on the quality of life in the city.³⁰ The **Consortium of Social Services of Barcelona** (Consorti de Serveis Socials de Barcelona) regulates part of the social services of the city, developing the network with a focus on specialised services for the most vulnerable groups, defined as children and adolescents; disabled people; and persons with a drug addiction.

The **Social Services** (Serveis Socials) of Barcelona belong to the area **Quality of Life, Equality and Sports** (Qualitat de Vida, Igualtat i Esports) of the City Council. While the services aimed at the general population³¹ can be accessed by young people, there are also several services specifically for youth: Information and advice for youth³²; the Academic counselling service for youth³³; Socio-Educational Action on the Streets³⁴; and the Detection and Intervention Service³⁵

In terms of health care, primary care is offered at the **Primary Care Centres** (CAP – Centre d'Atenció Primària), located in each neighbourhood.³⁶ The **Youth Information Offices** (Punts d'Informació Jove) are also, in theory, responsible for providing information on access to health care; however, the number of consultations related to health at these offices is very low (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2013a).

While access to health care, both in terms of physical and mental health, is practically universal for youth in Barcelona, the access to social services and social income seems to be much limited. The unstable

²⁹ The current version is the result of collective work of the City Council and the civil society organisations gathered in Barcelona under the Citizen Agreement for an Inclusive Barcelona (ACBI – Acord Ciutadà per una Barcelona Inclusiva) and the Municipal Social Welfare Council (Consell Municipal de Benestar Social).

³⁰ Consell Municipal de Benestar Social, 2013, web:

http://w3.bcn.cat/V45/Home/V45HomeLinkPI/0,3698,88652498_88654198_1,00.html

³¹ E.g. basic social services; emergency social services; time bank; information and orientation on equality and discrimination.

³² Aimed at counselling young people on issues such as housing, education and labour market.

³³ Designed to counsel youth on academic programmes and scholarships.

³⁴ Directed to youth living their life mainly on the streets.

³⁵ Aimed at unaccompanied foreign minors with no family ties or reference in the city, in a state of serious neglect and social risk and generally living on the streets.

³⁶ Some of these centres also have specialised units, e.g. the Service for Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASSIR – Atenció a la salut sexual i reproductiva), some with set times for drop-in advice for youth on sexual health; or mental health units, including special teams for children and adolescents under 18.

labour market - leading to many young people having either not worked enough days in order to achieve access to unemployment benefits, or having run out of benefits as a result of long-term unemployment - has led to more youth either being dependent on help from their families, or in need of minimum income benefits. The Spanish welfare system is not a strong one, however, and certainly does not seem tailored for the increased need of social services due to the high level of unemployment. At the city level, the new Youth Plan recognises the importance of working to prevent the risk of social exclusion and aims to implement measures to reduce this risk, with a special focus on youth below the poverty threshold. Nevertheless, a more specific definition of these measures is not included in the plan.

2.2.2. Housing

The current debate on housing in Spain is highly focused on mortgages, evictions and legal issues in the crisis context. This stems from a vulnerability on the rise over the last few years, which may affect a number of non-emancipated youth, namely that of families who can no longer pay their mortgages. Before the economic recession, due to easy access to loans, many families bought property. Now, a great number have lost their jobs, making it difficult or impossible to keep up with mortgage payments; hence, many families have become homeless. In the last few years, an important number of evictions have taken place in Barcelona – in 2010 the eviction rate was 15.59 per day, and in 2011 a total of 5.801 evictions were carried out in the province of Barcelona (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2012b).³⁷

As a response to this phenomenon, an increasing number of suicides have been acknowledged due to the stress of having an accumulation of debts. This has been widely covered by media and has put pressure on the political parties to respond to the citizen demands, which has been reflected in the parliamentary debates on the mortgage law. In this sense, the Spanish government has, somewhat belatedly, reacted to the mortgage issue and the increase in evictions: the recent mortgage law reform³⁸ introduces changes directed towards easing the pressure of those in debt; however, these measures are likely to be “too little too late” for too many families, focusing only on the debt issue and not on housing as a basic human right. This law has been approved by the People’s Party with the opposition of all other parties, as it does not gather any of the three main social demands: the retrospective deed of assignment in payment³⁹, a moratorium on evictions and the promotion of social rent of empty homes owned by banks.

As has been implicitly stated above, the housing market in Spain is to a great extent based on ownership and the rental sector is generally small with a minimum presence of the public sector.⁴⁰ Housing is

³⁷ As a citizen response to the wide extension of this issue, in 2009 a group of citizens founded the Platform of People Affected by the Mortgage (PAH - Plataforma d’Afectats per la Hipoteca Barcelona) bringing together people struggling to pay the mortgage, people in the process of foreclosure and people who generally care about this problematic and who want to provide support to the affected. It is not clear, however, how many young people are engaged in this platform.

³⁸ Ley 1/2013, de 14 de mayo, de medidas para reforzar la protección a los deudores hipotecarios, reestructuración de deuda y alquiler social. <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2013/05/15/pdfs/BOE-A-2013-5073.pdf>

³⁹ Meaning the delivery of housing in exchange for canceling the debt mortgage.

⁴⁰ It is worth pointing out that since 2004, there have been attempts to facilitate rental housing at the national level, with rental subsidies to people under 35 and with a household income below 15,792€/year and subsidies for homeowners renting out their unoccupied dwellings (Aguilar, Escobedo and Montagut, 2011).

perceived as part of family wealth (Aguilar, Escobedo and Montagut, 2011), and, therefore, housing policies in Spain have been conceived as economic rather than social policies.

The young population in Spain certainly suffers difficulties in entering the housing market. The Spanish youth emancipation was already one of the latest in Europe, and has now been even more delayed due to the crisis (Vilà, Chamorro and Llobet, 2012). The average age when leaving the family home is currently estimated to be around 30 years (EC, 2012); however, somewhat younger for women than for men.⁴¹

Zoning in on Barcelona, the emancipation rate of Barcelona's population between 18 and 24 years of age fell from 12.4% in 1985 to 7.7% in 2000⁴² (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2007) and we would expect it to currently be even lower, due to the crisis. The late emancipation is mainly due to the extension in education and the delay of young people in entering the labour market (Montagut, 2011), now exacerbated by the economic crisis. There is also a cultural element to the late emancipation, namely the important role of families, somewhat shaped by religious habits, and the perception of co-residence of parents and youth during the latter's transition into adulthood as part of family life in the Spanish context (Vilà, Chamorro and Llobet, 2012).

As previously mentioned, the housing market is primarily based on private property, but currently, buying a home is extremely difficult for young people due to excessively high prices and job insecurity.⁴³ Furthermore, the economic recession in the recent years has increased the demand for rented apartments⁴⁴ and in order to obtain access to a rented apartment, a permanent work contract is often required, as is a bank endorsement. For many young people, the only housing option in order to be able to move out from their family home is to share an apartment with other young people. This is especially common among university students; however, a large proportion of youth from Barcelona have no other option than to stay with their parents until they finish their studies, and many for even longer, considering the difficulties in entering the labour market. So currently, youth living with their relatives is not so much perceived as a choice rather than the only option.

Another, unconventional and many times unstable option for housing, is squatting. The so called "Moviment Okupa" of Barcelona has been active since the mid-1980s and does not only include dwellings, but also (often) social centres – spaces for cultural creation and expression as well as alternative lifestyles in general (Martínez, 2001). Studies on squats in Barcelona are scarce and, therefore, it is difficult to estimate how many there are⁴⁵; the proportion of young people living in squats; their socioeconomic characteristics; or their reasons for squatting.⁴⁶ Although the reasons may vary, similarly

⁴¹ As a pre-crisis comparison, in 2008, the average emancipation age was 27 years (Van de Velde, 2008).

⁴² This is the latest number available regarding youth emancipation at city level.

⁴³ It should also be noted that Spanish salaries are low compared to many EU countries.

⁴⁴ Rental prices have grown significantly in the city since 2000, when prices in Barcelona and the region of Catalonia were quite similar, to 20% higher rents in the city in 2010 (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2012b).

⁴⁵ Figures from 2006 estimate the number to 200 in Barcelona, according to the municipal police and the Catalan police in the article "El club de los indeseados" *La Vanguardia*, December 8th 2006.

⁴⁶ In this sense, we should bear in mind the internal diversity and plurality existing within this movement in terms of political orientation (e.g. Catalan nationalism/pro independence, communism, anarchism, multiculturalism), and the kind of projects

to living with relatives, as a result of the crisis it is likely that there are more young people, but also families, who squat as a direct need for housing. The attachment to a political ideology is, however, still an important element when squatting, beyond economical needs.⁴⁷

Finally, social housing in Barcelona is very scarce, and corresponds to only approximately 3.2% of total housing in the city (Montagut, 2011).

Institutions, policies and services

The current Housing Plan of Barcelona 2008-2016 (Pla d'Habitatge de Barcelona 2008 – 2016) defines young people among the groups with the greatest housing needs, deserving special attention in this field, due to lower incomes and a higher degree of job instability. In the city's housing policy context, a person between 18 and 35 is considered young (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2007).

The **Barcelona Housing Consortium** (Consorti de l'Habitatge de Barcelona) is responsible for planning, programming and managing public housing policies. The Consortium has developed the **Register of Applicants for Social Housing** (Registre de Sol·licitants d'Habitatge amb Protecció Oficial de Barcelona), in which all persons requesting social housing are registered.⁴⁸ When new social housing is published, the dwellings are raffled among the registered persons depending on their requirements.

The **Barcelona Municipal Housing Board** (PMHB – Patronat Municipal de l'Habitatge) is a local government agency aiming to promote affordable housing and meet social needs in this field. The Board runs the **Rental Housing Register for Youth** (Borsa d'Habitatge de Lloguer per a Joves), which provides mediation services between flat owners and possible tenants, aiming to increase the offer of affordable rental flats for youth.

The **Social Services** also have a role in housing with regard to youth at risk of social exclusion. In terms of support for homeless youth, they offer the specialised programmes mentioned in section 2.2.1. They also run several other services⁴⁹ for vulnerable youth, although the actual extent of their implementation depends on the budget.

In terms of financial aid, previously a municipal programme existed, which facilitated youth emancipation through a rental aid for up to two years until reaching the age of 30. Due to budgetary

organised, the interactions with other civil society agents and institutions. More references can be found in: Batista, 2002; and González and Gomà 2003.

⁴⁷ In relation to the squat movement, an interesting observation is that of González et al (2003) suggesting that there may be a correlation between youth policies and squats, meaning that in municipalities with a stronger squat movement, there are also more affirmative youth policies - although not exclusively in the field of housing - and that this may have been sparked by the squatting youth. However, it should be pointed out that this suggestion was based on a study in Catalonia before the crisis.

⁴⁸ To be eligible for social housing a person needs to be of legal age, be registered in Barcelona, and have an income under a certain limit. The housing offered through this system comes in several shapes: rental; rental with the option to buy; for sale; rental for youth; and rental for old people.

⁴⁹ The services include: Assisted flat for youth 16-18, aimed at adolescents under government guardianship who live together 4-6 people in a flat, overseen by social workers; Assisted flat for youth 18-21, which is housing for young people between 18 and 21 years without family, who reach adult age and especially those who have left the institutions where they have been living as minors; and Housing service for youth enrolled in labour insertion programmes aimed at 16 to 20 year-olds who are either under government guardianship or who used to be and who are enrolled in a labour insertion programme.

measures, however, the programme was repealed and no new applications have been allowed from January 2012, whereas the subsidise for persons already in the programme has been decreased.⁵⁰

To conclude, authorities seem on the whole concerned with the difficulty for youth in leaving their parental home, reflected, for example in the previously existing rental aids. In Barcelona, however, these are no longer accessible due to budget cuts, a factor which is likely to exacerbate the difficulty for Barcelona's young people in their process of emancipation, together with the other effects of the economic crisis. In short, housing for youth does not seem to be a prioritised issue in a crisis-ridden country. The objectives in the new City Council Youth Plan include, however, the development of measures to provide better access to rented dwellings, paying attention to the difficulty of young people in accessing an apartment in the current rental market; and to facilitate the conditions for young people to be eligible for social housing. Currently, though, social housing is scarce, and although the "lottery system" of access may seem fair, the system might also lead to the most vulnerable groups not obtaining access.⁵¹

2.2.3. Education and training

In Spain, education is compulsory between 6 and 16 years of age and provided by both public and private institutions. Basic regulations are set by the central government, whereas the regions are fully responsible for implementing the system, structured as follows:

- Preschool Education (Educación infantil) is non-compulsory and divided in two stages: 0-2 years and 3-5 years.
- The compulsory Primary Education (Educación primaria) is implemented for 6-11 year olds.
- The compulsory Lower Secondary Education (Educación Secundaria Obligatoria) is divided in two stages from 12 to 16 years: ESO 1 (1st and 2nd grade) and ESO 2 (3rd and 4th grade).

Having finished compulsory education, students can opt between a general education track and vocational education. Upper Secondary Education (Bachillerato, 17-18 years) is the most straightforward access to university studies. The other option, Vocational Education (FP - Formación Profesional) consists of two cycles: Ciclo Formativo de Grado Medio, available for those who have successfully completed ESO 2, and Ciclo Formativo de Grado Superior, available for those who have successfully completed the Bachillerato. University entrance is also possible for students finishing this stage.

Spain is among the EU countries with the highest number of drop-outs from compulsory education (Vilà, Chamorro and Llobet, 2012). In 2011, the rate of early leavers⁵² for the age group 18-24 was 26.5%, with a significantly higher rate for men than for women: 31% and 22% respectively (EC, 2012). Among

⁵⁰ Web of Consorci de l'Habitatge de Barcelona, <http://www.bcn.cat/consorcihabitatge/ca/borsa-habitatge.html>

⁵¹ In this regard, a study on the Register of Applicants for Social Housing conducted by the European Social Research Unit in 2010 concluded that the profile which was most benefitted in this system was a person – male or female - between 25 and 36 with a medium-low or very low income, soliciting rental housing for youth, whereas the profile which least benefitted was an older person, suffering from domestic violence, from either a large family or a single-parent household and suffering from some degree of disability.

⁵² Defined as "leaving the formal school system before obtaining a degree from upper secondary education".

people aged 20-24, the rate of persons having completed at least upper secondary education reached only approximately 61%, which, in contrast to the EU27 as a whole, is a slight decrease from the year 2000. Also in this regard, the difference between men and women is significant, with more females having finished at least upper secondary education (EC, 2012).

Although a general characteristic for youth in the last few years has been the increased number of years in education, for some the option to continue studying has become less attractive because it no longer guarantees a qualified job. As previously mentioned, the proportion of NEETs is high in Spain, corresponding to around 18.5% among 15-24 year olds (Eurofound, 2012). The share is higher for men than for women and in terms of education, approximately 70% of the NEETs have a lower than average level (Eurofound, 2012). It should be remembered, however, that the NEET population, although easy to capture statistically, is highly heterogeneous. Not all are equally vulnerable⁵³, hence, they may have very different needs, calling for tailored policies to re-engage them with education or the labour market (Eurofound, 2012).

Although Spain also has quite a high level of young university graduates: 11.8% of under 25s in 2011⁵⁴, this share has not been enough to meet the EU objective of average population with medium levels of educational attainment, especially considering upper secondary education. As a consequence, Spain's youth still has a low level of education compared with the EU average.

The rate of early school leaving reduced until the mid-1990s, but has not dropped for the last 15 years.⁵⁵ Most research concludes that drop outs do not form a homogeneous group and that no single factor can predict who is at risk of dropping out. Studies in the Spanish context focus mainly on factors within the individual and his/her social context, such as social origin, gender, belonging to a minority or having the experience of migration (Fernández Enguita et al, 2010), and the educational level of the parents, where especially the educational level of the mother seems to play a significant role (Fernández-Macías, 2013). These factors exist to a greater or lesser extent in all countries, however, so what could be the structural explanation behind the high rate of early leaving in the Spanish society and school system? Some factors can be identified: firstly, Spain spends less on education in terms of GDP than the EU27, the difference being much greater in secondary (26%) than in primary education (5%) (Fernández-Macías, 2013). Secondly, lacking resources, the school system does not sufficiently compensate for disadvantages related to socio-cultural origin.⁵⁶ Thirdly, the system of repeating is still used in Spain, although various studies

⁵³ E.g. voluntary NEETs from more privileged backgrounds vs. involuntarily unemployed vs. the disengaged who are neither seeking jobs nor education

⁵⁴ Approximately 4 percentage points above the EU average

⁵⁵ Fernández-Macías et al (2013) suggest that this, in part, is caused by the statistical effect of the rise in young immigrants, who arrive in Spain after their initial education, but before finishing upper secondary education, i.e. affecting the rate of early leaving although they have never been part of the Spanish school system.

⁵⁶ However, there is a measure by the state government aimed at addressing diversity, namely the Initial Professional Qualification Programmes, which replace the previously existing Social Guarantee Programmes. These are aimed at youth over 16 years of age who have not finished lower secondary education and the objectives are to reach a certain level of professional competence; to facilitate labour integration; and to prepare for further studies (Palomares and López, 2012).

show that it makes little or no sense (see e.g. Holmes, 1989; Jimerson 1997; Troncin, 2004). In fact, there seems to be a linear relation between repeating a year and dropping out (Fernández Enguita et al, 2010).

Concerning education in Barcelona, there are approximately 236 public centres and 355 private or “concertados”⁵⁷ for primary education, and 77 and 198 respectively for secondary education. Only about 40% of students attend a public school. In the school year of 2010-11, the rate of drop-outs in the last year of compulsory education was 15.59% - an improvement from 18.1% in 2006-07 (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2012b). In terms of tertiary education, the city has five public universities.⁵⁸ University education is subject to fees, which were raised by the central government in the autumn of 2012, nevertheless, letting the autonomous regions determine the exact raise.⁵⁹ The higher fees are likely to have an impact on who will have access to higher education.⁶⁰

Institutions, policies and services

At the regional level the Department of Education (Departament d’Ensenyament) of the Generalitat is responsible for implementing the education system. Regarding youth programmes, the Department runs the Programme of dual education, aiming to respond to the needs of the labour market and increase collaboration between vocational schools and companies.

In terms of city level institutions, the **Barcelona Institute of Education** (IMEB - Institut Municipal d’Educació de Barcelona) is an independent administrative body of the City Council, acting to adapt the educational offer to the city’s needs, correcting territorial imbalances and social inequalities, and reinforcing public schools. In addition, the **Barcelona Education Consortium** (Consorti d’Educació de Barcelona) was created in 2002 as an association of public nature, composed of the Generalitat and the City Council for the joint management of educational activities and services.

There are a few measures in place which can be perceived as countering inequalities in education, while not necessarily having this as their objective: Regarding possibilities of combining Upper Secondary Education with work, some schools offer this as an evening course, for persons over 16. There is also an option of distance education at the **Open Institute of Catalonia** (Institut Obert de Catalunya). In order to provide possibilities to study in a quiet environment, the **Department of Youth and Adolescence** (Regidoria d’Adolescència i Joventut) of the City Council, together with the city districts and the Provincial Council’s Library Consortium offers **Evening Study Halls** (Sales d’Estudi Nocturnes) for students. Finally, concerning economic support for tertiary education, the **Agency of Management of University and Research Scholarships** (AGAUR – Agència de Gestió de Ajuts Universitaris i de

⁵⁷ A private educational institution which is partly state-financed.

⁵⁸ Universitat de Barcelona is the largest, followed by Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Universitat Pompeu Fabra and Universitat Oberta de Catalunya

⁵⁹ In Catalonia the system builds on the family income, but in general the fees have gone up between 151 and 948€ per year. <http://educacion.practicopedia.lainformacion.com/educacion-universitaria/como-sube-el-precio-de-las-tasas-para-la-universidad-en-2012-16524>.

⁶⁰ Both preceding and following this raise of fees, there have been several student strikes both at national and local levels, to protest against the fees and generally against the budget cuts in education. The strikes have not only concerned the university level, but also primary and secondary education, which have also been subject to severe cuts over the last few years.

Recerca), offers a range of scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students. Some universities also run their own scholarship programmes.

Concerning the general view on education, the City Council notes that this should be understood from a broad perspective (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2013). Beyond schools, vocational schools and universities, also other agents, such as different associations, perform educational tasks. Among these, in Catalonia the **Esplais** or **Caus** (“Leisure clubs”) can be highlighted.⁶¹

To conclude, training opportunities for youth with lower educational levels seem to be a priority in the field of employment rather than in education.⁶² One line of action in the new Youth Plan, however, is to increase the number of places in public vocational training and adult education as well as broaden the offer of upper secondary education evening studies. Furthermore, the City Council underlines the need to reinforce public education in order to guarantee equal opportunities, as well as to establish mechanisms of economic support for the most disadvantaged families. Improvement of the municipal programmes for diversity in educational contexts, especially in relation to youth with a migrant background, is also mentioned in the Plan; however, as previously noted, it remains to be seen how these aims will be practically implemented.

2.3. Power, democracy, citizenship and civil participation

Whilst a majority of youth are not formally members of any political or other kind of organisation, many are actively participating in democratic movements. It should be understood, therefore, that there are many different forms of participation and involvement, which not always translate into formal organisations or political parties and that these manifestations are important to consider when looking at the role of young people as agents of civil participation. This is especially true in the case of Spain and Barcelona, where the social and political movement which has arisen in the last few years stands out in terms of youth involvement. The movement, predominantly known as **15M**⁶³ after the big manifestation on 15th May 2011 in Madrid and 50 other cities all over Spain, has its roots in the economic crisis and the growing discontent with how the politicians have handled it. Santamaría (2011) points out that the core of this movement is made up of young people born in the mid-80s and the beginning of the 90s, many with a university education, and other requirements which would have made their emancipation possible in other times, but who in today’s Spain cannot find a decent job, nor an affordable dwelling. Neither the number of young people participating in this movement, however, nor their more detailed socio-demographic characteristics remain clear.

⁶¹ An Esplai is a non-profit educational institution working with children and young people in their free time, which performs a public service rooted in a specific territory and is developed through the joint work of professional volunteers (Batlle, 1997). The activities may be related to drama, nature, sports, music, arts or science, and are carried out as a group, helping the participants to better relate to their environment. This is done based on a global educational project, and the esplais can many times be sources of innovative social practices.

⁶² I.e. further training opportunities usually form part of labour market insertion strategies, described in section 2.1.

⁶³ Alternatively known as “Indignados”, or, mainly in social media, as the “Spanish Revolution”

In relation to this, it is important to understand that 15M was neither a one-off action nor just a number of demonstrations, but rather an ongoing movement, currently articulated through different formations, which can be perceived as sources of social innovation. Some of these are locally based in Barcelona, such as **Democracia Real Ya**⁶⁴, one of the main organisers of the 15M demonstration, emerging at the national level in February 2011 as a coordinating platform mobilizing citizens against austerity policies.⁶⁵ In addition to this, the **Acampada** movement sprung from Democracia Real Ya, beginning as a squatting of public squares all over Spain starting after the 15M demonstration.⁶⁶ The Barcelona branch, **Acampadaben** is still active as a movement and is now based mainly on neighbourhood assemblies, which have reached consensus on a number of questions, denominated “Demandes mínimes” (Minimum requirements). These concern areas such as access to housing; right to quality public services; participative democracy; fewer privileges for the political and economic elites; and environmental issues.

Looking at the more traditional forms of youth organisation, statistics from the Flash Eurobarometer survey 2011 reveal that 42% of Spanish youth (age: 15-30) had participated in an organisation⁶⁷ in the year leading up to the survey. Of these, the most common organisation was a sports club (26.7%), whilst only 2.7% had formed part of a political organisation or party. In terms of voting, during the last three years before the same survey, 70% of youth had participated in either a local, regional, national or EU election, which is below the EU27 average (80%). Concerning the corresponding numbers of participation at the Barcelona city level, there is a severe lack of data.⁶⁸

Added to the traditional forms of youth organisation and the recent protest movement, we should also highlight the engagement of youth in other types of social movements, such as feminism, ecology, squatting, or anti-globalisation. There is a tradition of the civil society of Catalonia and Barcelona in engaging with and participating in social movements and citizenship issues, and the involvement of young people in social movements is quite high and diverse.

Institutions, policies and services

Looking at the services available to facilitate the organisation of youth in Barcelona, an important organisation is the Barcelona Youth Council (CJB - Consell de la Joventut), an independent platform coordinating and representing the principal city entities for youth. The CJB aims to redefine youth policies and prevent social exclusion of young people and is recognised by the City Council as a valid interlocutor in youth policy and matters affecting young people. Among other things, it is involved in the

⁶⁴ The local branch is called Democracia Real Ja Barcelona.

⁶⁵ Some critics of this movement, however, argue that it includes too many people from the “establishment” trying to conduct it in a certain direction and not aiming for deep enough changes.

⁶⁶ The biggest concentration took place in Madrid, whilst in Barcelona, the central Plaça Catalunya was taken over by between 300 and 3000 people depending on the day. It was dissolved through a violent eviction by the Catalan police on May 27th, although a number of people returned to the square afterwards.

⁶⁷ The options included in the survey were: sports club; youth club, leisure-time club or any kind of youth organisation; cultural organisation; political organisation or a political party; local organisation aimed at improving your local community and/or local environment; organisation active in the domain of global climate change/global warming; organisation promoting human rights or global development; any other non-governmental organisations

⁶⁸ This data is collected through the youth survey and the last such survey in Barcelona was conducted an entire decade ago, in 2002-2003 and would, hence, not provide us with any insight into the current situation.

Resource Centre for Youth Organisation in Barcelona (CRAJ - Centre de Recursos per a les Associacions Juvenils de Barcelona), a municipal service managed jointly by the CJB and the City Council. An interesting programme implemented by the centre is the Vivers Juvenils, a service with two branches: one facilitating basic infrastructures for youth organisations, and another assisting non-profit projects of youth groups.⁶⁹

The City Council points out that the young people using the public services in this field are mainly Catalan natives with middle to upper class socioeconomic background (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2013a). Strikingly though, despite showing awareness of this limitation of the outreach of the services, it does not remain clear what measures the City Council plans to implement in order to extend the service usage.

While the reference model for youth participation traditionally has been the formally constituted associations, already in the 1997 **Law of associations** (Llei d'associacions) changes were introduced related to the emergence of new participatory models, lead by the social movements and particularly by the squatting movement (González, 2003). This is also reflected in the new Youth Plan where the new social movements are recognised as a form of youth participation to be recognised, beyond the formal youth organisations. The actions by the authorities in relation to e.g. the demonstrations of the 15M movement do not show, however, any real commitment to this statement.

In terms of measures to bring the municipal governance closer to the city youth, the City Council aims to promote direct contact between politicians and young citizens and extend the virtual tools for interaction, (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2013a). Although the intention is good, one can only speculate whose voices will be heard through these measures – while the diversity of the young population seems to be reflected in some policy measures, in others, youth is once again treated as one homogeneous collective, risking a too narrow focus which most likely will not represent the heterogeneity of Barcelona's youth.

3. Life for young people in the city

Considering the diversity of a global city like Barcelona, it is difficult to diagnose the state of the young people in a generalised way. As in any major city, the youth of Barcelona is highly heterogeneous and some young people may suffer from multiple forms of disadvantages or discrimination due to gender, sexual orientation, family model, ethnic origin or class, and thus, the dual role of being e.g. both young and female; belonging to the LGBT community; having a single parent; or being poor, even further aggravates the needs and problems of some young people.

⁶⁹ The groups have access to an office, equipped with basic furniture, computer and phone. They can make use of management tools for the development of the project and also have access to the advice of staff during a maximum period of two years.

Additionally, hitherto we have not mentioned the socioeconomic differences between city districts and neighbourhoods, which in the case of Barcelona are noticeable. Therefore, we can also expect life for youth to be perceived and experienced very differently depending on the neighbourhood they live in.⁷⁰

Nevertheless, some general observations can be made. On the whole, there seems to be a discomfort and discontent amongst young people, largely generated by the crisis. As we have seen, unemployment is high and still on the rise. This is one of the main concerns among young people and to a great degree present in the current atmosphere. On the other hand, young people who are employed many times have temporary contracts with a precariousness that keeps extending. This instability in turn affects other areas of life, in particular housing, with deteriorating possibilities of emancipation. At the same time, with an extended unemployment not only among young people, different generations within a family may be unemployed, resulting in a decline in the possibilities of social support from the traditionally highly important family network.

Considering the heterogeneity of the city's young people and of the neighbourhoods, a wide array of local, neighbourhood based actions and services would be essential in order to decrease the existing inequalities and effects of the crisis. Initiatives to empower youth at risk of social exclusion both personally and professionally would be necessary. The crisis has brought with it cuts in budgets, however, and in times when more personalised services would be the most needed, the services available may have become less outreaching than before.⁷¹

Furthermore, a paradox to keep in mind is the substantial difference between Barcelona as a brand promoted by the authorities - i.e. the image of the perfect city sold abroad and to tourists - and the real life of young people, a difference which has been increasingly marked since the outset of the crisis. A visitor from abroad is unlikely to perceive the excessive number of unemployed youth or other signs of the crisis, but is instead led to the areas which have been polished and prepared for the enjoyment of tourists. An example of this polishing is the law from 2006 which, according to the City Council, is aimed to promote the coexistence between citizens in public spaces.⁷² This law included some measures which clearly limit life for certain collectives of young people, such as the prohibition of games in public spaces, e.g. skateboarding. That is, certain activities mainly performed by youth were suddenly turned into offences penalised with fines. Likewise, the focus on security has been strengthened in the last few years, with the entrance of the right-wing government, something which has been visible most of all during demonstrations, such as the 15M, with acts of excessive violence by the police. In this sense, the trust between the authorities and the city's youth is likely to have decreased over the last few years.

⁷⁰ One way of analysing the economic differences between districts is to look at the disposable household income per capita. Using Barcelona as a base with the index 100, the index numbers of the districts show large disparities, with the richest districts, Sarrà - Sant Gervasi and Les Corts, reaching 178.9 and 141.4 respectively and the poorest, Nou Barris and Sant Andreu only 61,6 and 74,1 (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2012d).

⁷¹ Even the City Council admits that although there are many youth services in place, these are poorly coordinated, making it difficult for professionals to be familiar with them all and able to provide useful guidance for young people (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2013a).

⁷² "Ordenanza de medidas para fomentar y garantizar la convivencia ciudadana en el espacio público de Barcelona". The ordinance went into effect on January 25th 2006.

The branding of the city has also led to an overall increase of prices.⁷³ As a result of no longer being able to afford to live in the city - where the citizens are affected by the crisis whilst most prices are not – an increasing number of youth are now moving to smaller cities or towns nearby. Others see no other option than to seek better opportunities for life in other countries.

Despite this somewhat gloomy scenario, it is important to comprehend that youth in Barcelona, as we have seen, have not remained passive in the face of the crisis and the actions by the authorities. One of the traits that characterise many young people in the city is their active stand against injustice. Barcelona was one of the places of origin of the 15M movement, which later spread all over Spain and beyond, and many are the young people who have taken the streets as part of the new social movements, to protest against the cuts in key welfare areas or the massive redundancy plans (e.g. EREs), trying to defend the right to a decent life for all.⁷⁴

⁷³ One way of measuring this is the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which, with 2011 indexed as 100, rose from 74.6 in January of 2002 to 104.9 in January of 2013. These numbers are for the *province* of Barcelona, and we can expect the price increase in the *city* of Barcelona to be higher. <http://www.bcn.cat/estadistica/catala/dades/economia/consum/ipc/ipcev01.htm>

⁷⁴ As previously mentioned, however, a large part of these young people seem to come from middle-class backgrounds, and the more vulnerable youth may not be so much involved in these new processes.

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Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across
Europe

Cities in their national contexts

BIRMINGHAM

Symptoms and causes of inequality affecting young people

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This report is part of Work Package 2 of the research project entitled “Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across Europe” (CITISPYCE). CITISPYCE has been devised against the back drop of research which shows the disproportionate impact of the global economic crisis on young people across Europe. This includes excessively high rates of youth unemployment (particularly amongst those who face multiple social, economic and cultural disadvantages) and threats to the social provision enjoyed by previous generations. CITISPYCE partners are working on a three year multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral programme to examine the current state of the art and ideas concerning social innovation against inequalities faced by young people, explore socially innovative practices being developed by and for young people in urban areas, and test the transferability of local models of innovative practice in order to develop new policy approaches. The CITISPYCE consortium covers ten European countries and is funded by the European Commission (FP7, Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities).



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1. The city – a presentation

1.1. The city in its national context

Birmingham is situated in the centre of the UK at the heart of the West Midlands region and is the largest city after the capital, London. The city is the West Midlands regional centre for commerce and industry, retail and leisure, serving a regional population of approximately 3.1 million. It is at the centre of the UK's road and rail network with the 3rd largest airport outside London. More than 500,000 people are employed in the city, with more than 150,000 commuting from beyond its boundaries (ONS, 2013).

Birmingham is divided into ten Parliamentary constituencies, each of which elects one representative to the national Parliament. The constituencies also serve as the administrative and electoral districts for a single representative body for the residents of Birmingham at the local level, the City Council. Each district is subdivided into four 'wards' and residents in each ward vote for three councillors to represent them in the City Council (120 Councillors in total). A Leader and Cabinet are responsible for the overall political direction and management of the city. Responsibility for young people's issues at the city level is shared between different central policy departments and between the portfolios of different Cabinet members, notably Children and Family Services, Social Cohesion and Equalities, Development, Jobs and Skills and Health and Wellbeing¹. Under the current Labour-led City Council, however, responsibility for the management and delivery of a range of services at local level has been devolved to 10 local District Committees, corresponding to the administrative and electoral districts and comprising the 12 City Councillors for each district.

¹ Available at: www.birmingham.gov.uk/democracy (accessed 2 June 2013)

As there is no elected regional tier of government in England, there is a direct political relationship between central government and local authorities and there are frequent tensions over where the balance of power lies.

During the 1980s Birmingham experienced a population decline similar to that in other post-industrial cities in the UK. The arrest in the decline of Birmingham's population noted in the 2001 census and its return to growth is an indication of the recent slowing and reversal of population loss in many major cities across the UK. In addition to broader changes in the regional economy and social mobility, in Birmingham the growth in population over the past two decades has in large part been driven by an increase in birth rates, declining mortality rates and new waves of immigration. These are also key factors in making Birmingham a super-diverse city. Indeed, the city is predicted soon to become one of Britain's first major cities with a majority non-white population (Phillips, 2008).

Currently, cities account for 54% of the UK national population, 58% of national jobs, 60% of the national Gross Value Added (GVA) and 79% of new country's immigrants (Centre for Cities: Cities Outlook, 2013). Birmingham is the largest of the Core Cities group of eight major regional cities in England that, together with their wider urban areas, currently contribute 27% of the national economic output (Core Cities, 2011). Birmingham, however, has a lower level of wealth creation ("Gross Value Added") per worker than the UK average and other Core Cities.

Together with London, the Core Cities are key drivers of the UK economy but they function within a highly centralised unitary state. They are subject to strong government control and direction, and are heavily dependent upon central government for their funding. For this reason many of the key national issues relating to young people are also reflected in Birmingham.

1.2. Historical and Cultural background

Economy up to 1945

Birmingham's original economic success was built on the metal working industry. By the 18th century metal artefacts of all kinds were made by highly skilled craftsmen in numerous small workshops across a growing town. Traditional and newer metalworking industries continued in Birmingham throughout the 19th century and the city became known as the 'workshop of the world'. By 1900, 75% of the workforce was employed in manufacturing and in the 20th century the city became a centre of engineering and automotive production.

Birmingham was able to keep pace with growing demand for its many products thanks to the development of transport infrastructure which connected it to supplies of raw materials and to national markets and ports for overseas exports. It thus became the national communications hub at the heart of the road, canal and rail networks and led the way in the export of goods from the UK to other parts of the

world. Today the city is a key node in global business for a number of business sectors, particularly among the city's diaspora communities.

Governance

In 1838 Birmingham was given the status of 'municipal borough' with its own elected Town Council. National legislation in the 19th century to deal with the appalling working and living conditions of industrial workers and their families provided the city and other rapidly growing industrial cities with greater opportunities for local decision-making. Local councils began to implement a range of physical improvements e.g. in public health, housing and sanitation, and gradually to extend their powers into activities such as the creation of municipal gas and water companies and the provision of libraries. In 1889, Birmingham became a City and over the course of the next century its boundaries were extended to its current size. The Victorian legacy of civic autonomy, however, was largely eroded in the 20th century and local authorities became subject to unprecedented levels of central control (Hunt, 2004), particularly during the 1980's.

Economy post-1945

Birmingham continued to be a relatively prosperous city until the late 1970s when recession hit manufacturing industry, the bedrock of the regional economy. Total employment in the city declined by 200,000 between 1971 and 1984 (Parkinson 2007).

Unemployment rose to over 20%. Many of those out of work were low-skilled manual workers with minimal or no qualifications and had no tradition of self-employment. They were ill-equipped to access new opportunities which required higher levels of literacy and numeracy. They were in no small part victims of the structural shift in economic policy espoused by the Thatcher government in the 1980's. This was the case across the country, where the emergent neo-liberal economic settlement significantly altered the cultural as well as economic bedrock of Britain (Hall, 2011).

Over the past 30 years, however, there have been a series of national programmes of urban renewal which have focused investment into some of the worst hit areas such as the post-industrial cities of the North East, North West and Midlands to stimulate regeneration and create new employment. Birmingham has undertaken an ambitious series of regeneration programmes to revitalise the city's economy over this time, combining resources from government with EU funding and private sector investment. The city centre has been remodelled and expanded; new cultural and leisure facilities have been built; and transport infrastructure is being improved. Until recently, however, the emphasis has been more on physical rather than social regeneration and, in spite of positive initiatives to raise educational standards and to tackle social exclusion, major inequalities across the city still exist. As will be seen in later chapters, unemployment, particularly amongst young people, continues to be higher than the national average, deprivation is significant and there are major gaps in the health outcomes for many people across the city.

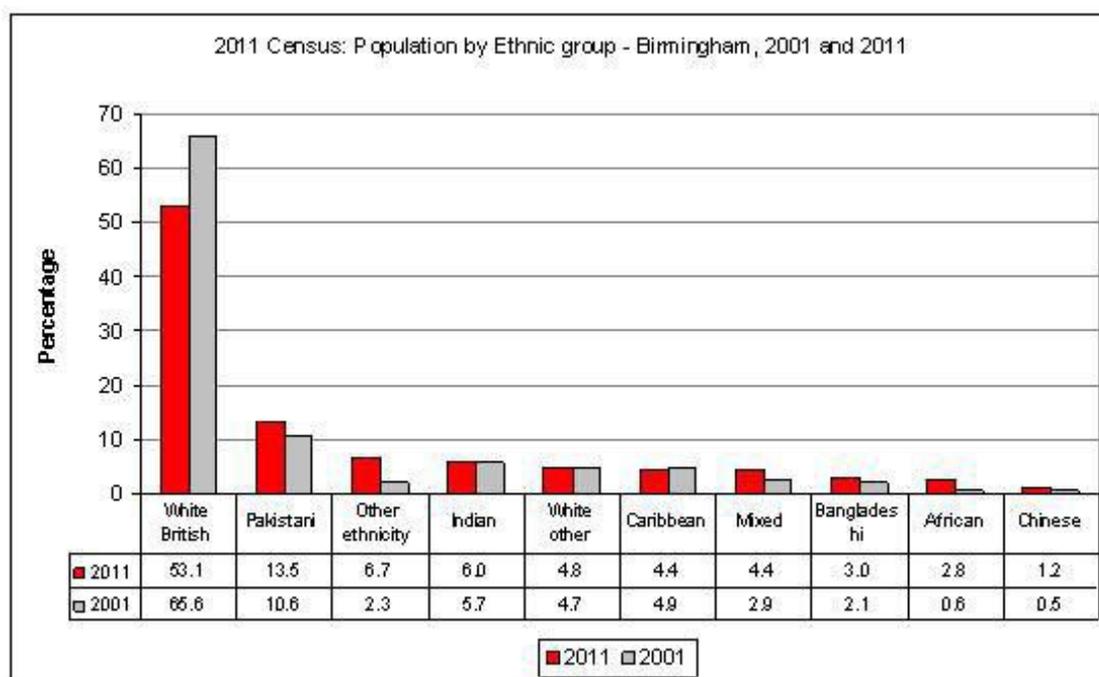
Governance post 1945

After the 2nd World War, central government began to extend its powers over local authorities. Thus, cities such as the eight core cities became both increasingly dependent upon central government for funding and, at the same time, have been required to become the agents of central government in terms of policy delivery across a wide range of services. This is particularly pertinent to the consideration of the social, economic and cultural position of young people in UK cities today. The current government, for example, has devolved some of the most difficult spending decisions to local authorities in the name of greater autonomy, whilst at the same time maintaining that the need for austerity requires further cuts in the monies available.

1.3. Demography

Birmingham's population according to the last national census 1,073,045 (ONS, 2013), was an increase of almost 90,000 (9.1%) since the previous census in 2001. The most noticeable growth is seen amongst the number of young adults in their twenties (26%) and people in their late forties (24%). The city has a younger population than the average for England as a whole, 47% are aged 30 and under compared to 29% across England. It has the highest proportion across the Core Cities of people aged 18 and under (27%), which is also higher than England as whole (23%). There are estimated to be over 174,000 people aged 15 to 24 in the city accounting for 16% of its population (BCC, 2013).

Birmingham is also one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the country, with 22% of its residents and 19% of those aged 16 to 24, born outside the UK. Around 46.9% of residents identified with a minority ethnic group other than White British compared to an average in England and Wales of 19.5% (ONS, 2013). The breakdown of the main ethnic groups in the city according to the 2011 Census is shown in the table below.



Between 2007 and 2010 people moved to Birmingham from 187 different countries.² This highlights one of the traits that helps define Birmingham as a “super-diverse” city – fragmentation, whereby many newcomers are part of a very small group or not part of a group at all. The main ethnic minority communities were established in the city post 1945 when significant numbers of predominately commonwealth migrants from India, Pakistan and West Indies arrived in Birmingham to find work. This was often in the thriving industries where they filled the gap in Birmingham’s shortage for unskilled jobs. More recently, new migrant populations including those from EU Accession states, (e.g. Poland) and refugees from the Middle East and the Horn of Africa (e.g. Kurds, Yemenis and Somalis) have added to the city’s diversity. The employment patterns of post-war migrants, alongside limited housing in post war Birmingham shaped the distinct settlement patterns across the city with these communities being based largely in the inner city.

Much of Birmingham’s cultural vibrancy is attributable to its multicultural character and increasing cosmopolitan feel. These two phenomena remain, however, unevenly spread across the city. Enclaves of ethnic businesses, for example, are to be found located in parts of the city, densely populated by minority ethnic groups. While the city centre, as a result of significant development since the late 1990s, has come to reflect the increasing international feel and aspirations of the city. Historical legacies of economic evolution, geographical and demographic development outlined above, combine with the current economic climate to exacerbate divisions in the city and the emergence of new inequalities between areas, communities and age groups.

² <http://www.wmpho.org.uk/topics/page.aspx?id+6513>

2. Inequality in the City and the response to it

2.1. Economy and the labour market

Employment inequalities

National level

According to the Office for National Statistics, between February and April 2013 (ONS, 2013), the employment rate for those aged 16-64 stood at 71.5%, compared with 74.3% in March 2007. ONS figures show 1.6 million with temporary jobs and 7.9 million in part-time employment. Youth employment in April 2013 was 3.7 m people aged 16-24 or 51%. Overall employment has grown since the UK first left recession but much of this increase in total employment is driven by a rise in part-time work. (BCC, 2013³). Besides the unprecedented low levels of youth unemployment in Britain, these changes in the types and terms of employment are prompting debate about the precarious nature of work, most popularly represented in discussions about ‘zero hour’ contracts.⁴

The rate of unemployment in the UK for March to June 2013 stood at 7.8%, but for March 2007 it was 5.5%. Figures for 2012 show that youth unemployment (under 24 years old) was 20.7% for the UK (Eurostat EU LFS 2012) and in April 2013 the rate was 21.2%, with almost 1 million young people (aged 16-24) unemployed (ONS, 2013). The percentage of 15 to 24 year olds who are long-term unemployed in the UK has increased from 15.7% in 2007 to 24.7% in 2011 and to 27.4% in 2012 (Eurostat EU LFS). Moreover, the youth unemployment ratio for 15 to 24 year olds has gone up from 8.8% in 2007 to 12.4% in both 2011 and 2012.

Local level

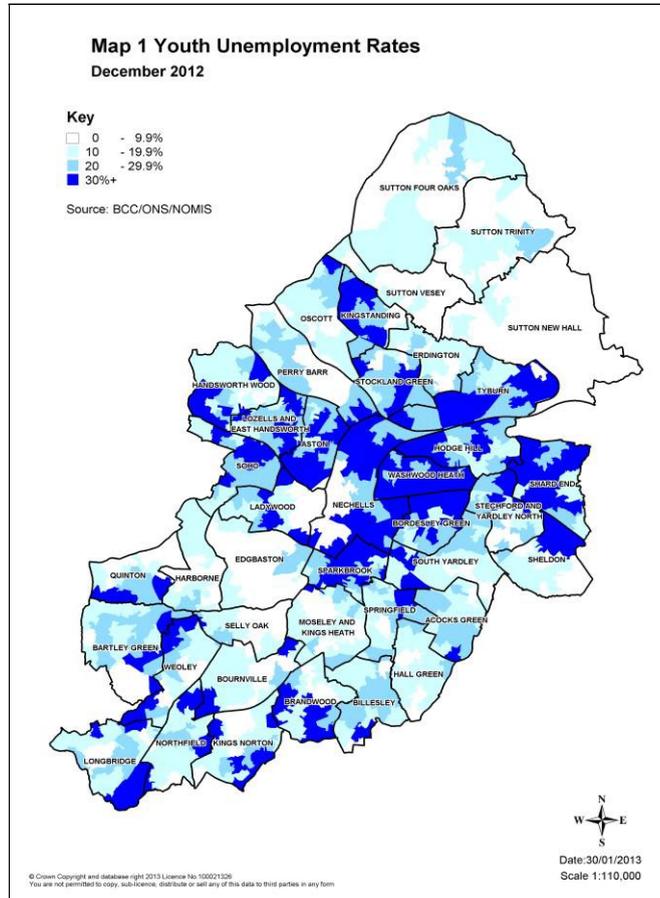
The West Midlands employment rate for those aged 16 - 64 was 69.9% in April 2013 (ONS, 2013). The overall rate of unemployment for the region is 9.8%. For 16 - 24 year olds the employment rate is 46.5%. For Birmingham the seasonally adjusted youth unemployment rate in the city stood at 19.8 % in June 2013, significantly higher than the rate for the UK as a whole (11.1%). The current proportion of youth unemployment (youth claimants divided by the total 18-24 resident population) stands at 8.9%. Youth unemployment is defined as those aged 18-24 who are claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA), and is regarded by the Office for National Statistics as the most reliable indicator of unemployment. It is used for measuring unemployment across the economically active 16–64 year old population. This measure does not capture the unemployed who, for variety of reasons, are not registered. There is anecdotal evidence of young people not ‘signing on’ because their earnings from casual or part-time work may take them over a threshold at which they would begin to lose their benefits.

³ Birmingham City Council Economic Update July 2013 <http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/birmingham-economy>

⁴ Zero hour contracts are those whereby people agree to be available for work as and when required but they have no guaranteed hours or time of work. These contracts are particularly prevalent in retail and hospitality sectors.

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The map below shows the percentage youth unemployment rates in Birmingham. Most of the highest concentration is towards the centre of the city in wards that are known to have high levels of deprivation, with figures as high as 25.8% of 18-24 year olds claiming JSA. There are now four times more young people who have been on JSA for a year or more than there were before the recession.⁵



Youth unemployment in Birmingham has long been well above national levels. Youth unemployment has followed a similar path to that of the region and nationally since 2000, but at a higher rate.⁶ Unemployment rates for young people in minority ethnic groups are higher both nationally and in Birmingham.

Causes of Employment Inequalities

Much of Birmingham's situation reflects the national position. Leaving the European exchange rate mechanism in 1992 began a period of steady expansion and low inflation for the UK until 2007. By then, an outwardly successful economy had developed several systemic vulnerabilities: a house price bubble, an over-extended banking system, an over-indebted household sector, an uncompetitive exchange rate and a deteriorating overseas trade position (Martin, 2010). Even so, at the onset of the global recession in 2008, 75% of the working age population in the UK was in employment (ONS, 2008).

⁵ Birmingham City Council in Birmingham commission on youth unemployment (2013)

⁶ Seasonally adjusted youth claimant rate (2012) Birmingham City Council

Recovery from the recessions of the 1980s and 1990s changed the youth labour market: the UK never returned to the 1970s norm of young people leaving school at 16 and immediately getting a job (Bivand, 2009). The commitment of the new government in 2010 to reducing the budget deficit has led to major cuts in public sector expenditure. Local government, especially in urban areas, has been affected particularly in the form of reduced public spending and the resulting significant job losses.

The most recent recession has reflected existing patterns of economic decline: the greatest job losses have been in ex-industrial areas such as Birmingham and the West Midlands. Cities with low skill levels have experienced the largest increase in unemployment (The Work Foundation, 2009). The current levels of youth unemployment can also be explained partly by changes in the labour market. The manufacturing jobs lost over the past decades have not been replaced by those created in the 'knowledge economy' or by an increase in self-employment. Only 10.2% of Birmingham's working age population is self-employed, below the national average (13.0%) and many of the other core cities. The proportion of 18-24 year olds who are engaged in early-stage entrepreneurial activity in Birmingham is three times smaller than in London. Moreover, the remaining manufacturing sector depends on highly skilled employees and the growing service sector, such as retail, leisure and hospitality, requires a range of softer interpersonal skills which many NEETS appear to lack (The Work Foundation, 2009). According to a Chartered Institute for Personnel Development (April 2013), 16–24 year olds also face barriers relating to job application and interview processes where their lack of work experience and unfocused applications place them at a disadvantage compared to older applicants.

Previous responses to youth unemployment have seen older people being encouraged to leave the labour market. This trend has not been repeated in the recent recession, however, and the most recent ONS Labour Market Statistics Summary (14 Aug 2013) indicate that there are increasing numbers of people over the age of 65 in employment. With the increases in the state pension age it is likely that there will be even fewer job opportunities arising from retirement replacements.

Public sector policy and investment addressing youth unemployment

In the face of low levels of labour market demand there has been some public sector investment in youth employment. In 1997 the government prioritized youth unemployment and introduced policies aimed at supporting individuals with job search and training and incentives to improve their employability (New Deal for young people⁷), as well as area-based initiatives such as the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) targeting the most deprived parts of the country. Through WNF, local authorities were given the flexibility to design local solutions, but it did not always target youth unemployment. The Future Jobs Fund (FJF), announced in 2009, supported the creation of six month jobs for long term unemployed people aged 18-24 years old and those 25 and over residing in unemployment hotspots. Jobs were predominately in the voluntary, community sector and public sectors.

⁷ The **New Deal** (renamed **Flexible New Deal** from October 2009) was a programme of [labour market policies](#). The purpose was to reduce [unemployment](#) by providing training, subsidised employment and voluntary work to the unemployed.

Historically, there has been fragmentation of government initiatives to support young people into education, training and employment including separate programmes for different age groups. The current government appears to be attempting to bring learning and employment support closer together, at the same time as making cost savings. Existing programmes have been streamlined into a single Work Programme. Delivered mainly by private sector contractors, this targets young people aged 18–24 who are referred after being unemployed for six months. The Youth Contract, introduced in April 2012 offers training and apprenticeships to young people who have been claiming (JSA) for over nine months and incentivises firms to participate with a wage subsidy.

In the Positive for Youth strategy, a new approach to cross-government policy for young people aged 13–19 in England, the Coalition government has presented a single vision across the interests of at least nine government departments to tackle some of the key causes of youth inequality in the labour market and to engage with employers, education and training sectors as well as local government (DfE, 2012).

It is difficult to assess the impact of a number of these measures as they are relatively new. Early criticism regarding the Work programme, however, argue that it may reduce participants' chances of moving into jobs in comparison with the general population. The Youth Contract has also been criticized for providing support only to around one in ten young people who are likely to claim Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) and few measures are applicable to young workless people who are not claiming benefits. Also, targeting measures simply at the 'claimant unemployed' risks missing large numbers of workless young people who may have low chances of moving in work or education or who are in part-time low-paid work, with no access to progression routes or to learning.

Local support and responses to employment /labour market inequalities

Birmingham has made use of the Future Jobs Fund (FJF) to support approximately 5,000 long-term unemployed young people into subsidised work – around 45% of whom then went on to unsubsidised employment, a very high proportion relative to most back-to-work programmes. Its discontinuation, however, left a major gap in the support available to young unemployed people in the city (Merida, 2011).

More recently, the city used various central government initiatives, notably the wage subsidy for employers taking on a young person who has been on benefit for 6 months or more. But both of these initiatives together have created only a small number of jobs (Merida, 2011).

Provision to remove practical and logistical barriers to employment for NEETs is funded and co-ordinated at local level. In Birmingham the main service to support NEETs is Connexions, a formerly nationally funded network for careers information, advice and guidance to young people who are in "vulnerable" groups which is now delivered by local authorities in central Birmingham and outreach centres in local communities.

2.2. Welfare Regimes

The Welfare System in the UK instituted by the 1945-50 Labour government comprised a mix of universal entitlements (irrespective of income). These included Family Allowance (for children), health care and education both free at the point of use, contributory universal benefits such as a state pension and unemployment support (available to all who worked and paid into the National Insurance scheme), and a second means-tested tier of welfare support, known as National Assistance, to act as a 'safety-net' for those who had insufficient Insurance contributions or were not contributing at all. The models for funding and setting entitlement to welfare services that were part of the original model have, however, undergone considerable revision in response to emerging political, social and economic realities ever since. By the 1970's concerns were already being raised about the mounting costs of provision, particularly of the National Health Service and successive governments have sought to reduce state expenditure and encourage the development of market forms of provision e.g. private hospitals and insurance and occupational pension schemes.

2.2.1. Access to social income, social and health services

The welfare state continues to be a major part of British family life, with 20.3 million families receiving some kind of benefit (64% of all families). For 9.6 million families, benefits make up more than half of their income (30% of all families) (The Observer 6 April 2013). This is in spite of continuing attempts by successive governments, to reduce the proportion of national expenditure on welfare provision.

In 1997 the government introduced major reforms as part of its wide ranging programme to reduce social exclusion. A key dimension of this was a redistributive element that saw the creation of new benefits for a range of vulnerable groups including disabled, single parents, older people and ethnic minorities. Critics have since argued that nearly all the extra funding distributed in benefits went to older people and children (Lupton et al, 2013). Spending on benefits in this era has also been cited by some as the key reason for Britain's current budget deficit and public sector debt, leading to a 'cold climate' for social policy to operate in (ibid). Below are some key recent examples of policy measures contributing to the 'cold climate'.

Access to social income

As of 1 June 2013, the range of social benefits available to young people nationally includes:

- Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) a benefit for people who are unemployed but capable of work aged 18 or over. Claimants must meet a set of basic rules of entitlement, and eligibility is based on contributions to National Insurance or means-tested.
- Income Support for people on a low income to help them pay for their living costs. People can claim Income Support only if they are 18 or over.

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- Housing Benefit for people on a low income to help them pay their rent. The amount received by a single person aged under 35 with no children is very restricted.
- Council Tax Reduction for people on low income to help them pay their council tax.
- Disability Benefits: There are a number of different benefits and tax credits including; Disability Living Allowance, but this is being replaced by the Personal Independence Payment which will require much more rigorous tests of eligibility. As of February 2013, there were 5,330 16 to 24 year olds in Birmingham claiming Disability Living Allowance. This is 3.3% of the total 16 to 24 year old population at the census (ONS, 2013).
- Working Tax Credits can be claimed by young people aged 16 or more. Tax credits are means-tested and depend on income. There are again very restricted conditions on the income level and hours of work.

Under the Coalition government certain other benefits for young people in England such as the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) have been discontinued. EMA was a means-tested benefit for 16–19 year olds living in a low income household who had left or were about to leave compulsory education and were continuing their studies. In 2009/10 (the last complete EMA year for which there are figures), the total EMA expenditure on Birmingham residents was £17,215,070 (of which £14,427,960 was spent on weekly payments and £2,787,110 on bonus payments). At 30 Nov 2010 the take up in Birmingham was 18,107 pupils (Gibb 2011).

Access to Social and health services

Young people 16-19 and in full-time education have free access to health care at the point of use (as do all children and adults resident in the UK). They do not have to pay for medicines, contraception, dental or eye treatment. Those over 18 and below state pension age have to pay for these, unless they suffer from a specified medical condition or are on low income and receiving Income Support or receiving Family Credits.

Key health issues affecting young people are highlighted in the Birmingham Joint Shared Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2012. The structure of the JSNA is based on the Marmot review 'Fair society, Healthy lives', which states that 'people with a higher socioeconomic position in society have a greater array of life chances and more opportunities to lead a flourishing life. They also have better health. The two are linked: the more favoured people are, socially and economically, the better their health' (Marmot, 2010: 4).

Poor lifestyle choice is something that is more prevalent in areas that experience high levels of multiple-deprivation. Ill health caused by smoking, alcohol and drug misuse and poor diet is higher in Birmingham's deprived areas. Smoking prevalence in 2009 was 26% amongst 16-19 year olds. This is higher than the national average and also greater than that seen in the general Birmingham population. There are treatment centres available for drug and alcohol abuse and Mental Health problems but demand

is high, services underfunded and overstretched and it is often difficult for young people to get the help they need.

Causes of welfare inequalities

Since the economic downturn there have been heightened controversy surrounding alternative methods of defining and measuring poverty and deprivation in the UK. Increasingly, social scientists and politicians have argued that the definitions and measurements currently used significantly influence the direction and emphasis of policy interventions and that they have implications for resource allocation. Some commentators have argued for the importance of considering how these technical definitions link with people's everyday understandings of poverty and need and the impact of competing understandings on ideas of fairness and equity (Dorling, 2011). There is a need not only to ensure that resources are allocated to those in need, and allocated effectively, but also to persuade the wider population that such decisions are fair and equitable.

UK policy-making utilises a range of quantitative data such as the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) that enables broad based understandings of which groups are at most risk of suffering poverty, and some of the circumstances surrounding this. These datasets also provide some measurement of trends over time. The IMD provides a single overview indicator of how all-English areas compare on levels of deprivation measure a broad concept of 'multiple deprivation', made up of several distinct dimensions, or domains, of deprivation. The data is based on 38 separate indicators across seven domains: Income, Employment, Health and Disability, Education Skills and Training, Barriers to Housing and Other Services, Crime and Living Environment. It is used to compare areas but is not a direct measure of deprivation so other measures in the above domains are also used e.g. income, employment, health outcomes. Government and local authorities, however, use IMD datasets to target services to tackle deprivation.

With the introduction of multiple indices of deprivation income redistribution (through welfare benefits) was given a back seat in the government's welfare agenda as it introduced a number of new welfare initiatives between 1997 and 2006, targeted at the multiple dimensions of deprivation. These included: the New Deal for Communities, Welfare to Work, Opportunity for All, National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal and the Working Neighbourhoods Fund. There has also been a significant increase in benefits and tax credits since 1997, which has had a substantial effect on the incomes of lower income groups (Lupton R. et al 2013).

Despite the broad-based picture these data sets enable, they tell us little, however, about the impact of poverty on people's everyday lives and during changing social and economic conditions. This dimension of how poverty and deprivation impact people's lives is discussed in terms of social exclusion. In the UK more recently, debates about social exclusion have involved wider discussions about community, identity and social participation in Britain (Platt, 2009). As a consequence, tackling poverty has become a broader policy concern, evidenced in talk about community cohesion. The focus on relations between groups, organisations and institutions suggests the need for more dynamic measures and interpretations of poverty

and deprivation. The focus on social exclusion delineates the various different dimensions of people's lives on which deprivation has an impact. While this helps target improvements in particular areas, it does not affect the holistic experience of poverty as people say they experience it.

Some of the more common criticisms about the above approaches to measuring and addressing poverty are:

- that there is either too much or too little importance accorded to income
- that the area basis does not correspond closely enough to realities at individual or household level
- the time horizon
- social exclusion has been used to develop anti-poverty policies without actually using the word 'poverty'

The prevailing welfare regime outlined above has diverted attention from more difficult and expensive to tackle issues of straightforward material deprivation, lack of income and redistribution. Direct indicators such as definitions of poverty may also be used. According to Eurostat LFS, the percentage of 18 to 24 year olds in the population, therefore, at risk of poverty or social exclusion has changed from 23.1% in 2007 to 28.7% in 2011.

Causes of inequalities

A key factor the current government has attributed to the UK economic crisis is the level of public spending and it has pledged to (further) reform funding mechanisms for welfare support measures in England and Wales which include social services, social income support, children's services, health care and housing. In effect, this will mean even less money with which to provide adequate social and health services to meet competing demands, particularly from the growing numbers of older people. Thus, the so-called 'cinderella' services including preventive health support e.g. drug and alcohol abuse counselling, mental health care and contraceptive advice, are often amongst the first to be cutback.

The current government's welfare reforms are a reflection of such structural causes but are also having a significant impact in their own right. Access to health care for young people is free but may be limited by their ability to travel to specific health needs facilities, by the reduction in such facilities, by a reluctance to cross the threshold of a formal institution or a lack of awareness of services available in their area or citywide appropriate to their needs.

Policy support and responses

The Coalition government has announced, and is in the process of implementing, £18 billion of cuts to welfare spending (that is, spending on benefits and tax credits) by 2014. It has begun the roll-out of a new Universal Credit from October 2013 with full transition expected to be completed by 2017. This represents the most significant change in the structure of the welfare system since the 1940s and is aimed at reducing administration costs, simplifying claims, encouraging take-up and strengthening the incentive

to work. It will gradually replace six means-tested benefits with a single integrated means tested benefit for people on low income. These include Jobseeker's Allowance and contributory Employment and Support Allowance. Most claims for Universal Credit will need to be made online which may cause problems for those who do not have access to a computer or are not computer literate. The Benefit cap and changes to housing benefit are likely to have an adverse effect on a range of vulnerable groups including low income households, lone parents, young adults, children and the disabled– with the potential for increased demand on a range of local Council services.

Birmingham City Council has established a Welfare Reform Multi-Agency Committee, bringing together City Council and key agencies from the across Birmingham to develop solutions to mitigate against the worst effects of the Welfare Reform Act, with a particular focus on the city's most vulnerable individuals. In addition, the Council is taking on new responsibilities – such as the transition of public health from the NHS. Also from April 2013, it will be responsible for tackling the significant public health issues and inequalities in Birmingham including smoking, obesity, substance abuse and sexual health.

2.2.2. Housing

The supply of housing and system of homelessness safety services in England is governed by national legislation introduced over the past four decades. Safety net provisions encompassing both housing provision and support services for homeless households are governed legislation set out in Housing Acts, Building Acts, and the Homelessness Act 2002. The Homelessness Act places a strategic duty on local government to work in partnership with NGO's and other stakeholders to tackle and prevent homelessness.

According to the 2011 Census, levels of homeownership in Birmingham are below the national average of 63.4% with 55% of Birmingham housing in owner occupation. Local strategies for housing in Birmingham are overseen by the City Housing Partnership (CHP) which includes social and private landlords and other organisations that provide housing-related services. Directly provided state housing (council housing) remains a significant feature of Birmingham's housing stock, accounting for 65,000 tenancies in the city with the remainder (40,000 homes) provided by housing associations. Collectively the 'social rented' sector accounts for 24% of housing in Birmingham. Projected increases in the population, particularly of young people over the next 20 years, mean that the basic housing requirement for 2011–2031 is approximately 80,000 extra dwellings (up from 50,600 five years ago) (BCC, 2012).

Symptoms of housing inequalities

Research indicates that young people in the UK are three times more likely to experience rented housing and homelessness problems than other age groups (National Youth Agency (NYA), 2012). The current housing market and the challenges of high youth unemployment in many cities, means that young people are finding it harder to afford to buy and rent properties, with an increasing proportion choosing to stay at home and live with parents and families exacerbated due to shortages in social housing. Whilst it is not

currently possible to provide a direct city comparison to the average age of young people leaving home, UK statistics suggest that the numbers of people remaining in family structures is increasing. Across the UK the number of people aged 20 to 34 who still live with their parents increased by 20 per cent between 1997 and 2011. In Birmingham 30% of people aged between 20 and 34 live with parents (LFS, 2011).

In 2011, 107,060 people in England approached their council as homeless, an increase of 10% over the previous year. Rough sleeping is rising as well, with snapshot street count figures for autumn 2011 showing that on any given night there were 2,181 people sleeping rough – an increase of 23% on 2010⁸ according to Crisis, a national charity for single homeless people (Crisis, 2012).

Birmingham accounts for almost half of all homeless households in the West Midlands region and 9% of the national total. In comparison with neighbouring authorities and other cities, rates of homelessness are disproportionately higher. 16 and 17 year olds and care leavers aged 18–20 account for 5.8 per cent of all households accepted as being in priority need. More than one in ten of the 723 homeless applications made to the city in July were from 16 and 17-year-olds (BCC Challenge Unit 2011⁹). A total of 3,255 young people aged 16-24 were on Birmingham City Council's housing register on 2nd April 2013.

There is increased demand not only for Council housing but for housing provided by 'social landlords' such as Housing Associations which are independent, not-for-profit organisations that own and manage social housing.

Causes of inequalities

The lack of affordable social housing in Birmingham – as in other cities in the UK – can be traced back to the 'right to buy' policy of the 1980s which encouraged tenants to purchase their Council homes. This depleted the stock of social housing and neither local authorities nor government have been able to replenish the supply. Local authorities have also found it hard to fund repairs to many of the remaining stock

Inflation of house prices in the 1990's reduced affordability of market housing and in the current economic climate; affordability and access to mortgage funding are the key barriers to young people getting onto the housing ladder or progressing on it. This is driving the exclusion of young people (Institute for Public Policy Research IPPR, 2012) in the housing market. This is a major national problem. The net result of these market factors on young people has been continued rises in the age of first time homebuyers. Analysis suggests that only 33.8% of lone parent households in Birmingham would be able to afford market housing if they were to move home now. 'Mixed & Other' households are most likely to be unable to afford market accommodation in the City, followed by 'Black' households according to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (technical study) BCC, 2012) used to inform Birmingham's Local Plan.

⁸ Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) statutory homelessness release, October-December quarter 2011

⁹ Briefing note supplied from this Unit towards the data gathering of this report

The recently enacted Localism Act 2011 introduced a number of changes, including amendments to the Housing Act 1996 on the allocation of social housing and the abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) which set out minimum levels of house building. Coupled with this, the changes in welfare benefits - particularly housing benefit since 2010 – are also causing inequalities. Changes to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) include the raising of an under 25 years of age threshold to under 35 for a LHA shared room rate. The net result of this will be larger numbers of people competing to find accommodation at the lower end of the rental market. The Child Poverty Action Group estimate that someone under 35 on the shared accommodation rate for will lose on average £41 per week (CPAG, 2013). So there is more competition for social housing and less support for young people to be able to afford it.

Policy support

The Children and Families Bill 2013 takes forward the Coalition Government's commitments to improve services for vulnerable children and support strong families. The Bill deals with reform of the systems for adoption, 'looked after' children, family justice and special educational needs and follows a series of high profile cases involving the failure of local authority social care services to protect children known to be at risk. The intended interventions are aimed at encouraging growth in the childcare sector, introducing a new system of shared parental leave and ensure children in England have a strong advocate for their rights. Doubts have been expressed, however, about the government's view that the measures will underpin wider reforms aimed at children and young people. This comes in relation to significant public interest in the issue following high profile cases involving the failure and neglect of some children in local authority care, including in Birmingham.

Further Government changes have included delegating new powers to the local level to design local support schemes. From 1 April 2013, Council Tax support is no longer awarded as a "benefit" but is given as a "discount" against a Council Tax bill. The Government, however, is reducing the amount of funding Councils receive to meet the costs of support by 10% - a reduction in the case of Birmingham City Council of £10 million. To help meet this gap, the City Council will remove the Council Tax discounts applied to second homes and empty properties to raise £4.6m. Unfortunately, due to wider budget pressures, the City Council will have no choice but to cap at 80% the maximum level of discounts available for eligible households.¹⁰ Pensioners, those with disabilities and those with young children under six will continue, however, to receive their current levels of support.

At the local level, Birmingham City Council is building its own properties in the city through the Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT), which was launched in 2009 in response to falling output of new housing and reduced capital funding for housing associations. There are also a range of services in place for vulnerable people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Alongside four local Housing Advice Centres available to those aged 22 and over, there is a dedicated Youth Hub commissioned by Birmingham City Council to bring Children's and homeless services together in one

¹⁰ <http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/counciltaxsupport>

place in order to provide a single point of access for 16-21 year olds. The Youth Hub offers a range of services including assistance with accommodation problems and support for households and persons who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. It is run on behalf of the council by a local Homeless charity and is an example of the move towards greater partnership working between local government and the third sector in the provision of welfare services. Housing advice centres are managed by BCC and provide support and guidance on housing matters for those over 22. Those under 22 are referred to the Youth Hub.

There is concern, however, that the Welfare reforms, combined with existing economic conditions and the legacy of the reduction in social housing and the boom in house prices for market housing, will only serve to exacerbate welfare inequalities. For example, proposals to reduce benefits for households under-occupying social housing may present some opportunities to make better use of existing social housing stock, but could also result in increased homelessness as a result of rent arrears. Direct payment of Universal Credit¹¹ to tenants represents a potential risk in terms of increased rent arrears leading to homelessness, particularly for those residents who lack budgeting and financial skills.

2.2.3. Education and Training

Education in the UK is a ‘devolved matter’ with each of the four countries of the UK having separate systems under separate governments. The Department for Education (DfE) has overall responsibility for Education and Children’s Services in England. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) is responsible for science and innovation, skills, further and higher education and enterprise.

Since April 2010, the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) has been responsible for funding and commissioning post-19 education and training. The SFA, alongside the Young People’s Learning Agency (YPLA) replaced the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) which had the broader remit of planning and funding all post-16 education.

Schools and Further Education system

England has state funded schools and further education colleges which are financed through national taxation. Education is mainly state funded from the ages of 3 to 18 years. Approximately 93% of school children attend state funded education provision whilst 7% of children are educated in fee paying schools. Full time education is compulsory for all children aged between 5 and 17. From 2013, all young people in England must continue in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 and until their 18th birthday from 2015¹² (HM Government 2013).

¹¹ Universal Credit is a single integrated means tested benefit for people on low income intended to replace six existing means-tested benefits – see page 16.

¹² HM government 30 May 2013 School leaving age <https://www.gov.uk/when-you-can-leave-school>

There are six main types of maintained (i.e. in receipt of state funding) schools in England providing education up to 16 or 18 years. The most recent two are relevant to the consideration of youth inequalities:

- **Academies:** Set up to replace poor performing community schools in deprived areas. The startup costs are generally funded by private means with running costs made by central government.
- **Free Schools:** Introduced in 2010, they are newly established schools in England set up by groups of parents, teachers, charities, businesses, universities, trusts, religious or voluntary groups, but funded directly by central government.

At local level, the responsibility for organising publicly-funded school education rests with Local Authorities. Their duty is to secure sufficient suitable education and training opportunities to meet the reasonable needs of all young people in their area. They do not fund academies or education and training for 16- to 19-year-olds (although the funding for 16- to 19-year-olds in maintained schools flows through local authorities). Local authorities used to have a major role as providers of schools but this role is now reducing as a significant number of secondary schools are converting to become academies or free schools, which are independent of Local Authorities (LAs).

Birmingham has three universities and three Colleges which were granted university status in 2012 providing higher and postgraduate education to local, national and international students together with Further Education Colleges focusing on vocational training post -16 and Sixth Form Colleges (16–18years). The [Children Young People and Families](#) services directorate of the City Council is now responsible for the education of pupils in maintained [children's centres](#), nurseries and [schools](#) and the [youth service](#).¹³

By September this year 55% of secondary, and 31% of primary schools in the city are expected to have converted to academy status. As this trend continues the funding the council will receive from central government will continue to reduce as it is transferred directly to schools, and more power is delegated to all schools. Yet, the local authority will still be accountable for school improvement. Hence, the Birmingham Education Partnership is being created and is intended to share expertise between schools and with partners such as universities and business (BCC, 2013).

Symptoms of educational inequalities

Although 81.8% of 20 -24 year olds had completed at least upper secondary education in 2011 (Eurostat EU LFS), a Report from the OECD indicates that 18% of young people failed to remain in education or training after 16 (OECD, 2012) and 13.5% of 18-24 year olds had at most lower secondary education (Eurostat EU LFS, 2012).

There is a higher incidence of under achievement amongst pupils with the following heritage: Pakistani, Black Caribbean, mixed White/Black Caribbean and Black African including Somali. These are groups

¹³ Birmingham City Council www.birmingham.gov.uk/education

which have large numbers in Birmingham. There are also concerns for White disadvantaged pupils (particularly boys), ‘looked after’ children and pupils with special educational needs.

As with many other countries across Europe, a key concern emerging is the number of young people with low educational attainment (NETs) and low or no qualifications, and the number and percentage of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEETs). The Intergenerational Foundation reported that at the end of 2012 roughly 14% (one in seven) of the UK’s young people aged 16–24 were still classed as NEET, although this falls to just 9% (one in eleven) for people aged 16–18 (Intergenerational Foundation, 2013).

In its Report of January 2013, the Birmingham Youth Unemployment Commission found that there were approximately 15,500 16 -24 year olds NEETs known to the authorities and 3,130 18-24 year olds had been claiming JSA for over a year. Levels of NEETs in the West Midlands are consistently above the national average, and we know that young people who are NEET are also likely to display or develop other disadvantages too.

Causes of educational inequalities

In this area, Birmingham is, once again representative of the national picture. Alongside the longstanding debates about the impact of ‘selective schools’ creaming off the best performing pupils and weakening surrounding schools, there have been similar criticisms of the development of the current government’s push to establish Free Schools. Critics have argued that inequalities, which emerge from a family’s abilities to choose where to live in order to be within a ‘catchment area’ of better schools are likely to be compounded by the economic downturn as it affects home buying choices.

The costs of education and training are a further factor that is exacerbating inequalities for many young people. The removal of the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) for young people continuing in education after 16 and the introduction of tuition fees for higher education appear to be having a negative impact on the take up of education or training (BeBirmingham, 2013).

Allowing universities to charge higher fees may be deterring able students from applying for University, but it is too early to be sure how significant a factor this is as a barrier to participation by young people from disadvantaged backgrounds (Connor et al., 2004)

Policy support and responses

The current government has removed a number of interventions introduced by the previous government to address social inequality in education. Most significant has been removal of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

A number of new initiatives have also been introduced with the professed aim of reducing inequalities in education. In April 2011, the Pupil Premium was introduced, giving schools extra funding to close attainment gaps to cover the needs of their most disadvantaged pupils and to help address differences in attainment levels. As part of the scheme, schools receive extra funding for every child registered as

eligible for free school meals at any point in the past 6 years, as well as for children who have been in care for 6 months or longer.

In September 2011, £50 million was made available for the Summer Schools programme for disadvantaged pupils in transition from primary to secondary education. Almost 2,000 schools signed up to the programme, which was open to all secondary schools during the 2012 school summer holidays.

University Technical Colleges are being introduced to provide technical education to 14-19 year-olds that meets the needs of modern business and are sponsored by a local university and employers. Five UTCs are now open including one at Aston University, Birmingham.

Studio Schools are aimed at young people who learn in more practical ways. They teach a rigorous academic and vocational curriculum in a practical way which includes experience in the workplace. They typically teach 300 students aged 14-19. 16 Studio Schools are now open and a further wave are due to open in September 2013, including schools in Aston and Small Heath, two of Birmingham's most deprived neighbourhoods.

2.3. Power, democracy, citizenship and civil participation

70% of young people aged 15 to 30 in the UK voted at one or more of the local, regional, national or EU level in the three years prior to 2011 (Eurobarometer Flash Survey 2011). This is below the EU average but is a higher level than popularly perceived in the UK where debates about disengagement of young people from the public life of their cities has been ongoing since the 1980's. In fact, research by Ipsos MORI (2010) suggests that turnout among young people at the 2010 election was just 44%, far below the national average of 65%.

There is a sense that young people do not consider the traditional democratic processes to be relevant in their daily lives nor that politicians are either interested in or understand the concerns of young people. A study by Henn & Nick, 2012 aimed at understanding why fewer than half of 18 to 24-year-olds voted in the 2010 general election, found that 63% of those surveyed were interested in politics but that a similar percentage were put off by the behaviour of politicians and political parties.

Most young people in the UK reject formal politics altogether: a 2013 study of political engagement by the Hansard Society found that although some two-thirds of adults under 35 declare themselves interested in "current affairs", only one-third confessed an interest in "politics" (Economist, 2013). There is further evidence of a lack of trust in the formal democratic processes and its representatives. Nevertheless, young people do continue to engage in political activity outside formal structures but the means by which they access information about the causes they espouse and the ways in which they express their views have shifted not least because of the popularity of social media (Loader, 2007).

In Birmingham, young people participate in civil society in a wide range of ways, some of which are below the radar but might end up feeding into more formal structures. One example is Operation Black

Vote (OBV), a non-party political campaign to address the under-representation of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities in key areas of civic society. It is now collaborating with the City Council to encourage their greater participation in local civic life.

Recent political protests in the UK have also involved young people who believe that they have borne an unfair burden of the austerity measures put in place by government. The changes to tuition fees for higher education triggered a wave of demonstrations from students and others about the increasing costs of education and the cutting of the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA). Two years on, the National Union of Students (NUS) organised demonstrations in London for a broader protest against the coalition government's cutbacks in support for young people to access education and employment.

Smaller scale protests involving young people, but often organised by formal bodies such as Trades Unions have taken place around the country linked to local cutbacks in services for young people. In Birmingham in February 2013, for example, a group of 100 gathered outside the Council House to demonstrate against proposed cuts in youth services, including the potential closure of 30 youth clubs around the city. Another form of direct action manifested itself in the form of various episodes of unrest in major cities and towns across England, including Birmingham in August 2011. These protests have roots in longer term structural issues such as institutional discrimination and are exacerbated by the effects of austerity (Solomos, 2011).

More traditional forms of youth involvement in civil society are still present across the UK. 57% of UK young people (age 15 – 30) participated in some form of organisation in the year leading up to the Survey by Eurobarometer in 2011; higher than the EU average. 48% had been active in a sports club, youth club or cultural organisation.

There is a range of formally constituted organisations relating to citizenship for youth in the UK. One of the most notable is the UK Youth Parliament (UKYP) which aims to give a voice to young people in the UK between the ages of 11 and 18. Scouting is the biggest co-educational youth movement in the UK with a total youth membership of 390,929.

In 2012 Birmingham City council set up the Birmingham Leadership Foundation as a charity to help young people develop capabilities for leadership through building connections and alerting them to opportunities. The Birmingham Youth Service is another service aimed at organising young people (11–25) in the city. Two of its principles are to encourage young people to participate by playing an active role in the development of their own local, and wider, community and influence decision-making. Civil participation initiatives by the City Council include Voice is Power (VIP) the revamped children and young people's parliament which is a group of 20 young people from constituencies in Birmingham. VIP has worked on various campaigns including racism and violence in the community. Although there seem to be a wide range of opportunities for youth participation at national, local and community level, a key challenge remains for all City Councils and other formal structures which seek to engage and empower young people. This is how to ensure that participation is not confined to the more articulate, confident and

well supported young people in society since this is likely to inhibit participation from young people from more deprived areas and disadvantaged backgrounds.

3. Life for young people in the city

The performance of the local economy and very high unemployment is the backdrop to the way young people experience their lives in Birmingham. Recent debates within Birmingham City Council point to a worrying trend emerging in the city with resident employment levels failing to demonstrate the pick-up in the economy beginning to be seen nationally and regionally. In April 2013, however, the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership¹⁴ launched its Strategy for Growth, (GBSLEP, 2013) setting targets of increasing private sector jobs by 100,000, driving up GVA by £8.25 billion and transforming performance in skills and employment. The Strategy focuses, however, on sectors which require a highly skilled work force and thus prospects for those with low skills and educational attainment and little or no work experience continue to be bleak.

A key concern for Birmingham is the challenge of bridging the gap between different age groups, ethnicities and areas in the city where economic development and downturn have been experienced differently. Young people in some of the more deprived communities feel that they particularly are ‘victims’ of the recession. In its most worrying manifestation this is evident in the popularity of far right or extremist views among certain sections of young people who complain of a lack of belonging to broader national and local communities. Furthermore, research in Birmingham with young people has revealed a lack of connection between those living in deprived parts of the city with other areas of the city and particularly the city centre (Birmingham Social Inclusion Process, 2013). Young people also complained of the negative images portrayed about them by and within statutory organisations and the media. There is a need to recognise the negative effect that this can have on them. This is particularly the case for young people from ethnic minorities who feel that they are likely to be treated unequally by the ‘system’ because of their ethnicity and where they live. But it is also a concern for white youth who live in traditional white working class areas on the outskirts of the city (Bray, 2012).

The Bishop of Birmingham has been leading a multi-agency initiative across Birmingham to try to bring a collective, city-wide response to this situation via Birmingham’s Social Inclusion Process, 2013. This is an important activity which underlines much of what has been outlined in this report and which attempts to counteract the ravages of the tight economic restraints, diversity in opportunities, lack of education and job attainment.

¹⁴ Birmingham and Solihull, Bromsgrove, Cannock Chase, East Staffordshire, Lichfield Redditch, Tamworth and Wyre Forest.

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Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across
Europe

Cities in their national contexts

BRNO

Symptoms and causes of inequality affecting young people

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This report is part of Work Package 2 of the research project entitled “Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across Europe” (CITISPYCE). CITISPYCE has been devised against the back drop of research which shows the disproportionate impact of the global economic crisis on young people across Europe. This includes excessively high rates of youth unemployment (particularly amongst those who face multiple social, economic and cultural disadvantages) and threats to the social provision enjoyed by previous generations. CITISPYCE partners are working on a three year multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral programme to examine the current state of the art and ideas concerning social innovation against inequalities faced by young people, explore socially innovative practices being developed by and for young people in urban areas, and test the transferability of local models of innovative practice in order to develop new policy approaches. The CITISPYCE consortium covers ten European countries and is funded by the European Commission (FP7, Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities).

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1. The city – a presentation

Brno is the second largest city in the Czech Republic (member of the EU since 2004) and a centre of the South Moravian Region. Brno has a strategic geographic position within Central Europe as an important transportation hub situated at the junction of roads leading to four major cities - Prague, Bratislava, Vienna and Budapest.

Brno is the centre of judicial power; it is the seat of government agencies with nationwide competence and a number of supranational companies. With its 14 universities and over 86,000 students it has also become a centre of education. Brno is also known as a centre of international trade fairs and exhibitions, annually visited by almost one million visitors, and a centre of culture and sports, historical sights and functionalist architecture.

The City wants to keep its position at the peak of research, development and innovation and to use the scientific research results for the needs of commercial companies in order to bring a long-term increase in the competitiveness of the entire region. The Centres of excellence employ scientists and professionals from around the world and talented students and research teams are supported. Funds worth more than 17 billion CZK (680 Mio EUR) were obtained from the Operational Programme Research and Development for Innovations for the construction and operation of high-end scientific centres in the last five years. Brno is home to a number of research institutions focusing on a wide range of disciplines in the field of biochemistry, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, textiles, food processing industry, agriculture, construction industry, military and others. Universities also run technology transfer centres, which facilitate cooperation between companies and research teams through research on demand (Brno Business Facts, 2013).

1.1. Demography

Brno with its 385,913 inhabitants (data from 26th March 2011, ČSÚ, 2011a) is the second most populated city in the country. The population of the city is growing, both in the city (in 2002 Brno had only 370,505 inhabitants) and in peri-urban areas. The total population of the city including citizens from other countries reaches 403,543 (Brno Business Facts, 2013) which makes it be in Czech conditions an outstanding multicultural hub. Brno appeals to non-native dwellers especially due to the interesting employment opportunities provided by global companies and their plants in Brno. Almost 20,000 foreigners work in the RTD field. The total population of the metropolitan area goes beyond half million (529,078 in 2011, Brno Business Facts, 2013).

Brno is a younger city than the Czech Republic as whole having a slightly larger proportion of people aged 15 to 29 (in Brno 20.5%, in CZ 18.9%, ČSÚ, 2011b) and many students are commuting to the city (see above section). The total number of young people in this age having permanent residence in Brno is almost 80,000 (ČSÚ, 2011b). Despite the favourable age structure of Brno, the city is also steadily ageing. In 2002, the ageing index¹ reached 114.1 but in 2011 it was already 134.9. Brno is not only younger but also older than the national average with 17.3% of people aged 65+ (compared to 15.8% in the whole country, ČSÚ, 2011b).

Brno has a comparatively lower proportion of people with basic and incomplete secondary education but more people with complete secondary education (more than a quarter) and twice as large share of people with university degree (10.7% in CZ and 20.6% in Brno, ČSÚ, 2011b). This highly skilled labour force makes Brno interesting for foreign companies and investments.

Looking at the young people in Brno (15-29), we may see some differences in educational structure and in unemployment rates compared to the total population of the city. In the group aged 15 to 29, basic education outnumbers the other options due to the fact that most of these people are still pursuing their studies. For the group aged 25-29 has a much higher proportion of people with university degree (28.5% compared to 20.6% in Brno (ČSÚ, 2013). Almost 40% of people aged 15 to 29 are employed and almost 35% is still undergoing preparation for a future profession (students, pupils etc.). Unemployed people compose over 7% in this age group (of which 3.2% are seeking their first jobs, ČSÚ, 2013). Besides, there are about 8.4% of young people who have not claimed any economic status. We may suppose these young people live with and are dependent on their families, being economically inactive (NEETs).

Only 157 Brno citizens declared themselves as Roma (of which 45 were aged 15 to 29) but qualified estimations suggest about 15 to 17 thousand Roma settled in Brno (Kašparová et al., 2008). Also the declaration of mother tongue proves the numbers of Roma in Brno be to higher (503 of young people in group 15 to 29 chose Romany language as the only or one of two mother tongues) (ČSÚ, 2013).

¹ Index of ageing is computed as number of people 65+ divided by the number of people 0-14 (in %).

1.2. Social policy network for youth

Most of the social policies and programmes are formulated at the national level – by the **Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs** (MLSA). Social benefit schemes, as well as standards for social work are set by the MLSA as well as employment policy. Services in the framework of employment policy are then provided by the **Labour Office**, operating at national level but having hundreds of detached offices across the country. Social services not directly linked to employment are provided by **municipalities**. Housing and education policies are also driven at national level by **Ministry of Finance** and **Ministry of Regional Development** for housing issues and **Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports** for education. Social and municipal housing provision must be borne by cities and municipalities. In education, different stages of the schooling system are run by diverse actors – kindergarten, primary and secondary schools by the municipalities, grammar schools by the regional authorities while higher education is independent of local authorities.

Brno City Municipality has several departments dealing with youth:

- Department of Education, Youth and Sports – schooling, support to leisure youth organisations, formulation of sport policy of the city, support to sport clubs, centres of leisure time;
- Social Care Department – social services and social work provision, crime prevention, drug prevention, work with minorities, crisis intervention, social and legal counselling;
- Health Department – family policy, healthy lifestyles, domestic violence victims and perpetrators.

2. Inequality in the city and the response to it

2.1. Economy and the labour market

The overall situation

The Czech economy grew in the years 2005-2007 by about 6% per year. After the slowdown of the economic growth at the end of 2008² the recession was apparent mainly in 2009, while 2010-2011 were years of the economic recovery. The economy of the country is very much tied to the performance of manufacturing industries, the exporters in particular, strongly influenced by the development of the economy in Germany. Economic recovery in Germany was the main reason of the renewed economic growth in 2010 and 2011. In spite of slight recovery unemployment remains about 7% and the long-term unemployment rate is about 3%. The situation in 2012-13 is even worse due to new slowdown of the economy.

Unemployment and long-term unemployment increased markedly between 2008 and 2010 but still remain below the EU level. The problems of the labour market are structural ones: the country continues with

² The crisis arrived relatively late to the country.

modernisation of the economy while the recent economic recession has made the competition effect more pervasive. In consequence of this some groups equipped with only lower level of human capital (less skilled, disabled, lack of work experience), social capital (ethnic groups like Roma or migrants) or suffering with combination of these handicaps face a great disadvantage in the labour market.

The youth in the labour market

In the case of young people one problem is that although the numbers of drop-outs from educational system and numbers of unskilled (low skilled)³ is low, the structure and quality of the educational system is often not good at responding to the labour market structure and demands by employers. Specifically, we have observed after 1989 a massive shift of pupils/students from technical secondary schools (and universities) towards social, human, economic and managerial study fields, while the economy remains industry oriented, with a consequence of complicated transition from school to employment for the school leavers. Although the unemployment rate of young people is still below the EU average standing at 19.5% in 2012 it was nearly as twice as high as it was in 2007, especially for men. Fortunately, the share of long-term unemployment has decreased since 2007 and is slightly below the EU average (29.2% in 2011), transparently higher with men than with women. The negative impacts of the recession on young men are due to the fact that the crisis affected more manufacturing and construction sectors than services.

The unemployment ratio of the young people is at a low level (slightly above 5%) due to combination of relative low unemployment rates and high participation in education of youth. Only four countries in the EU have had lower unemployment ratios of the youth in 2011: Germany, Lithuania, Austria and the Netherlands (European Commission, 2012).

Long-term unemployment rates (available only from national data) illustrate that while the overall long-term unemployment rate has not increased during the crisis – this was due to implementation of the activation measures and more administrative pressures on the unemployed - youth long-term unemployment increased, by about one third of the previous numbers, with men by about half (to 2.7% and 3.9%). Summarised, the crisis has had much more negative impacts on the labour market position of young people than on the other groups of labour force.

The most important finding concerning the labour market position of young people in the Czech Republic is the exceptional importance of human capital indicated by education: while the specific unemployment rate of lower educated (ISCED 0_2) in the group 20-24 and 25-29 is close to 40%, the specific unemployment rates of those educated at the middle and high level are about 14% and 10% in the group 20-24 and about 6% and 5% respectively in the group 25-29. Such great relative disadvantage of the low skilled cannot be found in any EU country but Slovakia (European Commission, 2012).

While the unemployment figures of young people are only slightly below the EU average (on the other hand much worse when compared to total population in the Czech Republic) employment rates of youth

³ ISCED level 0-2

are by 9 percentage points lower in 2011 than the EU average (24.7% in the CZ), in particular lower with women (19.9%). This may be explained by the high inactivity rates due to participation in secondary and mainly in tertiary education. The other reason, in the case of women is long period of parental leave (typically up to three years of age of a child).

We have also seen that the employment rate of young people dropped during 2007-2012 by more than 3 percentage points, which is less than in the EU on average, but still the employment rates are more than 7 percentage points below the EU average.

Temporary employment is, however, lower than on average in the EU, by about 20 percentage points in 2011 (at the level of 22.3%) but it is rapidly increasing: from 17.4% in 2007 to 27% in 2012. This is a clear indication of the negative impacts for the crisis: in the Czech Republic, in general, the share of involuntary temporary employment (due to impossibility to find permanent job) is very high and has increased considerably during 2007-2012: from 63.2% to 78.5% (while the EU average is 37.7%). In this respect men have been hit more than women: involuntary temporary employment share in total of temporary employment of men was 83.6% in 2012. High figures of involuntary temporary employment indicate a high disadvantage of young people in this respect, at least comparable to the EU average.

Part-time employment is generally low in the Czech Republic since neither employees nor employers prefer it. Consequently, part-time employment of young people is below 10% and has increased only a little during 2007-2011, while the increase in the EU 27 was about from 26% to 30%. The similar pattern may be observed in the other post-communist and South-European countries, but the share of involuntary part-time employment of the young people has increased from about 4% to 20% while the increase in the EU 27 was only from 26% to 28% (European Commission, 2012). In terms of temporary and part-time employment the Czech youth have become as disadvantaged as the EU average – this was not the case before the crisis.

The indicator captures labour best is the real labour market exclusion market of the youth is the share of the youth 'not in employment or education' (NEET). Data for the Czech Republic show that there were about 8% of the youth in age group 15-24 and 12% in age group 15-29 classified as NEETs. This is below the EU average (13% and 15%) (Eurofound, 2012). The share of unemployment is a little higher in age group 15-24 but lower in age group 15-29. Female-male difference is bigger, especially in age group 25-29: this is due to long parental leave and increasing disadvantage for women when returning to the labour market.

The policy response

Active labour market policies or social investments in general are rather underdeveloped in the Czech Republic. In the long-term the scope of ALMP measures in the Czech Republic is quite limited: ALMP expenditures are below 0.3% of GDP (about three times less the EU average) (OECD, 2012). The crisis did not change this much on this since it was not recognised as a structural challenge; rather the government was to some extent concerned with protection of existing employment (Classen, Clegg,

Kvist, 2012). In such policy context the ,outsiders' like young people and school leavers are more and more disadvantaged.

The Czech Republic prefers rather to have an increasingly flexible labour market and force the unemployed to take any job available than to invest into job creation and employability. The number of ALMP participants dropped to 97,000, i.e. 19.1% of the unemployed in 2011, while it was 26.3% in 2008. The number of participants in requalification programmes fell particularly sharply in 2011, from 65,500 to 45,500, i.e. by 30.5%.⁴

The degree of targeting of active employment policy measures to the marginalised and most vulnerable groups in the labour market is only partly satisfactory. In the case of unemployed people with a low level of education (primary education at most), i.e. ISCED 0-2, the index is 0.63 (while in the case of unemployed people with a completed secondary education – ISCED 4 - the index is 1.56).

Labour market position of the youth in Brno

The position of the young people in Brno is very similar to the position of those in the country in general. The age group 15-24 by results of Census in 2011 is similarly represented in population: 12% in the country, 11.7% in Brno (CZSO 2013). Similarly, the unemployment rate is at the level of the country average or a little less. Brno was not so much hit by crisis due to more diversified economic structure of the big city, and the share of young people in total employment is slightly lower than in the country (16.6% compared to 18.1%). The causes and mechanisms are identical to those identified in the country in general.

We have carried out an analysis of the unemployed youth in Brno⁵ on data by the end of 2011 (2,884 unemployed young people included into the analysis). The results show a high proportion of low educated among the unemployed young people: while amongst the unemployed as a whole there were 26% with low level, 32% with lower middle level, 40% with middle level and 12% with high level of education, the respective figures among youth unemployed were 43% (low), 20% (lower middle), 35% (middle) and 2% (high). The share of men is higher (58%) than the share of women (42%), while lower educated are more represented among men (45%). Fortunately, long-term unemployment is not so widespread among the youth unemployed in Brno: 30% were unemployed less than three months, 22% between 3-6 months, 28% between 6-12 months, 15% between 12-24 months and 5% over 24 months, while for the unemployed as a whole the respective figures were 23%, 19%, 18%, 18% and 23%.

Employment support to the youth, however, is not much stronger than in the country on average. While the participation of the unemployed in the ALMP measures in the country was 19.1%, in Brno it was 19.9% (3,699 participants from 18,590 unemployed), 1,932 in vocational training (10.4%), 351 in public works, 273 in new subsidised jobs in the private sector and 1,139 were people supported on the existing

⁴ The author's own computations based on data provided by the MLSA 2011 web portal.

⁵ The authors are thankful for this to the Regional Employment Office in Brno.

jobs for the handicapped. Similarly as in the country as a whole young people are slightly underrepresented in measures of vocational training (targeting index is 0.89).

Labour market position of Roma

In the Czech Republic (where the overall population is slightly above 10 million), the estimated *actual number* of Roma in 1991 was about 160 thousand (Fialová, et al., 1996: 340). Gabal and Vášek (2010) have estimated the numbers of Roma as being between 150 and 200 thousand, based on data collected by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in 2009 concerning the number of Roma pupils in school. In order to document some of their specific features, we use data from Census 2001 (i.e. the sample of 11,700 Roma who declared their nationality).⁶

The age structure of the Roma by data from Census 2001 was much ‘younger’ when compared to the overall population: nearly half of the Roma population is under the age of 25, while this category comprises only 30% in the overall population, about 19% between 15 and 24.

The main causes of high Romany unemployment are discussed in various sources (e.g. Vášek 1999, Navrátil et al 2003, The World Bank 2008) and include:

- Lower or no qualifications and lack of opportunities for non-skilled labour (also due to competition from migrants from third countries like Ukraine and agency workers)
- Lower competence of the Roma to adapt themselves to transforming economics and to the demands of the labour market
- Poor health status of many Roma
- Different or sometimes insufficient understanding of the work ethic
- De-motivating system of social benefits combined with indebtedness
- Unwillingness of employers to employ the Roma in the formal labour market (i.e. discrimination)
- Weak and ineffective control of undeclared work enables employers to hire the Roma under informal contracts as day labourers

As we can see from Table 1, inactivity was extremely high among women⁷, while unemployment rates were extremely high among the young Roma. The young Roma under 25 thus represent 40% of the unemployed (this is twice as high as the share in the adult Roma population). The level of education is strongly associated with the labour market position of the Roma: among the employed, only 11% have ‘special’ basic education, 50% basic education and 39% secondary vocational education. Among the

⁶ New Census has been conducted in 2011, where only 5,135 Roma declared their nationality (2-3% of their total estimated number), in Brno only 157. Such data does not enable a thorough analysis.

⁷ Socially excluded Roma women achieve lower levels of education and qualifications than men. They are also divorced from labour market participation for a long time because of their childcare duties. Numerous women have had no opportunity to embark on a career, because they become mothers; therefore, they lack initial work experience and have had no chance to obtain the necessary work habits or improve their skills.

unemployed the respective figures are 21%, 60% and 19% and among the inactive 24%, 64% and 13% (the worst situation is in the last case).

Table 1: Unemployment rates and participation rates (population 15-64) in per cent

	Unemployment rate		Participation rate	
	Roma (12 loc.)	CZ (LFS 2007)	Roma (12 loc.)	CZ (LFS 2007)
Total	11.7	5.4	44.2	69.9
Men	10.3	4.3	61.3	78.1
Women	14.0	6.8	30.5	61.5
15-24	24.7	10.7	42.4	31.9
25-54	7.8	4.8	44.2	87.8
55-65	15.2	4.6	50.0	48.2

Source: The World Bank, 2008

The labour market status of the employed Roma was mostly a marginal one: only 20% occupied skilled-worker positions and only half of them had job tenure of more than 12 months (on average 3.5 years). About 30% of them worked without a formal contract (i.e. illegally). The wages of the employed represented on average 40% of the average in the country and only slightly more than minimum wage (114% of MW); the median wage was 35% of the average wage and equal to MW (The World Bank, 2008).

Nevertheless, we need to consider the role of informal employment. Estimates by GAC (2010) of informal employment of the Roma in excluded localities mostly refer to about 70% as informally employed (mostly men), report by Kašparová, Ripka, Janků (2008) refer about majority or a large part of Roma.

To conclude, the unemployment rate of the Roma of productive age may be around 50%. Employment Offices estimated 3,000 Roma participating in active labour market policy measures and 2,850 in ESF projects in 2009 (Zpráva 2010): thus nearly 15% of the registered Roma were activated, which is close (although a lower figure) to the average participation rate in the country in activation measures that year.

Labour market position of youth Roma in Brno

In Brno where about 370,000 inhabitants are living, official statistical data on Roma minority does not exist. The estimates are about 15 – 17,000 Roma in Brno, this is between 4-5% of population. Gabal (2006) identified four socially excluded localities in Brno with about 3,000 to 5,000 of Roma. Kašparová, Ripka, Janků (2008) mention 8-10,000 Roma in the excluded localities.

Summing up

To sum up, the labour market position of young people and similarly of (youth) Roma in Brno seems to be very similar to the country average or typical situations: low level of human capital combined with discrimination and several other obstacles are the main causes. The young people with multiple barriers in the labour market are extremely disadvantaged, although the general unemployment rate is below EU average. The crisis has aggravated the problem. Policy initiatives to address the employment barriers are weak. In Brno the situation is very similar, Roma, however represent relative higher share of population

compared to country average, a great part of them is concentrated in the excluded localities where unemployment is prevailing among the working age population, although combined with occasional informal jobs in shadow economy.

2.2. Welfare regimes

2.2.1. Access to social income, social and health services

The Czech welfare state represents a mixed system: it started as a conservative Bismarckian model inherited from the pre-war period (Cerami, 2006; Inglot 2008). Later it was modified by the communists who implemented more uniform elements as well as workplace-related measures. After 1989, the post-communist governments again modified it by imposing rather modest standards in social insurance, in combination with selective and targeted measures in the final result generous enough to effectively alleviate poverty. Since 1990s the Czech welfare state has gradually moved in a more liberal, residual direction through the decaying of benefit levels and by a series of partial reforms (Saxonberg and Sirovátka, 2009), labelled as a trajectory towards a “low social expenditure” welfare state (cf. Armingeon, 2006).

Nevertheless, the Czech Republic ranks with the Scandinavian family of countries amongst those where the level of the indicators of poverty and social exclusion risk is the lowest. At-risk-of poverty rate is nearly by 7 percentage points below the EU average (9.8%) and the composite indicator of social exclusion by nearly 9 percentage points lower in 2011 (15.3%). Similarly, as in the EU the level of the composite indicator of social exclusion of the young people in the Czech Republic is higher than of total population while severe material deprivation of young people is at the country average and the risk-of-poverty of the youth is below the country average. We note that young women are more often at-risk of poverty than young man. Still, all the indicators (although they show quite similar trends as shown by the overall EU average figures) are considerably lower than in the EU on average. Interestingly, unlike the figures on unemployment, the impacts of the crisis are not much seen in the change of the indicators on social exclusion – either in the EU or in the Czech Republic.

Table 2: Social exclusion indicators (group 15-24)

Social exclusion rate			At-risk-of poverty rate			Severe material deprivation		
	2007	2011		2007	2011		2007	2011
EU 27	28.6	29.8	EU 27	15.1	16.0	EU 27	11.3	10.7
CZ	17.9	18.3	CZ	8.6	9.1	CZ	9.7	6.1
CZ men	19.1	18.5	CZ men	7.7	8.3	CZ men	10.7	6.2
CZ women	16.7	18.1	CZ women	9.4	9.8	CZ women	8.7	6.1

Source: Eurostat Database, own computations

There are several reasons for the low risks of social exclusion in the Czech Republic: one of them is a relative low level of unemployment (even in the case of youth), combined with lower level of income

inequalities (Gini is in the long-term about 0.25) and effective social transfer system which is – although not much generous concerning the individual benefits levels well targeted at low income households.

In spite of this positive picture we notice that young people have more difficulty in accessing some benefits. Firstly, they rarely get entitlements for unemployment benefit since the entitlement condition is 24 months of employment record within last three years while the periods of studies are not counted as an employment equivalent period. Secondly, neither they are often not entitled to social assistance benefits: if are living in one flat or house with their parents/relatives unless the income of all the family members is below the legal poverty threshold they do not get entitled for social assistance benefits (since they are considered as one household unit with their parents).

The indicators of monetary poverty are misleading in some respect since the important issue is what material living standard the poor people can afford on their incomes. Then, concerning some indicators of deprivation we see that situation in the country is rather worse and young people are not well positioned. For example, in 2011 housing costs represented a great burden for 27.3% of people while it is 29.8% with the young people, about 28.4% of people were coping with their income with (great) difficulties while it is 31.1% with the youth. And 6.1% of people have problems paying their obligations and debts, 41.8% cannot afford one week holidays outside their house, 10.7% cannot eat meat/fish every second day while the respective figures for young people are similar - 6.8%, 45.4% and 10.5%. Further, 40.4% of people cannot pay unexpected expenses while with the youth it is 45.5%, and 9.6% of people cannot afford a car while with the youth it is 11.3%.

In the Czech Republic nearly 198,000 people were living on social assistance by the end of 2011, this is close to 2% of population.⁸ In Brno it was 8,748 people (2.3%). Young people represented 9.2% of all benefits recipients (similar to the country it was 9.4%), this is 801 persons. They also represent 1.8% of all young people in the age category 15-24 in Brno (which was 45,408 according to Census 2011).

If we look at this group of young people who are recipients of social assistance benefits in more detail, 56% of them are women and 44% men. Only rarely they are living alone: 13.6% of them live as singles while 10% of them live with the other adult person(s). More than 25% live in the households where there is only one adult/independent person and the others are dependent persons – these are mostly one parent families with children. Lastly, 46% of them are living in households where there are at least two adult persons and also some other dependent persons.

Income support

During the first transition to market democracy stage (1990-1992), policymakers considered the creation of a “social safety net” (employment policy, unemployment protection and social assistance). The unemployment insurance system was introduced in 1990 and codified in February 1991 (Employment Act 1/1991 Coll.). By now the unemployment benefit **replacement rate is 65% for the first two months**

⁸ Own analysis based on primary data from the registers of social assistance recipients.

(when in vocational training), 50% of previous wage in the next two months and 45% in the remaining period, with a maximum in amount of 58% of average wage. Thus the benefits are not very generous and are provided only for a period of five months (in case of those over 50 and 55 it is eight and eleven months). The entitlements for benefits are dependent on 12 months' employment record within the last two years, years of studies not counted as employment record.

In November 1991, the Living Minimum Act⁹ and the closely related Act on Social Need¹⁰ introduced a social assistance scheme that responded quite well to the impacts of transformation, and was comparable with the schemes known from other European countries.

This minimum income scheme has been reformed after accession to the EU (2004) and represented a shift towards the "activation paradigm". Within the comprehensive package of the "social reform" acts aimed at diminishing the public deficit in August 2007. The new Parliament accepted one important change in social assistance: the automatic revaluation of subsistence and existence minimums was cancelled, and is now only at the discretion of the government. The entitlements for social assistance benefits were cut again in September 2008 and came into effect as of January 2009.

The other measures adopted in 2011¹¹ have represented a continuation of the activation reforms with greater emphasis on workfare, together with further deteriorations in minimum income protection. First, positive incentives in the form of bonuses to the living minimum or to existence minimum in case of participation in public service (30 or 20 hours per week) have been cancelled.

At the same time the generosity of social assistance benefits has been undermined: the benefits are not re-valued/upgraded more depending on the increases of prices, e.g. between 2007 and 2011, the living minimum was not re-valued despite growing inflation. The cumulative inflation rate over this time period was about 15% (2007 - 2.8%, 2008 - 6.3%, 2009 - 1.0%, 2010 - 1.5%, and 2011 - 1.9%).

Access to health services

In the Czech Republic health services are guaranteed on the basis of public insurance and are universally available. Nevertheless, under the framework of the comprehensive reform package of the new government, regulatory charges for health care were introduced as of 2008. There is a limit on health care fees 5,000 CZK; 2,500 CZK for children (age below 18) and people 65+. People in material need (entitled to social assistance benefits) are not required to pay, but still the fees are required from other people below the EU poverty threshold (since the threshold for the entitlements for social assistance benefits is lower than the EU poverty threshold).

The rising fees in health care impede the financial accessibility of health care for population groups living on the lowest incomes since social assistance scheme does not cover the costs of health care (fees, medicaments). Flash Eurobarometer from 5-7 December 2011 asked the respondents whether during last

⁹ Act No. 463/1991 Coll. on living minimum.

¹⁰ Act No. 482/1991 Coll. on social need.

¹¹ Act no 354 from November 6, 2011.

6 months they had faced any changes in ability to afford health care for themselves or their relatives. 32% of Czech respondents found it (much) more difficult to afford health care which is by 9 percentage points more than found in the flash Eurobarometer one year before (Eurostat, 2012).

Access to health care is a more difficult problem for Roma living in the excluded localities. By data from the project SASTIPEN¹² (Nesvadbová, Šandera, Haberlová 2009) a group of Roma was identified (between 10-25%) whose health status is remarkably worse: with the Roma population the below average health status appears in the age 45-59 twice as often as in the majority population (and with people over 60, it is six times more often). Similarly, multiple diagnoses are twice as frequent after 45 compared to the majority.

Child care services

One of the key issues of the low employment of women with small children is insufficient supply of child care. In the Czech Republic, the number of places in day nurseries (for children aged 0-3 years) has been consistently negligible, i.e., slightly exceeding 1,000 places, mostly in big cities. The availability of child care facilities for children aged 3-6 has become a problem too, since many kindergarten refuse the applications due to lack of capacity: in 2008/09 only about 20 thousand children were refused, in 2010/11 39.5 thousand children, in 2011/2012 49 thousand and in 2012/2013 it was 59 thousand (ÚIV statistics 2013).¹³¹⁴

An even more challenging situation is apparent in 2013. For example in Brno 4,594 applications were submitted but only 2,198 children accepted to kindergarten: no application of children 2 years old were accepted, 1,137 of children aged 3 years were accepted while 1,971 were not accepted, the situation is better with children in age 4 years and older (Mladá Fronta Dnes 2013). The measures adopted by government on child groups and company kindergarten¹⁵ are coming slow and the expected improvements may be rather marginal. With respect to financial accessibility of childcare, less and less available public child care still represents the best option for most of the parents.

Access to social and housing services

Children, young people and families with children form one of the target groups that the social services community plan in the city of Brno is focused on. This plan clearly identifies what services will be developed, supported and provided in the city. Brno supports the following services for children, young people and families:

¹² The survey carried out in 2008 included 677 Roma respondents older than 16 and collected responses about 327 children from 0-15 in age. The quota sampling was based on Census data on gender and age structure and regional distribution of the Roma population.

¹³ Each year about one hundred thousand of new children are accepted in kindergarten (own estimate, data not available).

¹⁴ Source: Ústav pro informace ve vzdělávání (2013) <http://toiler.uiv.cz/rocenka/rocenka.asp>.

¹⁵ In September 2012 the government adopted the proposal of the legislation on the specific form of pre-school child care, so called children groups. These represent arrangements established by employers with a specified support by state (financed from ESF) for groups between 7-24 children pre-school age including those below 3 years of age. Some standards of staff qualification and hygienic norms should be respected in these facilities but will not be so severe as in kindergarten (MPSV 2012).

- social counselling;
- respite services;
- telephone emergency assistance;
- asylum houses;
- halfway houses;
- crisis intervention – immediate social help in crisis situations (e.g. cases of domestic violence);
- intervention centres – social assistance to people threatened by domestic violence;
- low-threshold facilities for children and young people – day services for children and youth endangered by social exclusion and social pathologies;
- social activation services for families with children;
- social rehabilitation.

These services are provided partly by the Brno City Municipality, partly by municipal organisations¹⁶ and non-governmental not-for-profit organisations. A greater emphasis is placed on outreach services and social activation services and the situation has also become stabilised in the field of emergency and asylum housing (Komunitní plán sociálních služeb, 2009) that are key for tackling homelessness. Social housing is yet a part of the policy that needs to be further developed.

Access to social work

Access to social work is most urgent in the excluded Roma localities. The Agency for social inclusion which has been established by government in 2008 is performing the regular activities at the national level which help to co-ordinate measures aimed at Roma inclusion and mainly they are cooperating at the local level with local actors in the excluded Roma localities, social work and emergency measures including.

The programme of social field workers in excluded Roma localities seems to be stabilized. In 2010, 12,377 users of the programme were provided with support. The most frequent and successful was the intervention in the field of indebtedness in re-payment of rents and services/utilities related to housing; there was a 70% success rate (see Zpráva 2011: 104-105).

Roma and pro-Roma NGOs and their initiatives are important in this field as well. In Brno the Agency is not present and mainly, however, there are some strong and experienced pro-Roma NGOs well recognised by the municipality which have established two important community centres and low threshold centres and developed many activities, by using effectively ESF funds and support from the municipality.

¹⁶ Such organisations are fully owned by the city but have independent economic status and accountancy.

Summing up

In the Czech Republic, risks of poverty and social exclusion as indicated by Eurostat data are amongst the lowest in Europe. There are several reasons for the low risks of social exclusion in the Czech Republic: one of them is a relative low level of unemployment (even in case of young people), combined with lower level of income inequalities and effective social transfer system. Unemployment or inactivity of the parents combined with one parent families or high number of children represents key determinants of poverty risk. The most transparent example, however, of multiple social exclusion are the excluded Roma localities where unemployment and material deprivation is enormous when compared to the total of population. Policy responses like active labour market policies, child care, social work and other are insufficient to respond such concentrated and intensive problems.

2.2.2. Housing

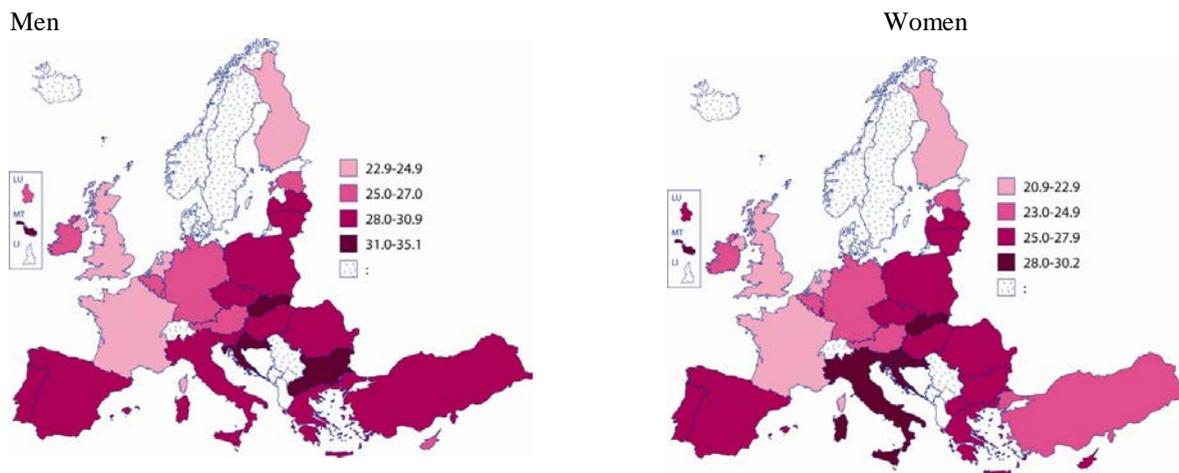
The overall situation

Access to housing is one of the key preconditions for the effective inclusion into society. The situation in the Czech Republic, both in terms of accessibility and quality, does not reach the European average (EU 27). Czechs have comparatively smaller flats but in spite of the economic crisis, the average number of rooms per person has grown between 2007 and 2011, yet with the total of 1.4 rooms per person (1.6 in EU-27). Lower-income groups live expectedly in higher populated households.

A larger proportion of Czechs owns a dwelling (more than 80% in 2011 compared to over 70% in EU 27) than in the EU on average and this private housing is less often mortgaged (18.1% in CZ and 27.6% in EU 27 in 2011). The overall share of tenants in the Czech Republic has fallen contrary to the trend in the EU-27 but their structure has changed towards a larger share of people renting at market price rather than for a regulated price. It reflects the processes of rents deregulation in the Czech Republic that were completed in 2012. Deregulation of rents affected 750,000 households – this is something less than 20% of all households in the country. In 2012 it was 350,000 while the other 400,000 households were affected in past years.

Young people leaving the parental home

Young people face particular difficulties when moving out of their parents' house that relate both to low incomes, poor work quality and security, and to unaffordable market prices of rents. Therefore, the age when young people leave the parental homes is quite high. This is also the case for the Czech Republic where young men leave their parents of the age of between 28 and 31 years, Czech women do so on average a little earlier (between 25 and 28 years of age) (see Picture 1).

Picture 1: Average age of young people leaving the parental household

Source: Eurostat. Online data code: not available.

Notes: This indicator tries to estimate the average age of young people when leaving the parental household by comparing for each age the percentage of young people not living anymore in the parental household. The exact age when leaving the parental home is not collected by current surveys. EU-27, EFTA and EU candidate countries covered except when not available.

In 2011 more than 33% of people aged between 25 and 34 in the Czech Republic lived with their parents, there were twice as many men as women. In general the share of young people living with their parents in the Czech Republic was 12 percentage points higher than in EU on average in both years (2007 and 2011). This proves higher dependency of young people on their parents, strikingly even aged from 25 to 34. Largest shares of young people living with their parents in the Czech Republic (similarly or strongly then in the EU on average) are students (especially in the age from 18 to 24) or employed on full time basis (around a quarter in age 18-24 and vast majority in the age 25-34). This may indicate the problem of low pay, i.e. in work poverty and inaccessibility of housing for young people.

Housing of Roma

Romany people in the Czech Republic live in comparatively lower quality dwellings located in excluded and poor areas provided quite often with very low civil services, such as shops or public transport (Gabal, 2006).

Major problems according to Gabal (2006) in the field of housing of the Roma are the following:

- a) mechanisms of exclusion from housing
- b) poor quality of housing

Data show that 15% of Czech Roma live in households without basic equipment, such as an indoor kitchen or toilet compared to rough 3% of Czech non-Roma population (FRA Roma Pilot Survey, 2011).

c) low chances for the housing situation enhancement.

As other studies show (Hradecký et al., 2012), however, Romany people less often suffer from homelessness due to their traditions of wider-family cohabitation. This mainly leads to enormous overcrowding in areas occupied by Roma.

Policy response

Housing policy in the Czech Republic is formulated at national level and combines actions and tools of various ministries aiming to support developing housing stock and enhancing the state of the existing stock (Koncepce bydlení do roku 2020, 2011).

The Ministry of Finance supports savings on housing through Housing Saving Scheme. This guarantees a minimum support from government to anyone saving to purchase or renovate housing. This scheme becomes less and less important for resolution of housing purchase. Further, the Ministry of Finance has set a lower tax rate on social housing¹⁷ construction and renovation.

The State runs a State Fund for Development of Housing that operates several measures to support housing construction and renewal. Some support is provided to developers of social housing through grants on construction of new dwellings but again the Fund suffers from lack of means in this instrument. Some support is also provided to municipalities for renewal of municipal housing stock.

The Ministry of Regional Development supports infrastructure construction through grant scheme for municipalities, construction of assisted housing (assisted or entry housing) or regeneration of panel blocks of flats (up to 70% of total expenditures). A special Integrated Operational Programme helps regeneration of housing stock in deprived areas, namely Roma neighbourhoods.

State Fund of the Environment disposed of cca 20 billion CZK (cca 800Mio EUR) in the framework of the Green for Savings Programme intending to improve energetic efficiency of the housing stock. This programme helped enormously to enhance the quality of the housing stock across the country.

Homelessness prevention policy targeted at youth in Brno

Policy preventing low-income families from homelessness uses two main instruments:

- a) social income schemes;
- b) social services – especially social housing.

Housing services for people in risk of homelessness

The city of Brno follows a model of transitional housing as defined by the Agency for Social Inclusion (Snopek, 2013) that encompasses 3 levels of housing:

¹⁷ Social housing is defined by Act no. 235/2004 Coll. on Value Added Tax as flats in size up to 120 m² and houses up to 350 m².

- I. Asylum housing – housing in crisis provided either by the municipality or NGOs in dormitories and lodging houses where usually some of the premises are common for the occupiers (kitchen, bathrooms etc.)
- II. Assisted housing – housing in separate apartments provided together with social activation services and other outreach services
- III. Social housing – standard social housing in municipal dwellings provided on long-term basis

I. Asylum housing

Asylum housing in the city of Brno is provided in various types of organisations. The overall capacities are:

- Asylum housing for children and youth in Brno – 33 beds
- Asylum houses for mothers with children – 31 dwellings with 80 beds
- Lodging capacities of non-governmental non-for-profit organisations – 257 beds

Additionally, there is an availability of shelters and asylum housing for homeless adults that is accessible to individuals aged 18+. Total housing capacity of these organisations is 151 beds.

II. Assisted housing

Housing with assistance provision of its nature is a standard housing where accompanying services are provided to the youth coming from dysfunctional families but mainly children's homes and orphanages. The total capacity of housing for youth with assistance is 43 beds and allows mainly for saturating the needs of youth with no family.

III. Social housing

Social housing comprises an integral part of the transition model of housing. It is intended among others for young people who cannot afford to pay for standard municipal housing or rent on the open housing market. The Housing policy of the city is defined by the Housing Master Plan for the City of Brno from 2008 and Brno Housing Strategy that dates back to 2009. Both of these key documents in housing policy define young individuals/couples/families as the target group. Housing Master Plan considers (a) young marriages, (b) low-income families, and (c) Roma as groups endangered by social exclusion and homelessness for the lack of financial means to purchase housing. The situation of Roma population in Brno is perceived as especially disadvantaging on a long-term basis (Generel bydlení města Brna, 2008).

According to the Housing Strategy (Brno Housing Strategy, 2009) the social housing stock should be created by two means: selection of social apartments in the existing municipal housing stock and new construction of social housing. The current system of granting social housing faces a major problem – lack of quantity (and often also quality) of available social apartments. Nowadays, there is no clearly defined social housing stock available for this purpose - which leads to increased competition and accessibility only for the poorest families. In 2012, the City of Brno started a lottery¹⁸ with flats as prizes (Aktuálně centrum: Brno pronajme první sociální byty, 2012).

2.2.3. Education

The overall situation

In the Czech Republic, education is provided at several stages: pre-primary (children aged 3 to 6), primary (children aged 6 to 10) and secondary (from 11 to 15) education, i.e. lower secondary education according to ISCED, that is obligatory, upper secondary education, both vocational (of 3 or 4-year duration) and general (preparing for tertiary education, of 4-year duration). Tertiary education is divided into 4 levels – short-cycle tertiary vocational education of 2-year length, bachelor programmes of 3 years, master programmes of 2 years and doctoral programmes of up to 7 years.

Young people in the age group 20 to 24 attain higher education than Czechs on average. The share of young people with completed upper secondary education reached 83.3% in 2011 whereas there were only 8.3% of young people with lower secondary education. Between 2007 and 2011, however, the percentage of persons with university or other tertiary education degree in this age group almost doubled in the Czech Republic.

The problem of early leavers from education is not as frequent in the Czech Republic as it is in the whole of the European Union. The percentage of early leavers in the Czech Republic reached 4.9% in 2011 but 13.5% in the EU-27. Although the volume of early leavers is shrinking on the whole, these persons find themselves more often or not unemployed (over the years from 2007 to 2011). Despite low early leaving of schools, the situation of Czech young people on the labour market is not much favourable also due to poor quality of education at some schools.

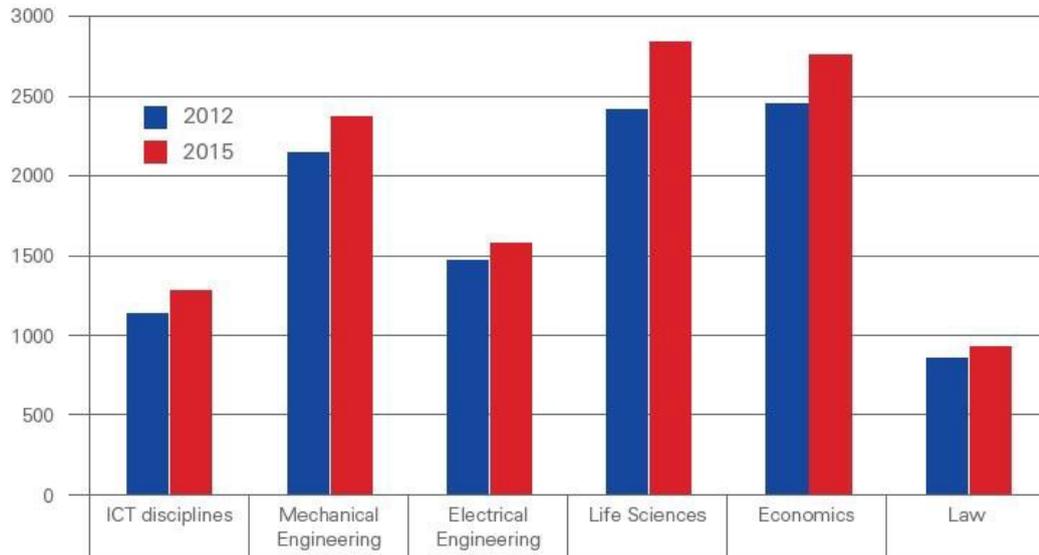
Education and youth in Brno

Brno is a university city with a high share of young people in and with completed tertiary education. Brno has five public, one state and eight private universities and colleges containing 34 faculties, with almost all university education directions, such as technical disciplines, information technology, humanities, economics, law, agriculture, art or military studies. Public universities have long traditions and provide free high quality education and therefore are attended by the vast majority of students in Brno (which was

¹⁸ All the applicants fulfil the basic condition to be a low-income applicant or low-income family earning not more than 0.4 of average monthly salary in national economy (i.e. cca 368 EUR) per one-member household (consequently 0.6 of average monthly salary for two-member family and 0.8 for three-member family) (Brno: Proběhne losování sociálních bytů, 2013). The rent in the proposed flats is set at 1.6 EUR/m².

86,234 in 2012) (Brno Business Facts 2013). The outlook for the next two years shows a growth of the number of students, particularly in some branches as life sciences, economics or ICT.

Picture 2: Number of graduates and their predictions in selected disciplines



Source: Brno Business Facts, 2013

Education and the Roma

In the Czech Republic, the most important problem of social exclusion in education seems to be the exclusion of Roma children from the mainstream education. The National Action Plan for Inclusive Education was launched in March 2010 which established the bodies and programmes which should support ‘inclusion approach’ to the disadvantaged individuals or groups in the Czech educational system. The plan includes the concrete activities and deadlines (see <http://www.msmt.cz/file/11487>).

In reality, most of the programmes addressing the targets remain rather modest in their scope (they are largely dependent on ESF financing). Segregation of the Roma children from mainstream education continues to be a common practice (which is based on the wrong assessment of their abilities, see (Hůle, 2010). Roma children continue to be often placed to the so called ‘practical schools’ which should be provided to children with ‘slight mental disability/impairment’. The Czech system does not provide sufficient individual support to children with pedagogical problems which might eliminate the above practice.

Some positive steps were, however, done: during 2011 a complex individual project has been carried ‘*The Centres of Support to Inclusive Education*’ in 11 cities, with 130 schools and 32.6 thousand pupils participating, from which 17% were pupils with special educational needs (Zpráva 2012). Further, in 2011 there were 228 preparatory classes established in order to improve readiness of Roma children for primary school, with 2,800 pupils (compared to 208 classes with 2,609 pupils in 2010). Similarly, the

number of pedagogical assistants for pupils with social disadvantage increased in 2011 to 508 (compared to 440 in 2010).

More progress is observed regarding short-term measures which were elaborated after the prompt reaction of the Ministry to the 5th anniversary of the ruling by European Court for Human Rights in December 2012. Several concrete measures were proposed: starting in the school year 2012/13 the legal pre-conditions for indirect discrimination would be cancelled like 25% tolerance of pupils with mental or social disadvantages in a class for pupils with health disabilities. The important measure is to revise tools used to diagnose mild mental disability/MMD and to implement new tools by the end of 2013.

Inclusive education in Brno

The City of Brno does not formulate an educational strategy for the city, except for a two-year plan in the field of municipal schooling (*Obecní školství ve městě Brně*, 2011). This document defines 2 groups of children with disadvantages: (a) physically impaired pupils, and (b) socially disadvantaged pupils. No actions were, however, clearly described and taken to improve the situation, especially of the second mentioned group. The Annual Report for the school year 2011/12 deals with the issue of inclusive education only in relation to children with physical impairment, mental handicaps or learning disabilities (*Výroční zpráva*, 2012). The total number of individually integrated children reached 1,081 for the given school year at 65 out of 66 primary and secondary schools. Integration of 628 children has been financially supported.

Primary, secondary and grammar schools may also apply for financial support at the MEYS in the open programmes to support individual integration of socially disadvantaged and to finance teaching assistants for socially disadvantaged students and pupils. In the programme to support integration of the Roma, in spring 2013 three schools from Brno were subsidised by the total amount of 31,500 CZK (cca 1,260 EUR) (MŠMT, 2013). At the same time, the South Moravian Region applied for a grant for teaching assistants and got 26.5 workplaces for year 2013. The amount reaches 5,952,216 CZK (cca 238 thousand EUR) which is 5.84% of the total allocated amount for teaching assistants. The City of Brno also implemented a project focussing on the inclusion of Roma through education and culture – the RICE Project.

2.3. Power, democracy, citizenship and civil participation

In the Czech Republic, as in other post-communist countries, the level of citizenship and civil participation of young people is low in general. This finding should be perceived in a broader societal context. The existing research in post-communist countries has drawn attention to the different patterns and configurations of forms of social capital and the significant effects these differences have on democracy and economic growth. Informal networks (bonding social capital) are recognised as a crucial form of social capital in post-communist countries but with little bridging capital between the higher and

the lower social strata. At the same time a lower level of trust in institutions and general trust was evidenced there (see Rose, Mishler and Haerpfner. 1998, Rose 2001).¹⁹ Raiser et al. (2002) maintain that in contrast to developed democracies, the strong reliance on friends (informal social capital) does not lead to higher civic participation (formal social capital) in post-communist societies, which means that the pattern of social capital formation is different.

Howard (2002) explains the weak civil society in post-communist societies by three main factors: the history of mistrust of communist organisations, the continued existence of friendship networks and close circles of trusted friends and family that were developed under communist times and even during the transition period, and a certain post-communist disappointment arising from the citizens' sense of having been let down or cheated by the new system.

Data on civic and political participation of the young people in the Czech Republic confirms this conclusion. The share of youth working in civil society organisations and associations was about 6% in 2010 and dropped by more than 10 percentage points since 2002 while in the EU 16 countries it increased to 15% (European Commission, 2012: 82, data by ESS).

Especially low is the political participation of the youth in the Czech Republic which is due to the widespread disappointment with the politics and political culture which has emerged in the country. European Commission 2012 refers to the share of young people (15-29) claiming to be 'very' or 'quite' interested in politics is the lowest from the 16 EU countries in the Czech Republic (about 5% only) while it is nearly 25% in average, and this figure dropped by about 8 percentage points since 2002 (data by ESS). In the preceding last three years about 70% of Czech youth voted in any political election at the local, regional, national or EU level, compared to the EU 80% average. The membership of the youth in political parties is only 1% compared to 2% (EU average).

Somewhat more promising are the figures on participation in sport and cultural organisations which are traditionally more preferred by the Czech population and may play more important role even concerning social inclusion.

Table 3: Participation in activities of various organisations in the past year (in %)

	CZ	EU-27
A sports club	25.2	33.6
A youth club, leisure-time club or any kind of youth organisation	13.8	18.1
A cultural organisation	19.1	13.9

Source: European Commission, 2011

In the above context rather sport and cultural activities and even informal social network plays more important role for disadvantaged youth in helping to their social inclusion. The question, however, emerges of the usefulness of these networks and of their disruption from civic and political engagement and rights.

¹⁹ Based on data from the New Europe Barometer Survey

Sirovátka and Mareš (2008) have shown that the sociability of income-disadvantaged people in informal or voluntary formal networks is not, generally speaking, too low, while the subjective indicators point in most cases to poorer access to social entitlements, in two-thirds of cases to distrust of institutions, in three-quarters of cases to general distrust, and (in 28% of cases) to a decreased interest in going to the polls.

3. Life for young people in the city

Brno is a modern city full of young people and university students. Industry has been replaced by global companies, such as shared-services or customer services centres, and recently by research and development hubs. Brno intends to become a leader in sciences, research and technology, especially in life sciences, nanotechnologies, new material production or ICT. So far, several research centres of national or regional importance have been established alongside universities supported enormously from operational funds of the EU. These recent developments bring to the city great work opportunities and make the city further appealing for young people, both young professionals and university graduates.

To satisfy the needs of the young people in the city, the municipality definitely has to consider enlargement of housing and childcare policies which are hopelessly insufficient. Housing remains a persistent problem to solve, especially when it comes to (non-existent) social housing and entry level housing for young couples and families. Rents on the housing market make decent housing inaccessible to young people, especially couples and families, as the large number of students living in shared housing are able to pay higher rents and raise the market prices. Childcare services are poorly developed, especially for children under three, which makes living and working in the city un-family-friendly and makes young people postpone their family plans.

There is an increase of inequalities amongst the youth, when human and social capital represent crucial factors/causes of labour market marginalisation. When combined with the other factors like (higher number of) children or lone parenthood, they are leading to poverty and welfare dependency. Ethnicity and living in the excluded neighbourhood plays an increasing role as well in shaping inequalities within the city.

Despite low interest of young people in politics and their low civil engagement in the life of the city, there are numerous opportunities to enjoy spare time, including large choice of actions and events in leisure, sports and culture. Brno citizens are not so active in building civil society as they are in leisure clubs and interest organisations.

Next to the majority of highly educated and skilled young professionals, Brno is home to, not a visible minority of excluded young Roma. These young people quite often live in the excluded and poor neighbourhoods, in families largely suffering from long-term unemployment and lack of access to good quality housing. Young Roma still suffer from poorer access to childcare facilities, to schools with

teachers and teaching assistants open to inclusive schooling and therefore remain segregated. Several non-governmental organisations operate in areas with high concentration of Romany people to provide them with services, such as catch-up classes and additional lessons for children or “low-threshold facilities” as anonymous and free leisure time clubs. These NGOs quite often combine services for youth with social services for the entire families, such as counselling in legal and financial issues, services related to crime and drug prevention, crisis intervention or activation services.

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Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across
Europe

Cities in their national contexts

HAMBURG

Symptoms and causes of inequality affecting young people

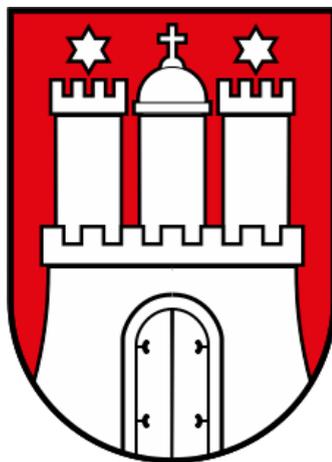
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HAW Hamburg

This report is part of Work Package 2 of the research project entitled “Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across Europe” (CITISPYCE). CITISPYCE has been devised against the back drop of research which shows the disproportionate impact of the global economic crisis on young people across Europe. This includes excessively high rates of youth unemployment (particularly amongst those who face multiple social, economic and cultural disadvantages) and threats to the social provision enjoyed by previous generations. CITISPYCE partners are working on a three year multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral programme to examine the current state of the art and ideas concerning social innovation against inequalities faced by young people, explore socially innovative practices being developed by and for young people in urban areas, and test the transferability of local models of innovative practice in order to develop new policy approaches. The CITISPYCE consortium covers ten European countries and is funded by the European Commission (FP7, Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities).



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1. The city – a presentation

In the following chapter an overall perspective about the City of Hamburg will be developed. First, we will explain its political development and the important features of its economy. Then demographic facts and trends for a multicultural society will be explored. Last, we will give a rough overview about social policy related to young people in the city.

1.1. Political situation and Economy

Hamburg is a city state and one of the 16 Lander (federal states) of Germany. It is the second largest city in Germany and the sixth largest in the European Union. The city acts as a federal state and as a municipality at the same time. As a state, Hamburg is responsible for public education and public safety and as a municipality it is also responsible for i.e. welfare services. The first mayor acts as head of the local public administration. He is also the head of the Hamburg Senate, the cabinet of the city which represents Hamburg to the federal government. The City is divided into seven districts and each is governed by a district council and administered by a municipal administrator (see figure 1). The districts

WP2 Hamburg

are not fully independent municipalities, as their power is subordinated to the Senate. Hamburg has a long social democratic history. After World War II the Social Democratic Party (SPD) was (except for a four year period) in charge for 50 years. From 2001- 2011, the conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) formed among others coalitions with the greens but in 2011 the social democrats came back to power, this time with a comfortable majority that allows them to push through some significant reform related to social affairs, education and youth policy.



Hamburg is one of the most important industrial centres in Germany and generates higher sales-taxes and trade-taxes compared to other states¹ due to its booming economy and tourism. The Free Port of Hamburg plays a key role in trade, service and transport worldwide. Since 2002 the City has used the slogan “Metropolis of Hamburg – growing City” to promote Hamburg as an economically attractive location both for companies and employees. The growth also shows in the increasing tax income due especially to sales and trade taxes which grew from EUR 8.8 billion to EUR 9 billion in 2013. Hamburg also takes the highest rank in the GDP per capita with EUR 53,000 which is far above the national average of EUR 32,000.² In the EU27 GDP comparison per capita of the 271 NUTS-2 regions, Hamburg lies at rank four with 188% of the average EU27 GDP³, meaning that it is one of the richest cities in Europe. Due to its wealthy residents, Hamburg has over 1,000 registered foundations – more than any other city in Germany. The change of Hamburg’s economic structure from a manufacturing to a trading and service metropolis can be measured by 84% of the gross value added coming from the service sector in 2011 and also 82.3% of all employees working in the service sector, 17.2% in production industry and only 0.5% in agriculture⁴ (see table 1). Hamburg’s main employers are the City of Hamburg, Airbus and Lufthansa (Hamburg is the third biggest airplane manufacturer worldwide), the Asklepios company of medical clinics, the University Medical Centre Hamburg-Eppendorf and the Deutsche Bahn (German rail).

Figure 1: Hamburg and its seven districts

	Farming/ fishing industry	Manufacturing Industry	Trade, hotel- industry, traffic	Other Services
1970	1.2%	35.4%	30.2%	33.2%
2011	0.5%	17.2%	31.4%	50.9%

¹ http://www.hamburgische-buergerschaft.de/cms_de.php?templ=aufg_sta.tpl&sub1=91&sub2=103&sub3=283&cont=207

² <http://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/73061/umfrage/bundeslaender-im-vergleich---bruttoinlandsprodukt/>

³ http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/1-13032012-AP/EN/1-13032012-AP-EN.PDF

⁴ Kreativwirtschaftsbericht 2012, p. 38

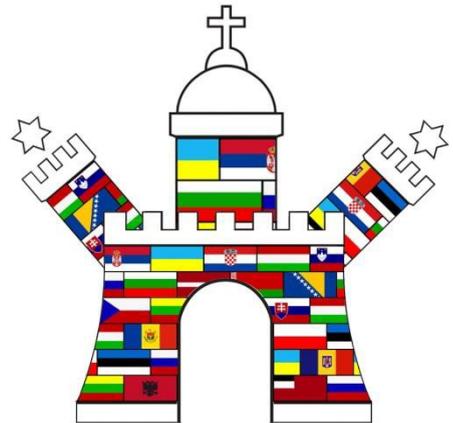
⁵ Statistisches Jahrbuch Hamburg 2013, p. 91

The City of Hamburg has a prosperous and innovative scene that spans across the arts and creative industries, including services and production related to new technologies and software development, media and journalism, advertising and design. Beside the typical hot spots in which young urban professionals have already established centres for multimedia and all types of creative and independent arts and technology (Schanzenviertel/St. Pauli/ Ottensen), many new creative cells are spread all over the city. In 2008, 15% of all companies/self-employees in Hamburg were involved in this sector, which makes up for 7% of the working population. This sector is growing in importance with an increase by 9.7% since 2003.⁶ In 2008, this sector had a share of 2.8% turnover rate and 3.8% added value in the overall economy of Hamburg.

1.2. Demography and cultural background

Hamburg – a growing and diverse City

Over the last two decades the city has been growing constantly (1990⁷: 1.65 Mio. 2011: 1.8 Mio) whilst the overall population of Germany has slightly decreased. More than 50% of the households in Hamburg are single person households. In 1970 this number was about 30%. The city's total population is generally wealthy and unemployment levels have dropped from 8.5% in 2005 to 7.3% (5/2013⁸). But Hamburg is also a socially and economically divided city with high inequalities between various social groups and between neighbourhoods. The proportion of children who depend on welfare benefits, to give an example, varies between 1.3% (Sasel) and an alarming 52% (Billbrook), with a city-wide average of 22.9%.⁹ As a harbour city, Hamburg has always attracted people from all over the world. In the 1960s and 1970s, it attracted guest workers from southern Europe (Spain, Italy, Portugal) and Turkey, and after 1989, new migrants, many of them late repatriates, from former Soviet, mainly Russia and Poland, and refugees from former Yugoslavia and other crisis regions.



Of the 1.8 Million inhabitants of Hamburg 29.2%¹⁰ have a migration background¹¹ which is above the national average of 19.5%. As shown in table 2, Turkey, Poland and Afghanistan are the main countries

⁶ Kreativwirtschaftsbericht 2012, p. 40

⁷ Statistical information is obtained from the statistic Report of Hamburg 2012/2013 (Statistisches Jahrbuch Hamburg 2012/2013).

⁸ http://www.pub.arbeitsagentur.de/hst/services/statistik/000000/html/start/karten/aloq_kreis.html

⁹ Statistisches Amt für Hamburg und Schleswig Holstein: Sozialleistungen in den Hamburger Stadtteilen 2011, p.6

¹⁰ http://www.statistik-nord.de/uploads/tx_standdocuments/SI_SPEZIAL_VII_2011.pdf

¹¹ The term “migration background” is a technical term that was introduced by public administrations in order not to “lose” those people in population statistics who have changed their citizenship and are no longer counted as “foreigners” as well as second and third generation migrants (irrespective of their nationality, be it German or else). It includes people who immigrated to Germany since 1950, people who were born in Germany to at least one parent with foreign background and became German citizens via birth or later.

of origin for people without German citizenship living in Hamburg. Today, the majority of the migrant population in Hamburg is between 30-44 (36%) and 45-64 (24%) years old. In the 1970s these numbers were significantly higher in the age groups of 0-5 (9.6%) and 18-29 (33.8%) (see table 3 which can relate to the former guest workers). In 2010, 5,931 persons were registered as asylum seekers or persons required to leave the country, holding a tolerated status as long as return to their home country is impossible.¹²

Table 2: Origin of main migrant-groups in Hamburg

Foreigners	13.7% (GER: 8.8%)
From Europe, non-EU	37.6%
	Turkey: 20.8%
	Serbia Montenegro: 4.1%
From European Union	32.1%
	Poland: 9.3%
	Portugal: 3.6%
	Greece: 2.6%
	Italy: 2.5%
From Africa	6.7%
America	4.2%
Asia	18.6%
	Afghanistan: 5%
	Iran: 2.3%
	Philippines: 2%

Table 3: Age groups of overall population and migrants¹³

years	Entire population		Foreigners	
	1970	2011	1970	2011
	1,793,000	1,798,000	69,000	247,000
0-5	7.5%	5.4%	9.6%	3.1%
6-9	5.3%	3.3%	4.4%	2.0%
10-17	8.5%	6.6%	6.4%	6.5%
18-29	13.3%	16.0%	33.8%	20.0%
30-44	21.0%	24.0%	33.0%	36.1%
45-64	24.9%	26.0%	10.0%	24.1%
+65	17.0%	18.8%	2.7%	8.2%

Diversity is higher amongst the younger parts of Hamburg's population than amongst older age groups. Of all children under 18 years, 46% have a migration background. These numbers vary in different districts and neighbourhoods: district of Hamburg-Mitte 67.5%, neighbourhood of Billbrook 94%, neighbourhood of Francop 3%).¹⁴ Hence, although all in all Hamburg can be described as a multicultural city, growing up here can mean rather different things depending on where one lives. In some neighbourhoods, diversity has become normal and the city is experienced as a true melting pot, other areas are still predominantly white. There is a clear correlation between ethnic and social segregation, although this seems to change, with more recent data indicating that ethnic segregation slowly decreases whilst segregation on the basis of income is growing (Guentner 2013, Dohnke/Seidel-Schulze/Häußermann 2012, Friedrichs/Triemer 2009).

Although the Senate has been experimenting with area-based policies on urban regeneration and social inclusion since the early 1990s, young people outside the mainstream concepts of society (due to i.e. ethnic and cultural background, disability or sexual orientation) tend to be excluded as far as their integration in functional subsystems (educational, labour market, health, housing etc.) is concerned (see e.g. Hamburg children and young people report 2007).

¹² EduAsyl p.13

¹³ Statistisches Jahrbuch Hamburg 2012/2013

¹⁴ Statistikamt Nord: Hamburger Bevölkerung mit Migrationshintergrund 2013, p.18

1.3. Social policy framework related to youth

In Germany, social policy measures for young people are mainly covered through the social code (Sozialgesetzbuch): Book eight in the social code (SGB VIII) implies the Child and Youth Service Act of 1990, which follows the right of every young person for support concerning his or her personal development for being an autonomous and independent member of the society (SGB VIII KJHG §1). This law is the main basis for child care and youth work, including statutory socio-educational family assistance and socio spatial measures to support and maintaining positive living conditions for young people and their families.

In the early 2000s, the German Government, then led by social-democratic chancellor Gerhard Schröder, introduced far-reaching labour market reforms, driven by the principles of activation and workfare. These reforms also set a new focus for the field of youth work. Institutions for child and youth work are now asked to build coalitions with the jobcentres for an integrated support of young people on their way to the labour market. In this context, measures for active labour market policies, i.e. the stimulation of (social) maturity for starting vocational education and training (VET), became a first priority.

These reforms burdened municipalities with increased costs for social security provision (unemployed benefits II/Grundsicherung). An approach to save on costs and increase efficiency that became popular amongst local social public administrations around that time, is socio-spatial targeting. According to this approach, social planning is not based on individuals and their entitlements, but geographic entities, so-called “social spaces”, are the basis for allocating resources. In line with this concept, the senate of Hamburg introduced a substantial reform of its social and youth policy in 2012, to substitute rather expensive statutory socio-educational family assistance (SGB VIII KJHG §§27-35¹⁵) by socio-spatial measures, such as meeting points and open counselling in community centres. In effect, instead of an individualized support by social workers, many families are now encouraged/forced to send their children to the much cheaper open child and youth work facilities.¹⁶

This reform is contested and its launch has been shadowed by open criticism of established youth work organisations who lost significant parts of their resources. The Senate, however, justifies cutbacks by the expectation that the new services will be more efficient. Furthermore, in line with a social investment perspective on social policy, emphasis has been put on the early education and childcare sector, which shall strengthen childrens resilience right from the start. Places for childcare and cost free afternoon care in all schools are expanded.¹⁷ From the start of 2013, nearly all schools have offered a full-day programme, blurring the traditional division between formal education (morning) and youth work (afternoon).

¹⁵ <http://www.sozialgesetzbuch-sgb.de/sgbviii/27.html>

¹⁶ Globalrichtlinie GR J 1/12 Sozialräumliche Angebote der Jugend- und Familienhilfe vom 01. Februar 2012

¹⁷ Ganztägigen Bildung und Betreuung an Schulen (GBS)

Although these measures are allegedly strengthening the education of young people in a holistic way, critics hold that whilst they give children a place to be, they would not lead to better quality education, essentially abandoning independent youth work, since the new full- day schooling approach is mainly organised from the perspective and needs of the formal education system.

2. Inequality in the City and the responses to it

In the following section we will present a range of areas where inequalities are felt and political responses to address these. It will be shown, however, that social policies and programmes can cause or reinforce inequalities, be it intended or unintended. For each area, and where relevant, we will provide some basic information on the national context and then zoom into the local situation. Areas that are covered include: economy and labour market, social protection and assistance, housing, education and political participation.

At a first glance, as has been shown in the previous chapter, it can be said that Hamburg's economic situation is very favourable. Compared to the national average and EU average, unemployment figures are very low at city level. It seems relatively easy to find a job. As the situation is so favourable, however, Hamburg attracts many people, and the population growth has put pressure on infrastructure and services, most visibly it has come with a significant shortage in housing, so that people have to spend a large part of their income on accommodation. Within the city, there are dramatic disparities between areas and between social groups. Access to employment and housing as well as educational achievement appear to be easier for some than for others. The causes cannot be allocated to macroeconomic conditions but rather to subtle (some more obvious than others) discriminatory practices on labour and housing markets and in the educational system. To put it a bit bluntly: inequalities are mainly related to address and nationality. It appears that discrimination is most pronounced at transition periods: when parents decide if they put their children into childcare, and where, when they decide to which primary school they take their children, and, more crucial, in the transition to secondary education and later from education to vocational training, high school or employment. These decisions are influenced by many factors, systemic and other. Hence, explanations for the inequalities that we can observe need to draw on structural factors as well as individual decisions and action. Clearly, if employment, housing and education systems are under stress, when more people look for housing than is available, or when more parents want to put their children into childcare than places are available, inequalities will be felt and exclusion will be (re-)produced, and factors like economic and social capital, resources and power come in.

2.1. Economy and Labour market

Germany's labour market is currently braving the economic crisis and booming. Never before has the number of people in employment been as high (2012: 76.7% of the working age population compared to

68.4% in 2003 and an EU27 average of 68.5¹⁸). Looking at the labour market from a gender perspective, the employment rate of women is well above the EU average (71.5% compared to 62.3%), but women work much more often in part-time jobs than the EU average of 32% in 2011.¹⁹ In fact Germany ranks second with 45% after the Netherlands with 76%.

The overall unemployment rate currently lies at 5.4% (EU27: 10.5%) and has decreased from 9.8% since 2003²⁰ (EU27: 9.1%). But the favourable economic conditions seem not to reach all parts of society. There are clear signs of a growing group of people who are effectively detached from the labour market and cannot find a way back into employment. At the same time, precarious jobs (short term or part time contracts - with less protection than in previous decades when permanent contracts were the norm) are increasingly common, even for middle classes, causing uncertainty and unease. Rather paradoxically, at the same time German companies and politics claim that Germany suffers a lack of skilled labour and that the recruiting of people from other countries is necessary.

Patterns of employment and unemployment in Hamburg

Hamburg's unemployment rate decreased by 30% from 2005-2011 and today lies at 7.3 %²¹ (May 2013/ Berlin: 11.3%, national average 6.8%). Although these numbers attest to a positive development through a growing Hamburg employment market, at a second look it becomes obvious that this is only one side of the story because the Hamburg labour market shows a very ambivalent structure. While the jobs for the highest qualified people increased by 47% between 2000 and 2011, jobs for people without a university degree but vocational training decreased by 5.4% and even by 17.5% for those without a formal job qualification.²² Hence, there is a clear structural change at Hamburg's labour market. For some groups the risk to becoming unemployed is significantly higher than for others (see table 4). Especially vulnerable are people with a migration background and young people between 15 and 25 without vocational training.

Table 4: Qualification of unemployed people, IAB 2012 p. 5

	Total %	Long-time unemployed	15-25	50-65	Single parent	Foreign nationality	disability	Recipients of social assistance based on SGB II
Share (in 2011) %	100	26	7.5	25.3	9.6	24.4	4.9	72.2
No VET	53.6	58	63	49.4	63	77.5	52.9	63.9
VET	36.4	35	34.8	41.2	32.2	15.9	41.1	30.3
University	9.1	6.3	1.1	8.4	4.2	5.6	5.2	4.9

¹⁸ http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&plugin=1&language=de&pcode=t2020_10

¹⁹ https://www.destatis.de/DE/PresseService/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2013/03/PD13_086_132.html

²⁰ http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=une_rt_a&lang=en

²¹ http://www.pub.arbeitsagentur.de/hst/services/statistik/000000/html/start/karten/aloq_kreis.html

²² Data obtained from: Buch/Seibert/Stöckmann: Die Entwicklung der Beschäftigung in Hamburg, IAB 2012

Atypical employment

Atypical is defined as forms of employment that differ from the classic model of full-time and long-term contracts. As indicated above, making the labour market more flexible is an overall trend that is seen as ambiguous: whilst it eases access to legal work, these jobs come with less protection and often lower wages, posing challenges to the insurance based social security system, in particular regarding pensions.

Hamburg's economy has always had a relatively high share of atypical employment, related to the particularities of the harbour and related businesses. Many people get hired for short term jobs in the harbour or the trade and service sector. This means that a large proportion of employees instead of working fulltime, with unlimited contracts in a non-subsidized job, only works either part time up to 20 hours a week or in temporary employment and often under precarious conditions. In 2010 this number was at 22% in Hamburg with an increase by 12.4% during the last decade.²³ Women (29.2%), people under 25 (42.5%), people without vocational education (41.6%) and migrants (29.4%) are in atypical employment. For the last group this number increased by nearly 50% since 2000, which makes them particularly vulnerable. The rising number of time-limited employment contracts (+36.5%) also contributes to this development which lets the future of people on the employment market look more and more uncertain. Amongst atypical forms of work, most striking is the growth in subcontracted temporary employment, which increased by 95% during 2000-2011 up to now 3.4% of all formal employment contracts (the national average is 2.9%). Half of these contracts are for less than three months and typically, the wages are much lower compared to average wages in regular employment contracts. In 2011 low qualified people had an average income of EUR 2,082/month in a regular job while they only had 1,180 in a subcontracted job. Temporary employees are 68% male due to the dominance of manufacturing and fulltime jobs in this area. The share of people with vocational education is relatively high with 68% (Germany 56%) because the Hamburg job market requires a larger amount of better qualified labour due to its big service sector (office jobs). But also people without qualifications have a high share of 25% in this type of employment. Employees in the temporary sector are also younger than the average working population - 39% are between 20 and 29 years old. All in all, the composition of these employees is certainly different from the rest of the working population in terms of age, sex, qualification and income.

The employment trends have clear repercussions in the distribution of income. At a first glance, Hamburg is very well off. The median income lies at EUR 3,095/month and is EUR 400, above the national average. There is, however, a substantial gap in incomes. In 2010, 19% of all employees were working in the low-wage sector with an income of less than EUR 1,890/month. This is an increase of 38% since 2000. The low wage sector is growing faster than the national average, people with a special risk for working in this kind of employment are again women, under 25 (52.1%) and with a foreign nationality

²³All statistics obtained from: Buch/Seibert/Stöckmann 2012:6f

(40.8%). Also, every third person without training is working in this sector. Typical branches for low paid work are hairdressers, tourism (waiters, hotel employees) and sale.

The data presented above indicate a clear polarisation of Hamburg's labour market. Women, young persons, foreigners and low qualified have difficulties to access full time and, consequently, social insurance. The causal factors are complex, but certainly the changing structure of the labour market, due to a growing importance of the service sector, but deregulation and flexibilisation, is a key driver (see below).

Employment Policy

In Germany, employment and labour market policies are mainly allocated at national level. Employment promotion is set out in the social security code III (Sozialgesetzbuch III) and the "Bundesagentur für Arbeit" (state employment agency) realizes these tasks by offering employment service and employment promotion, administrating the insurance for the unemployed and paying the insurance based unemployment benefit I (ALG I, insurance based for max 12 month). Furthermore they have to promote all different measures of vocational educational training (vocational preparations, accommodation, training allowance).

To support long-term unemployed on their path (back) to employment, "Jobcentres" were introduced in the mid 2000s. Their guiding principle is activation, or as they refer to, "promoting and challenging" (Fördern und Fordern). Amongst their instruments are qualification and training schemes, subsidised employment and also sanctions (benefit cuts) in case applicants don't show enough efforts to find a job.

A specificity of the German institutional structure is that the Jobcentres are most often run in partnership between the national level employment agency and local authorities, because their services combine placement (national responsibility) and social assistance (handing out the tax-based means-tested unemployment benefit II, which is a municipal responsibility). This muddling of competences had stirred concern by the constitutional court and was settled only recently.

Young people

Germany is the only country in the EU in which the youth unemployment rate dropped since the crisis. In fact youth unemployment rates of 16-24 year olds dropped from 11.6% in 2003 (EU27: 18.5%) to 7.5% in 2013 (EU27: 23.5%).²⁴ Also the rate of NEETs (people neither in education nor employment or training) decreased from 10% in 2003 to 7.7% in 2012 and lies far below the EU27 average of 13.7%.²⁵ The youth unemployment rate in Hamburg for people aged 15 to 25 was 7.0% in May 2013.²⁶ Activating measures (see 1.3) for young people not in employment, education or training are particularly rigid with quick sanctions like the complete cut off of after i.e. missing one job appointment. In line with this activating approach, youth work organisations are now forced to adapt their measures to support young

²⁴ <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>

²⁵ See Eurostat NEET rates (by age and sex), August 2013

²⁶ Der Arbeitsmarkt in Hamburg, Agentur für Arbeit Mai 2013

people with the integration to the labour market. In recent years various contracts between the city, the jobcentres, companies and NGOs were set up to support young people into vocational training and into the labour market, including subsidies for placements and training schemes. An Alliance for education and employment²⁷ was created, including businesses and public administration to reform the transition system from school to work. They developed a “Support Programme for education and vocational training for young people with a migration background”²⁸, an agreement between the city, the jobcentre, the chamber of commerce, trade union and companies to foster cooperation between companies and schools and to recruit teachers with a migrant background to serve as positive role models

A new institution to fight youth unemployment is the Youth Jobcentre (“Jugendberufsagentur”)²⁹ that was introduced in 2012 in each district with the political slogan “Nobody should get lost”. It will offer a “one-stop-shop” around all the services for the specific needs of young people U25 years for their transition into education and the labour market.³⁰

The entry to the labour market for refugees and asylum seekers is especially difficult. Only after four years of stay with tolerated status, refugees are given full access to the labour market. Also after four years of tolerated stay, young people are entitled to Federal education and funding grants. Due to recent reforms, refugees with tolerated status that finish vocational education and training in Germany and demonstrate having a job are at least granted a permanent residency permit (EduAsyl 2012 p.9). These circumstances lead to young people with uncertain residency status often working in precarious and illegal jobs with only little opportunities to fully integrate into society.

2.2. Welfare regimes

2.2.1. Access to social income, social and health services

The German welfare system has long been the prototype of a conservative, “Bismarckian“ model: social security is mainly based on social insurances and entitlement to support is linked to employment. For long, the system was organised around the “male breadwinner”; it was only in the last decades that reforms have been introduced to strengthen the position of women. An important principle that stems from the Christian background of the German welfare model is subsidiarity: the state should only come in as a last resort, family and civil society should be the first to turn to in times of need. This principle is reflected in the governance and provision of social services and in the power of the big non-governmental welfare associations. A range of developments have been challenging this model over the last decades: Individualisation and the weakening of family ties, a more flexible labour market that offers less and less regular fulltime employment, resulting in fewer contributions to social insurances, in particular health and

²⁷ Aktionsbündnis für Bildung und Beschäftigung

²⁸ “Aktionsplan zur Bildung und Ausbildungsförderung junger Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund“ Hamburger Senat 2009

²⁹ <http://www.hamburg.de/jugendberufsagentur/kontakt/>

³⁰ HIBB, Hamburger Institut für berufliche Bildung: Berufliche Bildungswege 2013: 6
<http://hibb.hamburg.de/index.php/file/download/1650>

pensions (see above). This led to a growing group of working poor and frequent calls for a minimum wage (so that loopholes in collective agreements can no longer be exploited), which has been picked up by all political parties apart from the liberals but hasn't been introduced yet. Most striking is the precarious situation of single parents (mainly women) who often cannot balance work and family duties without state support. Child poverty is increasing, about one out of five children are dependent on welfare benefits, however, with huge regional variations. Another indicator is the growing use of food and clothes banks and other charity services.³¹

As mentioned above, income distribution in Hamburg is rather unequal. Compared to other German states, the Gini-Coefficient is highest (0.32, national average is 0.29³²). National social reports show that Hamburg has a high share of people living on more than 200% of the national disposable equivalent income³³ (2011: 12.2%, national average 8.1%; 2005: 10.2%, 7.7%).³⁴ On the other hand, Hamburg's at-risk-of poverty rate of 18% lies above the national average of 15.1% (2005: 17.4% and GER: 14.7%) but compared to other big German cities still in a mid point. The proportion of people under 18 being at risk of poverty lies at 26.2% (2005: 25.9%) and for people between 18 and 25 at 31.7% (2005: 32.0%). People with low qualification levels of 0-2 (ISCED) have a high percentage of 36.3% (2005:26.9%) in this group, as well as people without German citizenship (35.3%, 2005:36.6%) compared to German citizens with 15.5% (2005:14.3%) and people with migration background (34.1%; 2005: 33.9%) compared to people without migration background (12.5%/ 2005: 11.5%). Income levels vary strongly depending on the level of education: In 2011 people without vocational education and training had an average gross income of EUR 1,731 compared to people with university degrees: EUR 4,786.³⁵

In Germany, an insurance-based unemployment benefit (ALG I) is paid for 12 month and lies at 60% (for people with children 67%) of the last gross income. After 12 months of unemployment, entitlement to insurance-based support ends and recipients are referred to the means-tested, tax based "unemployment benefit II". As a result of radical welfare reform in 2005, this is no longer calculated in proportion to previous income but at the same level as basic social assistance for those who are not capable to work, which is currently EUR 382 for a single household, plus accommodation and heating costs (up to certain limits) until they find work.

In Hamburg, although the citywide number of households depending on different kinds of social assistance slightly decreased (14.3% in 2005) in 2011 it still lies at 12.5%³⁶ with a high concentration in the southern and south-eastern neighbourhoods (up to 28% on welfare benefits, see figure 4). Areas in the western part of the city, as well as the north, north-east and central areas around the lake Alster have comparatively low level of dependants on social benefits. Looking at age cohorts, it is striking that while

³¹ From Local Report Hamburg, Progress Project COM.IN

³² The gini-coefficient can have values between 0 (equal income for all) and 1 (income concentrated at one person).

³³ The EU indicator is based on the component of EU-SILC, for the equivalent disposable income.

³⁴ Unless stated otherwise, all data obtained from: <http://www.amtliche-sozialberichterstattung.de/>

³⁵ Statistisches Jahrbuch Hamburg 2012/13, p. 107

³⁶ Statistisches Amt für Hamburg und Schleswig Holstein: Sozialleistungen in den Hamburger Stadtteilen 2011.

the share of elderly people above 65 years depending on benefits in Germany increased from 2.4%³⁷ in 2005 to 2.6% in 2011, in Hamburg the respective figures are 4.7% in 2005 and 5.8% in 2011, higher than in all other German states. The share of young people under 15 depending on benefits lies at 21.2%³⁸ and is far above the German average level of 14.9%. The share of children below 7 years depending on welfare benefits have a citywide average of 22.9% which means that twice as much children depend on benefits than adults. In some of the marginalised neighbourhoods even 50% of the children depend on welfare benefits (Billbrook, Steilshoop).

Migrants

The income situation for people with a migration background is worse compared to people without a migration background. Looking at national data, the average income of families with migration background in 2009 was EUR 2,200/month - some 13% less than for families without migration background.³⁹ The risk-of-poverty rate is, therefore, much higher for people with migration background than for German citizens. In Hamburg, in 2010 11.4% of people with a German passport and without migration background were at risk of poverty, but 34.3% of foreign nationalities and people with a migration background.⁴⁰ Risk factors such as being a single-parent, an early school leaver or unemployed, are even more valid for people with migrant roots. Every second single-mother with a migration background is at-risk of poverty, compared to every third with a German background. Also other disadvantaging aspects, such as for example barriers in language or a restricted residence permit status influence the income situation negatively. The risk-of-poverty rate for children in Germany is outstandingly higher for children with migration background (32.6%, 2005) compared with children without a migration background (13.7%). As every second child in Hamburg has a migration background this is rather alarming.

Asylum seekers

Asylum seekers and people with a tolerated status in Germany have no access to regular social benefits after social code II (SGB II). Instead they are entitled to special benefits for refugees and asylum seekers under the Benefits for Asylum Seekers Act of 1993. When they live in special asylum seekers sheltered accommodation, benefits for basic requirements in terms of food, health and body care etc. are often covered by benefits in kind. Until 2012 the regular monthly rate for a head of household was EUR 224.97. In 2012 this level was declared illegal because it lay below the level of a secure provision for all. Since 2013 the rate lies at EUR 354 (single person), EUR 283 for children aged 18-25, EUR 274 14-17 years and so on. In 2011 7,000 people received these kinds of benefits in Hamburg.⁴¹

³⁷ http://www.amtliche-sozialberichterstattung.de/B3quote_grundsicherung_im_alter.html

³⁸ <http://www.amtliche-sozialberichterstattung.de/B2sgbII-quote.html>

³⁹ BMAS 2012: Lebenslagen in Deutschland 2012, p. 125

⁴⁰ Following data: http://www.amtliche-sozialberichterstattung.de/Tabellen/tabelleA1206hh_land.html

⁴¹ Statistisches Jahrbuch, p. 68

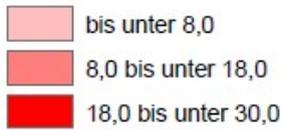
Inequalities in access to social income, social and health services

Access to social protection is linked to eligibility criteria, which, by their very nature, discriminate some groups and favour others. Most favoured by the German system are those who are covered by social insurance, with differences between those who can afford private insurance and those who are in the compulsory, state regulated system. Children are typically insured through their parents (traditionally it has been the male bread winner through whom the family is insured), so the parents' status will determine the status of the young people. In the health sector, services other than emergency treatment, are only provided on the basis of insurance. This causes massive problems for those who cannot enter the system, most strikingly refugees and asylum seekers. Some civil society organisations, NGOs and progressive medical practitioners, seek to help with low-threshold and anonymous services.

With regard to income support, the dual structure of insurance-based unemployment benefits for up to one year, the amount being related to what one had earned before, and tax based support as a lump sum to cover the socio-economic minimum of existence, has brought about a clear division line. After one year of joblessness, there is a radical change with a much tighter control system and rigid sanctions in case of non-compliance with what the case manager in the jobcentre regards as adequate effort to find new employment. The control system even extends to housing, where support is not just limited in terms of money (as with the general housing subsidy), but also in terms of size of an apartment (measured in sqm), which has distributional effects with regard to where long-term unemployed can find an apartment and where not.

Empfängerinnen und Empfänger¹ von Sozialleistungen zur laufenden Lebensführung am Jahresende 2011 in den Hamburger Stadtteilen

Anteil der Empfängerinnen und Empfänger¹ an der Bevölkerung in Prozent



Landesdurchschnitt:
12,5 Prozent

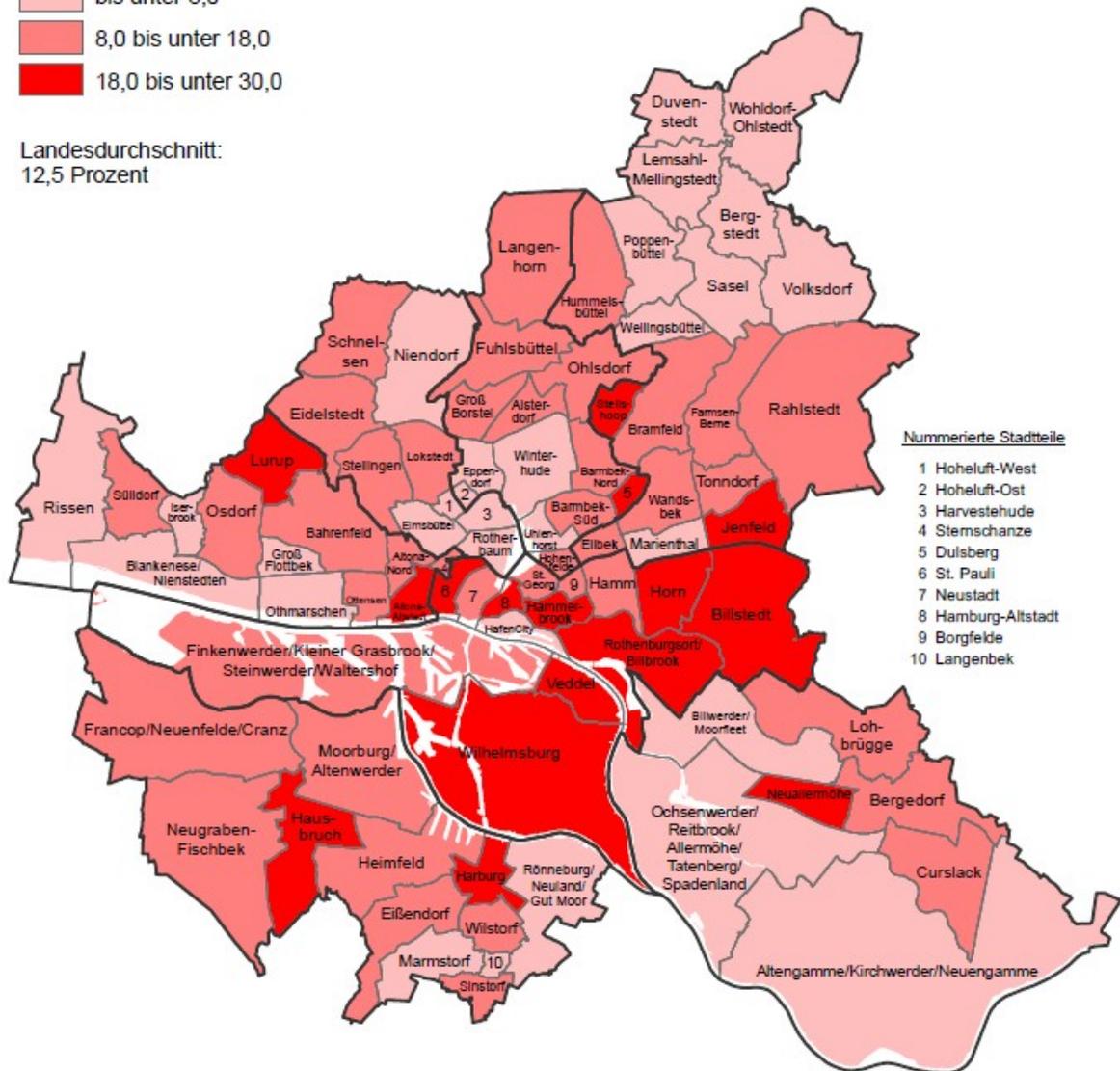


Figure 2: Concentration of households depending on social benefit in Hamburg 2011⁴²

⁴² Statistisches Amt für Hamburg und Schleswig-Holstein, Sozialleistungen in den Hamburger Stadtteilen 2011, III 2013

2.3. Housing

Structure of the housing market

In Germany, more than half of the households (53%) live in rented tenancy, whilst 46% live in their own home.⁴³ The ownership rate is rising rapidly, but still modest compared to other EU countries. In Hamburg, only 20% of households own their home, so the housing market is basically a rent market. About a third of the housing stock is owned and managed by cooperatives and other non-profit oriented companies, and by the large municipal housing company SAGA/GWG.

To provide affordable housing, various policy instruments exist, including housing benefits to low income and unemployed households, and subsidies to housing providers who offer apartments at a low price. In 2006, as a result of a federalism reform, the promotion of social housing was allocated to the level of the 16 federal states, as there was an assumption that the housing situation in Germany was generally satisfactory. In recent years, however, housing has been brought back to the attention, as in some big agglomerations severe shortages occurred, whilst on the other hand some regions are confronted with population decline and have an oversupply in their housing stock.

Hamburg's housing market is characterised by a severe shortage of apartments, resulting in enormous housing costs. Whilst on average, 23.8% of a household's disposable income are spent on basic rent (national average: 22.5%), a recent study showed that families on low income have to allocate 42.5% of their disposable income to housing related expenses⁴⁴ Respectively, margins for other expenses are extremely low. Children of these families suffer from poverty in relation to a lack of material, social, educational and cultural possibilities of participation.

The number of new built houses is too low compared to the need for affordable and central accommodation for the constantly growing population. Today Hamburg has a housing stock of 240,000 buildings⁴⁵ (1970: 180,000) holding some 900,000 apartments. Between 2002 and 2009 only around 3,700 flats were completed each year.⁴⁶ At the same time especially the number of flats being built with two to four rooms decreased because more single flats are required since 29% of all citizens live on their own (53% of all households). This lack of approximately 30,000 units leads to exploding rent prices especially in the inner-city neighbourhoods. In fact rents for public flats increased by 5.8% between 2009 and 2011 which lies high above the average increase of 3.7%. In the same period the share of flats with a rent below EUR 6/m² decreased from 33% to 28%. For newly constructed apartments, average rent prices climbed from EUR 7/ m² in 2000 to EUR 12/m² in 2012. All in all, Hamburg's rent level in an area of

⁴³ Figures as provided by the National Statistical Office, <https://www.destatis.de/DE/ZahlenFakten/GesellschaftStaat/EinkommenKonsumLebensbedingungen/Wohnen/AktuellMikrozensus.html> ; access: 16 August, 2013

⁴⁴ Heyn, Timo / Braun, Reiner / Grade, Jan (2013): Wohnungsangebot für arme Familien in Großstädten, Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, download: http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/cps/rde/xbc/SID-186A775E-EDA8262D/bst/xcms_bst_dms_38453_38454_2.pdf

⁴⁵ Statistisches Jahrbuch Hamburg 2012/13, p.80

⁴⁶ <http://www.hamburg.de/bsu/wohnungsbau/3516486/hintergrund.html> [23. May 2013]

average quality was at EUR 7.15/m² in 2011 (EUR 6.13/m² in 2003) with a strong variation between districts (Mitte: EUR 14, Altona 10.50, Harburg: 8).

The increasing rent prices cause gentrification processes particularly in old and central, mixed-use working class areas where people on a low income are priced out by increasing rents. This affects many migrants: In St. Pauli, a traditional working class area that is also known for its multicultural population, the proportion of people without German nationality dropped from 41.5% in 1991 to 21.9% in 2011.⁴⁷ On the other hand, more peripheral areas are achieving a high proportion of households that depend on state benefits. This leads to a strong segregation between different areas of the city. More often than not this process is no longer limited to poor working class people, it gets even more difficult for people with average income to find affordable yet central accommodation.

In 2009 the Senate of Hamburg decided on a “House Building Development Plan”⁴⁸ which set the goal to increase the number of flats being approved to build to 6,000 each year – 2,000 of them in subsidized housing - to reduce the shortage of (affordable) accommodation. To reach this goal the Senate and the seven districts (which are responsible for house building concerns) signed a contract⁴⁹, and the Senate and several housing companies established a coalition for building in Hamburg.⁵⁰ Another step towards better conditions for tenants is a new law that forbids an increase of rent prices of more than 15% over three years time (until now: 20%). The success of this tool will be jeopardised as newly built dwellings where rents often lie over 40% above average are exempt. Although all in all the efforts point in the right direction, some criticise them as being half-hearted and argue that at least 8,000 new flats would be needed each year and that the percentage of subsidized housing has to be moved up from 2,000 to at least 4,000.

Social Housing

Living conditions regarding kind, size, furnishing and location of flats and their connection to local infrastructure and social contacts contribute severely to the wellbeing of people. Shortage of accommodation and living in precarious housing situations can cause distress and isolation. Access to affordable housing is, therefore, a central aspect of social integration. Whilst affordable housing was an important element of local welfare systems throughout the 20th century, its importance seems to have been dropped dramatically. Whilst in the 1970s close to half of the available apartments were classified as social housing, rather typical for a universal approach, today only some 110,000 remain in that category. The municipal housing company SAGA/GWG which currently owns 130,000 flats in Hamburg dropped its share of subsidized flats from 77% in 1990 to 31% in 2011.⁵¹ But these trends do in no way reflect a

⁴⁷ Statistikamt Nord: <http://www.statistik-nord.de/fileadmin/regional/regional.php?MERKMALE=Ausl%20Finnen+in+%25+der+Bev%26lkerung&JAHRE=1991&JAHRE=2011&STADTTEILE=3&AUSGABE=A&STARTEN=Anfrage+starten...>

⁴⁸ “Wohnungsbauentwicklungsplan“ <http://www.hamburg.de/contentblob/1586098/data/wohnungsbauentwicklungsplan.pdf> [23. May 2013]

⁴⁹ “Vertrag für Hamburg“ <http://www.hamburg.de/contentblob/3460004/data/vertrag-fuer-hamburg.pdf> [23. May 2013]

⁵⁰ “Bündnis für das Wohnen“ <http://www.hamburg.de/contentblob/3077106/data/buendnis-fuer-das-wohnen.pdf> [23. May 2013]

⁵¹ http://www.diakonie-hamburg.de/export/sites/default/content/downloads/PK_Wohnungsnot-Zahlen-und-Fakten.pdf, p.2

lack of demand. Nearly half of the households in Hamburg (46%) would be eligible for social housing⁵² due to their low income. The decrease of affordable accommodation meant in turn that demand for housing benefits increased, in 2011 16,100 households received this support measure (2006:15,200), financed by the state and the federal states with an average sum of EUR131. Most of them were employees and pensioners and had an average income of EUR 914.⁵³ Young people who depend on social assistance have no individual entitlement for housing related benefits until they reach 25 years of age but have to live with and be provided by their family who receive an extra benefit for each child living with them. If they move out before their 25th birthday their benefits will be cut significantly and the costs for housing will not be covered. This situation prolongs the dependency of young people, forces them to live in often inappropriate surroundings and also prevents them of becoming self-determined.

Migrants and refugees with tolerated status

Migrants still have lower incomes than the German population and often live in smaller flats with lower living standards (in terms of equipment and neighbourhood). Especially migrants/asylum seekers without permanent residency permit suffer from increasing rents because they are only entitled to social housing when their right of residence is valid for at least one year. If this is not the case they are forced either to live in municipality accommodation facilities (where they can stay only for a limited time and receive basic requirements in terms of food, health and body care to be covered in kind) or try their luck in the private housing market where they are not only disadvantaged by low income but often face discrimination. Often, they are not fully informed about entitlements or subsidized housing possibilities. The new *Integration Plan for the City of Hamburg*⁵⁴ plans, therefore, to sensitize housing companies for special demands of people with migration background both in the public as well as on the subsidized housing market.

Poverty migration from Bulgaria/Romania

A specific challenge for the housing situation in Hamburg is related to newly arriving immigrants from Romania and Bulgaria. Whilst in 2007, 64,000⁵⁵ people migrated from these countries to Germany, this number increased to 150,000 in 2011. The biggest share (100,000 people) returned to their home countries after their season as guest workers. But this will change significantly when in 2014 the freedom of movement for workers for these countries is allowed. This issue is discussed widely these days in media and political debates, as some see a risk that so-called “poverty migration” from those countries might overstress the social infrastructure of big cities, because many will not find a good job that pays off the cost of living.⁵⁶ Currently, about 5,200 people from Bulgaria and 5,600 from Romania are officially registered in Hamburg; many of them live here under precarious conditions. There is no coherent strategy yet on how to deal with these “poverty immigrants”, because many institutions consider that the

⁵² §5 Wohnberechtigungsschein – social housing legitimation

⁵³ Statistisches Amt für Hamburg und Schleswig-Holstein: Wohngeld in Hamburg und Schleswig-Holstein 2011 (Oktober 2012).

⁵⁴ Hamburger Integrationskonzept Teilhabe, Interkulturelle Öffnung und Zusammenhalt 2013

⁵⁵ Statistisches Bundesamt

⁵⁶ They are entitled to monthly children benefit of : EUR 184,00 (2 Children) 190,00 3rd and 215,00 4th, paid by the state

Bulgarian and Romanian people will still behave like guest workers and return to their countries. But the reality looks dramatically different. The municipalities are already overwhelmed and badly prepared concerning financing of medical, social and housing infrastructure for these severely poor and disadvantaged immigrants.

2.4. Education policy frameworks

In Germany, the federal states not the central state are responsible for school education. There are broad similarities between the systems, but also some distinct differences. Primary school lasts four to six years and is followed by secondary school, which can be lower secondary school (“Hauptschule” lasting nine years), secondary school (“Realschule”, 10 years), grammar school, (“Gymnasium”, 12 or 13 years) or a school for special needs (lower secondary level, “Förderschule”). Traditionally, the choice of secondary school (either taken by teachers or parents) pretty much determined the future career prospects of pupils. After this harsh selection process had been criticised for the inequalities it produced (see e.g. PISA 2001), some federal states started to integrate the different types of secondary education in *one* comprehensive school in which pupils have the opportunity to develop their capabilities and reach the higher education entrance certificate after 13 years even if they started off with lower qualification and performances in the early years. This more inclusive school system intends to give more opportunities to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds who had been segregated (disproportionately high numbers of children with a migration background on lower secondary schools). In Hamburg, such a reform was carried out in 2010 when the so called “Stadtteilschule” (Neighbourhood school) was introduced (replacing lower secondary and secondary level schools), alongside the grammar schools which now lead to higher education entrance certificate after only 12 years (see figure 3).

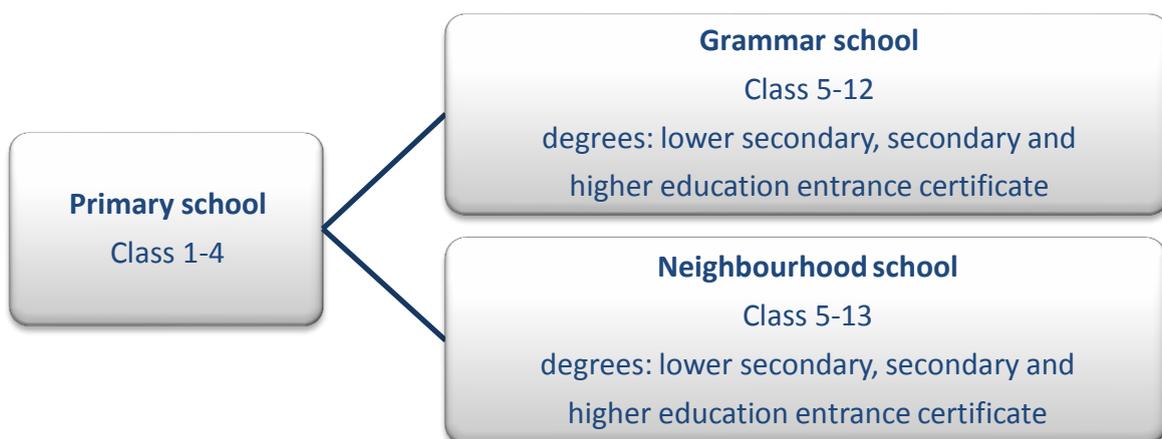


Figure 3: Hamburg's school system since 2010

The number of pupils in the different types of schools has changed significantly over the last decades. While in the 70s nearly 30% of all pupils attended the lower secondary school and 36% the grammar school, the expansion of education led to an unpopularity of the lower secondary and secondary schools (see table 5). In 2000, 40% of all pupils attended a grammar school and only 12% the lower secondary school. Parents started to place their children at comprehensive or grammar schools to enable them to gain a better school leaving certificate. The school reform in 2010, when lower secondary and secondary school were integrated into the Neighbourhood schools, aimed at providing opportunities to higher education even for children from difficult starting positions. Indeed the level of higher education entrance certificates has risen from 25% in 1981 to 50% in 2011 (see table 6). But even if the number of lower secondary education certificates decreases, the situation for these pupils has not been improved. Many companies nowadays prefer young people with at least secondary or grammar certificates before they start vocational education and training which leads to a significant number of young people being left without training places.

In 2009, Hamburg spent EUR 6,500 per pupil (3.3% of its GDP) and took the first rank of the 16 federal states which spent EUR 5,500 in average (4.3% of German GDP).⁵⁷ Although the number increased to 5.3 % in 2012 it is still criticized that they lie below the OECD average (6.2%), and have not grown adequately during the last decades. In accordance with the Europe 2020 Strategy, the government set the target to increase this number up to 10% of the national GDP until 2015.

Table 5: Share of pupils per school in Hamburg⁵⁸

School year	Pupils	Lower secondary (ISCED 2)	Secondary (ISCED 2)	Grammar (ISCED 3)	Comprehensive /neighbourhood (ISCED 2+3)	Special needs (ISCED 2)
1975/76	164,024	28.5%	18.8%	36.5%	9.6%	6.4%
2000/01	115,705	12.6%	10.1%	40.8%	30.0%	6.4%
2011/12	120,621	-	-	43.9%	50.9%	5.1%

Table 6: School leaving certificates in Hamburg 1981 and 2011⁵⁹

School year	Lower secondary	Secondary	Technical college entry qualification	Higher education entrance certificate	No school leaving qualification
1981	29.3%	35.1%	0.5%	25.7%	9.1%
2011	16.2%	22.9%	3.1%	50.6%	7%

To improve the expenditure on education and ensure that they reach the disadvantaged, Hamburg introduced a social index (KESS-Index⁶⁰) in 1996 to indicate the financial and staff requirements. This planning tool is based on data obtained from families and the annual structural data collection of the neighbourhoods. The index includes indicators on social, economic and cultural capital and migration

⁵⁷ Statistische Ämter des Bundes und der Länder, Internationale Bildungsindikatoren, 2012, p.42

⁵⁸ Statistisches Jahrbuch Hamburg 2012/13, p.40

⁵⁹ Statistisches Jahrbuch Hamburg 2012/13, p.41

⁶⁰ <http://www.bildungsmonitoring.hamburg.de/index.php/article/detail/1504>

backgrounds.⁶¹ On the basis of this index, schools are then categorized into six groups (1: severe social situation - 6: privileged social situation) so that schools with a low ranking will receive extra financial resources and staff, especially for remedial education, corresponding to their requirements.

Vocational education and training (VET) forms a third pillar in the education system besides school and higher education and is usually organized as a dual system of training on the job (ruled by companies) and vocational school (ruled by the state). This system is still much appreciated because it involves companies and through that guarantees a relevant training content for the labour market, the young people receive a training allowance and are covered by social insurance. Also the high level of standardisation of training courses and curricula adds validity to the training and contributes to high productivity of German companies. The sectors in which young people find VET placements are mainly in manufacturing, trade and craft, with a slight decrease in craft to an increase in industry and trade from 1997 until 2011 (see table 7). A rather traditional gender bias is still visible in the system: the top three professions for young people in Germany 2011 for women were sales, retail and office administration, and for men: vehicle mechanics, industrial mechanic and retail salesman.⁶² To enter the regular dual VET system, at least lower secondary school level certificates are required. Two thirds of each cohort choose a VET, 20% of them have grammar school level qualifications.⁶³ The increasing numbers of young people with grammar school level qualifications entering the VET sector show that a shift to a more knowledge based education even in the field of more practical working areas takes place which leads to more pressure for young people with lower education levels.

Table 7: New VET contracts in Hamburg 1997 and 2011⁶⁴

Year	No of pupils	Industry and Trade	Craft sector	Liberal professions	Public service	agriculture	Maritime shipping	housekeeping
1997	11,651	60.2%	26.8%	9%	1.8%	1.7%	0.3%	0.2%
2011	13,713	72.5%	18.4%	7%	0.9%	1%	-	0.2%

The “transition-system” between school and VET

Statistics state that the number of young people who have successfully found a VET placement has risen steadily. Indeed 570,000 (Hamburg: 14,916) young people found a VET in 2011 which is an increase of 1.8% (Hamburg 3.7%) to 2010.⁶⁵ There are, however, still around 300,000 young people who could not be placed in the regular VET system due to missing “VET entry maturity” (Ausbildungsreife), meaning they are either missing lower secondary degree (20%) or social/technical skills to start a VET right away.⁶⁶ For these young people the state offers a vast number of measures in a *transition system* that runs parallel to the VET market. A differentiated system of vocational preparation schools

⁶¹ <http://www.bildungsmonitoring.hamburg.de/index.php/article/detail/1628>

⁶² Berufsbildungsbericht 2012, p. 19

⁶³ Berufsbildungsbericht 2012, p. 6

⁶⁴ Statistisches Jahrbuch Hamburg 2012/13, p.46

⁶⁵ Statistisches Jahrbuch Hamburg 2012/13, p.17

⁶⁶ Statistisches Jahrbuch Hamburg 2012/13, p.28

(Berufsvorbereitungsschule) offers opportunities for young people to develop very basic skills and knowledge based on the specific profession they aspire. Although some pupils attend these preparation schemes for several years, they are in most cases not taken into account for later VET training, so they waste a great amount of time being stuck in this system. Because of that circumstance, the City offers the “Hamburg VET model”⁶⁷ - some special preparation classes in which young people attain school based vocational training for one year. When they then find a VET placement in the dual system, this year is taken into account. If they do not find a placement, they can continue their supported school-based training and also finish their degree, but with no practical training in companies. In figure 4 the Hamburg model of the transition system between school and VET is shown.

Although the German transition system offers opportunities for young people with only lower secondary education to get access to the knowledge-based labour market later on, it is strongly criticised for only prolonging transition phases after which the young people do not have better opportunities than permanent precarious employment.⁶⁸ This phenomenon is called “preparation scheme careers”. Also these placements present very low youth unemployment rates for Germany which are in fact inaccurate because these preparation measures are neither real jobs nor do they lead to proper VET certificates.

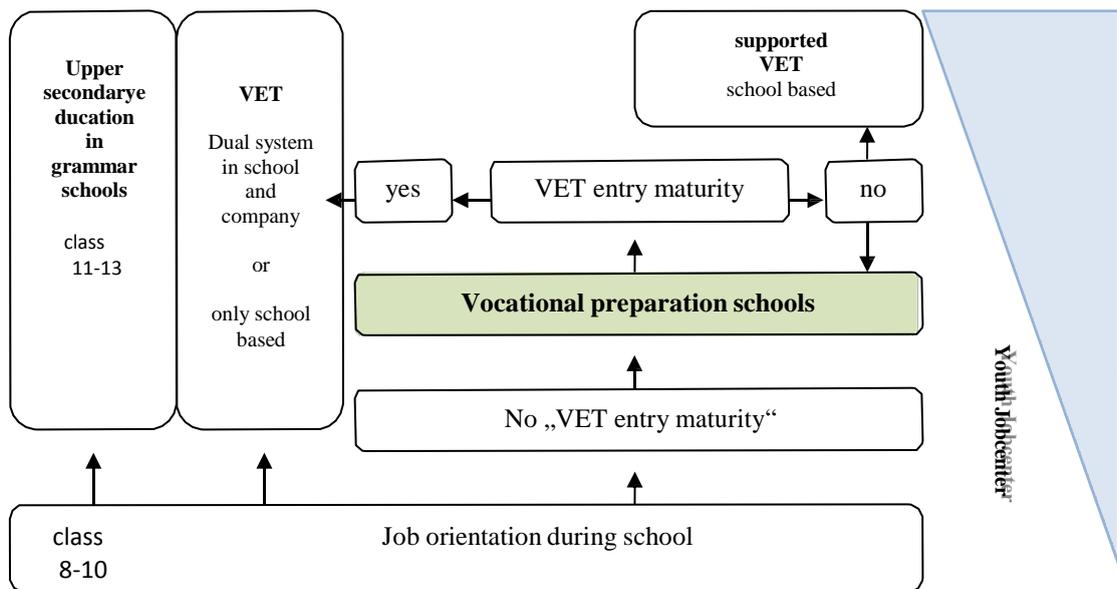


Figure 4: Hamburg transition system from school to VET

Situation of children with a migration background and refugees

The German school system structurally disadvantages children with a migration background: Whereas preschool and primary school are attended by nearly all pupils and the share of children with migration background lies at 24%^{69,70}, the system divides pupils in the transition to secondary school. The proportion

⁶⁷ Hamburger Ausbildungsmodell <http://www.hamburg.de/ham-hamburger-ausbildungsmodell/>

⁶⁸ Rothe/Tinter 2007, p.16 and Düker/Ley 2012

⁶⁹ Hamburger Schulstatistik 2011/2012

of children with migration background at the lower levelled *Neighbourhood schools* is remarkably higher (26%) than at the higher levelled gymnasium (12%). The highest concentration of children with migration background can be found at the schools for special needs with 31%. Of the 1,020 pupils who left school without any certificate in 2011, 36.2% had migration background. The share of people with migration background who left school with a lower secondary education is even higher (37.5%). The middle secondary education has a share of 28% migrants whereas the higher secondary education only has a share of 17% migrants.⁷¹ Of the people that passed vocational education and training (VET), the number of young people without German citizenship lies again at the average number of 12%. A remarkable number of pupils at the vocational preparation schools for pupils that are not qualified enough to start vocational education and training right away do not have the German citizenship (45%).⁷² These numbers show that young people with migration background are given fewer opportunities to reach higher education than children without migration background and are more likely to attend lower secondary education or even fail school. As a reaction to this problem, there exist special programs for migrants *with* and *without* secure resident permit status (Berufsvorbereitungsjahr-Migranten BVJ-M) in the transitional system. In 2006 the Senate of Hamburg started a *programme for the promotion of education and VET for young people with a migration background*.⁷³ It has two important strategies: cooperation between companies and schools aim to connect young people to the labour market and teachers with migration background themselves should act as role models and motivators. Between 2006 and 2009 already 2,000 pupils could be integrated into a VET by the cooperation.

Refugees with a tolerated status (and no secure prospect of long-term residency) have no access to work or education.⁷⁴ Only after one year of stay can they get access to education and training, enabled through the “Action Programme of the Federal Government for a contribution of employment migration to securing the skilled labour pool in Germany”. After four years of stay they are enabled to benefits via the “Federal Training grants”. If refugees can demonstrate that they have completed their regular school education or training in Germany, they are given a permanent residence status. After four years of stay, refugees gain the right to basic benefits at social benefit level and receive unrestricted access to the labour market. The problem with this system is that instead of starting to integrate young refugees into the society by giving them access to education and training right away they are put in a transition phase of inactivity, which beside the lack of resources like income and appropriate housing could lead to social exclusion and leaves them to their own without connection to the society. One important development has been the implementation of the European Community initiative EQUAL (2002-2007) which for the first time set up a range of education and employment tools for school and vocational support for refugees, asylum seekers and tolerated people. Under this programme and with the supportive funding of the Senate

⁷⁰ The share of children with migration background in the total pupil population of Hamburg lies at 21% and of young people without German citizenship at 12%.

⁷¹ Hamburger Schulstatistik 2011/2012, p.20

⁷² Hamburger Schulstatistik 2011/2012p. 24

⁷³ “Aktionsplan zur Bildung und Ausbildungsförderung junger Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund“

⁷⁴ All info from EduAsyl/Seukwa

the several networks have been established.⁷⁵ They integrate and connect different qualification initiatives of vocational training and work as subsystems at the interface between formal and non-formal programmes of then regular system. The programme was very successful and has been extended two times under different funding frameworks.

2.5. Power, democracy, citizenship and civil participation

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Hamburg has a two-tier political-administrative system combining functions of a federal state and a municipality: there is a city-wide government (“Senate”) and public administration (“Behörde”) and seven districts, each governed by a district council (“Bezirksrat”) and a district administration (“Bezirksamt”). Traditionally, Hamburg has been a social-democratic stronghold, with an exception in the period 2000 – 2011.

As regards public participation, apart from district and Senate level elections, a number of structures and channels should be mentioned that make for a rather particular and lively local political culture. At neighbourhood level, and as a result of urban regeneration schemes since the 1990s, in about 25-30 areas so-called neighbourhood councils have been established over recent years. Whilst they all have been initiated in the framework of publicly funded development programmes to ensure resident participation, each of them has developed a specific design as regards procedures, milieus that are being reached. All seem to be dominated, however, by adults, many of whom are pensioners, participation of youth is as seldom as participation of migrants.

Elements of direct democracy exist in form of local referenda at district level and at city-wide level. Often, this instrument is used by local interest groups to block a development, such as construction of motorways or buildings. In 2010, a referendum on the local school system was held that blocked a more far-reaching reform of the school system then has now been achieved.

Hamburg has a long history of charities and still today a very active scene of small and big trusts, including Germany’s oldest citizen’s initiative (Patriotische Gesellschaft from 1765) and a citizen trust (“Bürgerstiftung”) that supports projects for children and young people in deprived neighbourhoods.

In addition, and often in opposition, to the active established citizen’s initiatives, Hamburg also has an active scene of social movements, many of the united in the local Right-to-the-City network.

In 2011, the City Department for Urban Planning and Environment (BSU) established a “City Workshop” as an initiative to scout and develop new forms of citizen participation to be tested on matters of particular importance for the city as a whole, such as the development of the area south of the harbour, a new centre for the Altona district, or rainwater management.

A 2011 evaluation report on participation of people with a migration background found that despite much effort, most participation structures seem not to reach the migrant communities. Political parties have,

⁷⁵ http://www.fluchtort-hamburg.de/fileadmin/pdf/2012/FluchtortHamburgPLUS_Flyer_Nov2012_online.pdf

however, slowly managed to open and attract people with a migrant background. Nine of the 121 members of the local parliament have a migration background, at district levels their share varies between 0% (Wandsbek district) and 15.7% (Mitte district).⁷⁶

As regards participation for young people, a milestone decision was taken by the Senate in February 2013 when access to local elections and referenda was lowered from 18 to 16. A second important element that was introduced in 2010 was the obligation of district administration to consult children and young people on all plans and undertakings that are of concern for them (§ 33 district administration law, referred to as “participation paragraph”). Implementation of this paragraph, however, varies between districts, and it does not seem as this is promoted with too much enthusiasm.

⁷⁶ IfS (2011): Partizipation vor Ort, Berlin

3. Life for young people in the city

Hamburg is a socially divided city. On one side you have the rich areas, especially in the districts along the river Elbe to the west and around the inner city lake Alster. Here, the upper class enjoys a life style of golf, horse dressage and sailing. On the other side you have old working class areas and social housing estates with rather different pleasures. Some of these areas have by now, after decades of regeneration, a well functioning social infrastructure, some are even experiencing radical and rapid gentrification processes, but others are marginalised and long promised public investment has yet and again been delayed. In some high rise estates, there was a time in the 1990s/early 2000s where reports of “crash kids” and gang violence came up and became more frequent, but the situation seems to have calmed down today. But still, quality of life and career perspectives of young people depend very much on which neighbourhood of the city they live in. In some neighbourhoods about half of the young people live in households that depend on income support, resources and opportunities for culture, sport and leisure activities etc are scarce, deprivation being an everyday experience. With a reorganisation of youth services and schools, the local state tries to improve the situation, but the reforms are already criticised by youth organisations and social workers for being authoritarian (strengthening state institutions rather than NGOs) and half-hearted (budget driven rather than quality-oriented).

Young people with either or both a migration background and low qualification levels are particularly disadvantaged in the school system, vocational and educational training and at the labour market. Programmes to tackle discrimination and enhance their prospects were launched, following the wider activation approach in social and employment policy. The current Mayor of the city, Olaf Scholz of the Social Democratic Party, a former national Minister of Social Affairs and Employment (2007 - 2009), introduced a tougher tone vis à vis young people, including rigid sanctions in case of non-compliance to tasks that were fixed by their case manager at the Jobcentre, resulting in prolonging dependency of their families. If in need of benefits they cannot take individual decisions or live on their own until they are 25 years old. With the rigid sanction system, the ambivalence of the workfare approach is partly felt by young people. Whilst overall youth unemployment figures have dropped, and fewer persons are without education, training or employment, those who do not manage to access the systems, experience severe marginalisation, deprivation and exclusion.

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Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across
Europe

Cities in their national contexts

KRAKOW

Symptoms and causes of inequality affecting young people

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This report is part of Work Package 2 of the research project entitled “Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across Europe” (CITISPYCE). CITISPYCE has been devised against the back drop of research which shows the disproportionate impact of the global economic crisis on young people across Europe. This includes excessively high rates of youth unemployment (particularly amongst those who face multiple social, economic and cultural disadvantages) and threats to the social provision enjoyed by previous generations. CITISPYCE partners are working on a three year multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral programme to examine the current state of the art and ideas concerning social innovation against inequalities faced by young people, explore socially innovative practices being developed by and for young people in urban areas, and test the transferability of local models of innovative practice in order to develop new policy approaches. The CITISPYCE consortium covers ten European countries and is funded by the European Commission (FP7, Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities).



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1. The city – a presentation

Krakow is the capital city of Malopolskie Voivodship and the second largest city in Poland (after Warszawa), both in terms of its population and area. In 966, the city was first mentioned in written sources (Piekosiński, 1900). In 1320–1734, Krakow was home to the kings of Poland as well as the secular capital (Bujak 1999). The territorial development of Krakow after World War Two occurred mostly through the inclusion of neighbouring areas, particularly in 1951 of Nowa Huta, a workingmen's town, originally developed to provide housing for the large steel mill built from scratch (Mieziań 2004). Currently, the area of Krakow amounts to about 327 km². The city is divided into 18 districts.

According to Eurostat data, in 2012 the city had 758,400 inhabitants, while at the same time Malopolska was inhabited by 3 341,700 people. In Krakow, there are significantly more women than men; the gender ratio is about 114 to 100. According to Central Statistical Office Krakow is inhabited by 164,712 people aged 15–29, which constitutes 21.7% of the city's population (GUS, 2011). The official data concerning residency do not, however, reflect the true situation of the city, which ranks second to Warsaw as the largest academic centre in Poland (184,493 students in 2012), with the highest percentage of students per inhabitant (0.24) amongst all the large Polish cities.

Krakow is one of the richer Polish cities. According to Eurostat data, in 2007, its per capita GDP (PPP) amounted to 21,500 euro, which constituted above 150% of the national average.

Poland is a country with a small proportion of the population born outside its borders. This also applies to Malopolska, where, according to the general census, in 2011, there were fewer than 1% of the population born abroad. The largest ethnic minority in Malopolska is constituted by the Roma community, which, according to 2002 statistics, numbered 3,500 people (the largest community of all the other regions, or 17% of all Roma people in Poland). Since at least 2006 Malopolska has enjoyed a positive net internal migration index with population of the voivodship (Polish term for the are constituting NUTS 2 region)

rising by around 0,1% annually due to internal immigration. People aged 15-29 constitute around half of this figure.

Krakow, besides its status of an academic centre, is also perceived as a city with a rich cultural life and one of the main tourist destinations. The city boasts 41 museums and 13 theatres. The amount of tourist traffic is second only to Poland's capital city. According to Eurostat Urban Audit (2008), the total annual tourist overnight stays in Krakow amounted to 2,734,997.

Over recent years, Krakow has attracted companies from the business services sector (BPO, SSC). In 2012, in Krakow and its vicinity there were 65 outsourcing companies in operation employing about 26,000 people. Krakow constitutes the largest centre of this kind of companies in Poland, with 35% of all people employed in this sector in the country (Business in Malopolska, 2012). The mean age of people employed in outsourcing companies is quite low (28), and companies in this sector primarily employ women (70% of the workforce, *ibid.*).

On the basis of the definition of 'socially sensitive areas' contained in the Social Welfare Act of March 12, 2004, Krakow's authorities identified population groups requiring assistance and in 2007 adopted the Strategy for Solving Krakow's Social Problems for 2007–2013. The strategy identified four areas of support: 1. Social welfare (generally directed to people in financial difficulties), 2. Prevention and solutions to alcohol-related problems, 3. Support to disabled persons and 4. Prevention and countermeasures against juvenile delinquency. The strategy comprises a number of aspects geared at the support of individual development of children and young people, programmes to ensure attractive ways of spending free time, it includes mainly prevention and intervention (Strategia 2006).

Concerning geographical differentiation of such assistance, in 2010 the City Council adopted another document titled *Principles for the Rehabilitation of Multi-Family Housing blocks in the Area of Krakow Municipality* (Założenia 2010). Building on the analysis of six types of criteria – economic, social, environmental, technical, architectural, spatial and 'general' ones – 19 housing estates (in 12 separate areas) were selected for potential participation in the rehabilitation programme, of which nine were the primary targets of such intervention (Jeżak et al. 2011).

On the face of it, Krakow does not appear to have many social issues. As with all large cities, there are problems and these are mainly significant in their intensity in social, spatial and demographic terms. The data from a large cyclical study, the Social Diagnosis survey, carried out in 2011 allow for the calculation of the Gini coefficient for Krakow, which amounts to 0.36. The same index calculated for the entire country equalled 0.43. It appears thus that Krakow enjoys less inequality than Poland as a whole.

The social situation of Krakow (as well as Poland as a whole but to a greater extent) has to be viewed through a demographic lens. Polish fertility rate is dropping dramatically (from more than 2 children born per women in 1980's to 1,30 in 2011). This is due to many factors, one of the most pronounced being non-existent to bad demographic policies. The consequence is that, for example, the population of young Poles in Britain enjoys double the fertility rate of their domestic counterparts. This is due to many factors,

one of the most pronounced being non-existent to bad demographic policies. The consequence is that, for example, the population of young Poles in Britain enjoys double the fertility rate of their domestic counterparts. Experts argue whether the cause of that can be associated with the effects of democratic transition of the 1990-ties (showing that the same process can be observed in other post-socialist countries – Philipov, Kohler, 2001), or with relatively weak institutional support for families with children which seems to be more compelling line of argument (FT 2012). But whatever the cause it looks like Polish young people who live in the country are highly uncertain about the prospects of rising children. Nonetheless this fact creates a phenomenon known as the “demographic dividend” which creates some substantial, but quickly diminishing social and economic benefits for Poland, as well as Krakow. There is also a consistently negative rate of net migration (especially to the UK), which lowers the available supply of young workers, and in consequence, temporarily lowers unemployment figures (according to Eurostat data the share of people aged 15-29 among emigrants from Poland reached approximately 55% in 2008).

2. Inequality and the response to it

2.1. The economy and the labour market

Poland is a Central Eastern-European country with a population of approximately 38 million. Compared with other EU27 countries, Poland stands out in terms of its dynamic GDP growth: between 2004 (when Poland acceded to the EU) and 2012, the annual GDP growth totalled 4.3%, which was the second best result (behind Slovakia’s 4.6%), with the average annual growth rate for the period in EU27 reaching 1.2%. In this period Poland’s was the only economy in the entire EU without a decrease in GDP in any one year. In 2011, GDP per capita in PPS equalled 64% of the EU27 average.

Poland is the sixth largest labour market in EU27 with respect to the number of working people (15.6 million in 2012). In 2012, only 57.4% of the total workforce was employed in the services sector, 30.1% were in industry-related professions, while agriculture provided subsistence to as many as 12.5%.

The activity rate of young people in Malopolska is very low. In 2012, it was only 33.1% (M – 38.2%, F – 27.8%). These figures were only slightly lower than those for the whole of Poland. An explanation of such a low economic activity of young Malopolska residents is the fact that they devote most of their time to studying, both at the secondary and, especially, the tertiary level.¹ When studying, young people do not usually take up jobs (even part-time occupations) or even look for employment.² On one hand, this is related to lack of opportunity of young people finding gainful employment on the Polish labour market

¹ According to Eurostat, in 2009 average age when young people leaving formal education amounted in Poland to 22,3 years.

² Authors of the present report tentatively suggest that the activity rate in Krakow is actually higher than the figures for the entire region, since in recent years, university students (including full-time ones) have decided to combine studying with part-time or even with full-time employment and/or job search, which, in turn, should increase the activity rate. Such a development is possible thanks to the numerous companies operating in Krakow, which readily employ students (usually on the basis of freelance agreements that do not entail social insurance contributions).

(employers often offer them only unpaid ‘training’). On the other hand, it is due to the fact that young people in Poland tend to leave their families and become economically independent quite late in their lives. The level of analysed indicator is so low due to the shape of the obligatory education system in Poland which leaves a large part of young population outside the job market for relatively long period of time. Full-time school education is compulsory for children and young people aged 6–16, whereas part-time compulsory education (school or non-school) involves young people aged 16–18 (Eurydice, 2013). This is supported by data for narrower age bands available at the national level. In 2012, the activity rate among young Poles aged 15–19 was 7.2%, while in the 20–24 age it was 56.1%.

Surprisingly, the delayed entry of young people into Malopolska’s labour market, resulting from the extended period of education, appears to have no negative impact on their economic activity in subsequent years. The indicators for the 25–64 age band are higher than the national average. This regularity appears even more clearly in the data concerning Poles aged 25–29. In 2012, the total activity rate equalled 84.2% (91.6% M, 76.4% F).

Data concerning the employment rates of young people in Malopolska corroborates the previous diagnosis concerning their late entry into the labour market. The youth employment rate in Malopolska was only 24% (with clearly higher figures for men), which was slightly less than the average for Poland. The data embracing narrower age bands explain the reasons behind such low employment rates. In Poland, only 4.5% of young people aged 15–19 are employed due to compulsory education until age 18, while in the 20–24 age band it was 41.9%.

Apart from the reasons identified previously, other factors that influence the low employment rates should also be given due consideration. Undoubtedly, one of them consists in the approach of Polish employers who take advantage of the current economic slowdown and the large supply of university graduates in Poland, and offer them fixed-term contracts. In the Polish labour market, as many as 66% of working young people are employed on the basis of such contracts. For over one-half of them, this situation is undesirable and due to the lack of permanent job opportunities.

Fixed-term contracts are associated with less employment stability and quite often with poorer pay, which are the reasons why young people tend to devote their time exclusively to studying in the hope of improving their situation within several years. Additionally, in Poland young people very rarely decide to work part-time. The lack of available full-time jobs and the lack of interest in part-time jobs are the other reasons for the low employment rate of young people in Malopolska. Data on the older population (25–64) show that such a late-entry strategy is not associated with significant negative consequences. The employment rate in this age group in Malopolska is higher than the national average. This argument is supported by the employment rate for people aged 25–29. In 2012, it equalled 73.1% (81.2% M, 64.6% F).

Market research conducted in Malopolska in 2007 showed that the percentage of grey economy workers among people aged 18–24 equalled about 11%, but amongst those with at the most lower secondary

education was as high as 41% (Frączek, Laurisz 2007: 229). In the case of young people in Krakow, such unrecorded employment can be found primarily in catering and tourist services. Young men also tend to be employed in construction, while young women tend to supplement their incomes by baby-sitting and domestic help.

Undoubtedly, Krakow is one of best local labour markets in Poland. In terms of development opportunities for young people, this is a very favourable situation, because the unemployment rate is not as high as in other, smaller cities, in rural areas of Malopolska or nationwide. Since no data based on the LFS concerning unemployment rates are available in Krakow (either in general or for young people), we will quote registered unemployment figures.³ In December 2012, the registered unemployment rate in Krakow was only 5.9%, which was the 8th best result across Poland amongst all the 380 administrative districts.⁴ The statistics warrants the conclusion that the unemployment rate for young people in Krakow, based on the LFS, will be significantly lower than that for Malopolska (27.7 T, 24.9 M, 31.5 F) and Poland as a whole (26.5 T, 24.1 M, 30.0 F).

To elaborate further on the data concerning registered unemployment, it seems that Krakow is a labour market where unemployment of young people does not pose a serious problem. In 2012, people aged 18–24 constituted only 11.5% of those unemployed registered in Krakow, while respective figures for Malopolska totalled 24.6%, and for Poland – 19.9% (WUP 2013a: 50). At the time, the Municipal Labour Office in Krakow registered 2,753 persons aged below 25 (50% of whom were women). Only 5% of them were eligible for the unemployment benefit, while for 42% it was a successive (at least second) registration in the Labour Office (GUP 2013).

Further to the high unemployment rate of young people identified in Malopolska, it should be stressed that this is also related to simultaneously low vocational activity levels and employment in this age band. The data concerning the youth unemployment ratio show that the extent of unemployment in the entire population of young people in Poland is lower than the EU average.

When analysing long-term unemployment, one may notice that within the last 10 years the situation on the Polish labour market has definitely improved. In 2012, only 30.3% of unemployed young people (30.0% M, 30.7% F) had sought work for longer than 12 months (a decade before it was almost one-half of the unemployed population). It means that unemployed young people in Poland constitute a dynamic group – those who become unemployed tend to remain unemployed for a relatively short time, finding new (or first) jobs fairly quickly. This fact reduces the risk of negative long-term consequences of unemployment, which have a particularly strong impact on young people, such as diminishing the likelihood of finding a job, poverty, social marginalisation or exclusion. The analysis of Krakow's labour

³ In Poland, registered unemployment statistics are based on the number of unemployed people registered in poviats labour offices. Owing to methodological differences, registered unemployment data may differ from that obtained by the LFS (Labour Force Survey) with the former usually higher by several percentage points from the latter.

⁴ By way of comparison, the unemployment rate thus calculated for Malopolska was 11.5% and for Poland as a whole – 13.4%.

market indicates that long-term unemployment is even less pronounced than that at the level of Malopolska and Poland.⁵

Positive changes in the position of young people on the Polish labour market are also reflected in the evolution of the youth unemployment ratio. Inasmuch as in 2002 as many as 16.1% of all people aged 15–24 were unemployed (17.4% M, 14.8% F), 10 years later the ratio fell to 8.9% (9.3% M, 8.5% F). It must be noted, however, that this decrease was primarily due to the marked weakening of economic activity among young people in Poland at the time. On the other hand, when comparing the present situation with that in 2007, the youth unemployment ratio has markedly increased as a result of economic slowdown.

One of the most significant problems affecting young people on the Polish labour market is the quality of available contracts. There is a shockingly high percentage of young people employed on the basis of fixed-term contracts. In 2012, in Poland as many as 2/3 of all employed young people aged 15–24 had no permanent employment contracts (64.7% M, 69% F).⁶ In this respect, the Polish labour market is extremely unfavourable for young people, very much below European standards. This situation cannot be explained by the crisis and harder times for businesses, because very similar rates were noted both during the peak of prosperity in 2007 and in the crisis 2012. Although fixed-term contracts for young people who have only just entered the labour market can, and often do, help them to acquire valuable professional experience, permitting them to obtain in the future regular employment, to a large extent they mean poorer employment conditions in terms of stability and social security. The negative results of unstable employment are felt particularly strongly by young people with lower qualifications and skills.

Young people in Poland very rarely decide to undertake part-time employment, since in 2012 only 16.7% young people (12.6% M, 23.1% F) worked on a part-time basis. Part-time employment is usually an unconstrained decision made by Polish young workers, which is supported by the relatively low proportion of people working part-time due to their inability to find full-time employment. In 2012, this was the case with 26.1% of all those working on a part-time basis. The rate of involuntary part-time employment among young women in Poland (29.3%) is, however, significantly higher than that for young men (22.4%), which appears to suggest that the existing job offers are somewhat better matched to the expectations of young men.

Policy response

In terms of activation of young people on the Polish labour market, we should mention the Promotion of Employment and Labour Market Institutions Act of 20th April 2004. It specifically deals with young

⁵ Relatively good indicators of young people unemployment in Krakow can partially be explained by intense labour migrations. Polish youth, especially the one less educated, not being able to find a job in the country, took an advantage of the fact that Poland joined EU and thus EU labour markets openings. This way the unemployment has been partially “exported” from our country.

⁶ 56.3% of them (59.3% M, 52.2% F) are employed on the basis of fixed-term contracts because they are unable to find permanent jobs. This constitutes solid evidence for a high degree of mismatch existing on the Polish labour market (which is also the case with people aged 25–64).

people under 25 who are unemployed. People under 25 are offered additional forms of support which are not available to all the unemployed, such as internships. In Krakow, these activities fall under the responsibility of the Municipal Labour Office, which offers, among others, training courses, internships (opportunities to acquire hands-on skills), apprenticeships for adults and scholarships for those adults who decide to continue their education at post-primary or post-secondary level. An important element of support is also the promotion of entrepreneurship among young people by certain labour market instruments, such as grants to the unemployed who are planning to become self-employed, to establish or join a social cooperative. Additionally, young people over 18 are invited to consult Centres for Information and Career Planning based in regional labour offices (Poland 2012).

Important institutions supporting young people (especially from disadvantaged groups) are the Voluntary Labour Corps (VLC). The VLC is a state organisation functioning under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. It offers an educational model that combines school education and vocational training. While attending public elementary or grammar school, young people are trained in a particular profession or acquire occupational qualifications at basic vocational school level. VLC participants are paid for both work and study time (employers can have wages paid to the students refunded) (Poland, 2012). In Krakow, the VLC oversees the Centre of Education and Work for Young People (including Labour Club, Youth Job Centre, Mobile Centre for Vocational Information, Labour Corps, Local Labour Corps) and the Regional Centre for the Vocational Training of Young People.

From the vantage point of Krakow's young people and their present and future on the labour market, the actions undertaken by regional authorities are quite important. The framework of the Malopolska Voivodship Development Strategy for 2011–2020 includes a Strategic Programme – Intellectual Capital and the Labour Market. Thanks to the programme, the Malopolska young people can take advantage of the following measures:

- The Malopolska Talent Support Programme;
- Extended education centres for children and young people in the area of skills;
- Development programmes for schools geared at the modernisation of their vocational training and its adaptation to the needs of the regional labour market;
- Occupational guidance for school children;
- Employment support for young people.

In Malopolska since 2008, the above-mentioned measures directed to adults aged up to 25, catered for 102,000 people, including 19,000 people in 2012 alone. Furthermore, educational projects for school children were offered to 265,000 young people. People aged up to 25 are the preferred recipients of programmes and projects financed with public funds (the European Social Fund and the Labour Fund). Young people are assisted in finding employment, acquiring vocational experience and setting up business activity. In 2012, 10,000 people aged up to 25 took advantage of such support, with 51,000 since

2008. People aged up to 25 are eligible for preferential support offered by poviast labour offices. Since 2008, the labour agencies offered training to 51,000 people in this age band, including 9,000 in 2012. 65% of this group took advantage of the opportunity for vocational training. In 2012, Malopolska had 31 programmes financed with the Labour Fund underway, geared at vocational activation of people aged below 30 (WUP 2013a: 89-90).

The Social economy development programme, combating unemployment and vocational activation in the Krakow labour market adopted by the City Council in 2006 constitutes an example of synergistic actions undertaken by municipal authorities and the social economy sector whose beneficiaries also include young people. Krakow and Malopolska are considered by many researchers to be the capitals of Polish social economy. For a large number of social economy entities operating in the region (including social enterprises), young people constitute one of the most important recipients of activities (among others, those aimed at their inclusion in the labour market).

The organisational structure of Krakow's City Office (within the Department of Social Affairs) contains designated posts with responsibilities for young people, but none of their remits actually includes matters directly related to problems faced by young people on the labour market.

2.2. Welfare regimes

Poland is a postcommunist country and as such differs in terms of its welfare regime orientation from the "old" EU countries. It has been argued, that in spite of visible differences between eastern European countries in the structure and amount of welfare spending, they form a distinct "Post-communist European type" and as such cannot be clearly classified using Esping Andersen typology (Fenger 2007). That being said, we can describe Poland as a country with both moderate level of social spending on the one hand, and moderate inequality in various dimensions on the other.

2.2.1. Access to social income, social and health services

Social situation

The risk of poverty for young adults tends to be highest in regions where young adults can afford to live on their own, either with or without parental help. There is, however, an increasing proportion of young adults who continue to live in their parents' homes and are, therefore, less likely to be recorded 'at-risk-of-poverty,' since they share in their parent's income. (Golinowska 2007) This does not necessarily reflect their true situation, which may often be characterised by a lack of access to a decent income of their own.

The average age of young people leaving their parental in Poland is higher than the European average.- M-29.6%, F-28.4% (Eurostat 2009). It may result from the fact that young people often work on a fixed

term contracts, and are not eligible to meet the loan criteria. Cultural factors can also be of a crucial importance.

The general picture that emerges from the Eurostat data illustrates the contrasting tendencies in the level of social inclusion in Malopolska, still lower than the average in Poland. The at-risk-of-poverty-rate for the region has been rising steadily from 15.5 to 20.4. In the same period the index for the whole country is oscillating slightly below 18. The at risk-of-poverty-or-social-inclusion indicator shows positive tendency more or less in line with the one for Poland. It decreased by almost 20 (from almost 48 in 2005 to 28.6 in 2011) and is not very remote from the EU-27 average – 24.2. Severe material deprivation rate features similar trends and in 2011 it was lower than the average for Poland (10.7 and 13 respectively). Overall in the period 2005-2011 Malopolska region has noted the three-fold fall in the severe material deprivation rate.

The critical objective in counteracting the tendencies of social exclusion among the youth is the institutional support given to people brought up in families with alcoholic or other pathological problems. By the end of the first decade of this century, there were about a million young people being brought up in the families where alcohol addiction was present, dysfunctional, poorly educated and featuring a lot of social deficits (Jarosz, 2008). Each of those groups of young people is particularly susceptible to social exclusion, labour discrimination, alienation and social atrophy. The need to support such disadvantaged young people poses one of the most important challenges for public policies implemented in the big cities in Poland.

Policy response

Social assistance in Poland is regulated by the Law of 12th March 2004 on Social Assistance and is organised by units of central and local administration in cooperation with organisations such as foundations, associations, the Catholic Church, other churches, religious groups, employers and both natural and legal persons.

According to the legal provisions, social assistance is granted to people and families, particularly for the following reasons: poverty, those who are orphaned, homelessness, need protection of motherhood, unemployment, disability, prolonged illness, incompetence in childcare matters or in running a household, particularly in the case of incomplete and large families, alcoholism or drug addiction, difficulties in adjusting to life after discharge from prison, natural or ecological disasters.

The domination of cash benefits and the marginal role of social work as an effective instrument for social services workers have provoked debates on welfare dependency syndrome and its consequences for society. The system of social services is criticised for being expensive and inefficient while poverty is widespread and strongly connected with state budget crises (OECD 2012).

Investments in social infrastructure unleash the regional potential and prevent further growth of inequalities as well as contribute to social inclusion. They also translate directly to enhancement of social

cohesion by providing equal access to high quality services. It is, therefore, of crucial importance to ensure general accessibility to high quality public services, and hence allow both individual social groups and individuals to benefit, as well as limiting the scale of professional inactivity, counteracting exclusion from the labour market and accelerating the comeback to professional activity.

The main tendency of social policy reform in Poland seems to be devolution, with its main goal being to increase the involvement of local governments, communities and nongovernmental agencies in the design, delivery and evaluation of social welfare programmes. Key elements in devolution reform include local partnership of public and private agencies, community members and service users to combat social problems; and, effectiveness and efficiency of social services achieved by a process of market-type mechanisms, e.g. contracting. (Golinowska 2007)

Health care

The current health-care system was developed as a result of reforms that were conducted between 1989 and 2004. The National Health Fund (NFZ) was created in 2003. The NFZ has the primary not-for-profit task of providing access to publicly insured health-care services. The NFZ is fully responsible for needs assessment, and medical services, contracting and control. It operates 16 regional branches, which have some autonomy, as, for example, in the tendering process for health-care services. The NFZ also finances selected public-health programmes, prescription medicines in in care available to patients who are not bedridden, experimental programmes, rehabilitation and spa treatments, as well as long-term care. Since 2008, the list has been broadened to include certain specialised procedures, which were previously financed directly from the general government budget.

Improvement of the health care system is the area of key importance to the quality of life of the citizen. In recent years we can observe constant or slightly increased number of doctors in Malopolska, (from 219.9 in 2005 to 226.1 in 2010 – Eurostat 2012) Pomorskie, Slaskie and Mazowieckie, while in Wielkopolska the decrease is quite sharp. (from 176 to 151 respectively). This is probably due to a high regard for the competences of Polish doctors abroad who emigrate in search of a better pay. Dental care has remained at a similar low level in Polish voivodeships, even slightly decreased in Wielkopolskie and Dolnoslaskie, with Malopolska which has retained the number of dentists.(almost 40 per 100 thousand inhabitants in 2010, same as in 2006). It also needs to be added that the number of hospital beds per 100,000 inhabitants in Malopolska has steadily dropped in recent years by almost 100, from 973 in 2007, when it was surveyed first, to 894 in 2010.

The services delivered by the NFZ to the inhabitants of large cities seem to be meeting their medical needs. In Krakow the level of use of public health services is quite similar among young people as well as old people. The biggest difference between those two groups can be observed in Warsaw, where other channels of medical care service are used more frequently by young people – possibly paid for by the employer. Similar differences, although not that big, can be noticed in Poznan and Gdansk. (the author's analysis based on Social Diagnosis Survey).

Policy response

In order to improve the health-care system there is an urgent need to secure an adequate level of financing, better allocate resources and expand them as needed. It also requires the extension of the social insurance contribution base to earnings currently uncovered by the system. According to strategic documents, the most important issue is to ensure broader access and increase access to hospital resources hospital resources in a way which reduces waiting times, including by linking pay to this objective. The increase in health care access requires extension of dental services covered by public insurance, introduction of co-payments on medical services and a limit on out-of-pocket expenditure, by introducing a ceiling for such payments in terms of annual income (OECD 2012).

Controversial, but a measure of reform, is the promotion of the development of hospital management skills, including through linking remuneration to performance, with the planned “commercialisation” of hospitals, emphasising carefully the way that does not threaten equal access to care, especially across regions.

Policies in the health care system focus on improvement of accessibility and institutional capability, as well as on enhanced functioning of the health care system. The process deals with a change of the principles of organization and management in the health care system and the operation of entities involved in health care services. It is supported through investments improving the quality and competitiveness of health care services (i.a. modernization of health care institutions, purchase of state-of-the-art diagnostic and rehabilitation equipment).

2.2.2. Housing

In the 1990s Poland's traditionally low rents rose drastically when government subsidies for fuel, electricity, and housing maintenance ended. The long-term goal of housing reform was to let rents rise to market levels. A housing benefits programme was to help the poorest groups in society, and new rules were put in place for financing housing purchases. Rising rental and purchase prices, the new obstacles created for housing construction firms by competitive conditions, and the economic downturn that began in 1990 also contributed to this gap. To function efficiently, the housing industry also required more substantial investment in modern technologies, particularly in chronically wasteful areas such as cement production and building assembly.

On the basis of available data it can be concluded that the living area per person in major Polish cities is bigger than in large cities of Central Europe, apart from Bratislava, where such area is relatively huge, amounting to almost 30 m². Within Poland, Krakow ranks in the last place but the differences are not very big – in comparison to the leader of Polish ranking – Warsaw – it is a bit more than 3.5 m². It testifies to the fact that the size of apartments per person in highly urbanised areas are similar and does not influence the quality of life of their inhabitants (Urban Audit Cities, 2010).

In 2010 housing resources in Poland amounted to 13,4 mln of dwellings – 9,0 mln in cities/towns, 4,4 mln in rural areas. Five biggest cities (Warsaw, Lodz, Krakow, Poznan, Wroclaw – 18.9% of population) – include 22.2% of dwellings. The number of dwellings per 1,000 citizens: amounts to 327.6 - one of the lowest numbers in the EU. Social housing is about 10% of all housing resources in Poland – in comparison it is 33% in the Netherlands, 25% in Scotland, 24% in Denmark. Shortfall of social housing resources in Poland is estimated at 220-230,000 (Werner et. al. 2009) and the total shortfall of housing in Poland has been over 1.5 mln in 2002 (national census 2002).

Policy response

Housing in Poland is regulated by the following legislation: – Constitution of the Republic of Poland – art. 75 par. 1 provides that public authorities are required to conduct a policy in favour of "satisfying the housing needs of citizens, particularly combating homelessness, promoting the development of housing and supporting activities aimed at acquisition of own dwelling" – Act of 8th March 1990 on the Local Government – "satisfying the collective needs of the community should be the duty of the municipality. Among the tasks of local government, management of the municipal residential assets shall be included".

Further national legislation includes the Act of 26th October 1995 on supporting residential construction; – Act of 21st June 2001 on the protection of the rights of tenants, municipality housing resources and amending the Civil Code; – Act of 8th December 2006 on financial support for social housing creation, sheltered housing, and houses for the homeless; – Act of 8th September 2006 on financial support for families; in purchasing their own housing; – Act of 15th December 2000 on housing cooperatives and the Act of 24th June 1994 on premises ownership

Housing policy addresses two different tasks. The first one dealing with the development of a banking system capable of efficiently serving consumers and investors in the real estate market -Support to Finance. The second task comprises of pump-priming the sagging investment in the housing sector at a time of rapidly changing consumer preferences, increasing migration and social segregation - Support to Investment. Existing policy documents of the different housing policy departments give little guidance as to what was the basic policy concept during transition. Some are dominated by unrealistic plans to revive public housing production. In Poland process of support to investment enrolled only in slowly, old institutions such as co-operatives and public housing investors remained strong. In all reviewed countries, an almost complete communalization of public housing stock holdings, or a transfer to publicly owned corporations with the purpose of later privatization took place. New non-for-profit forms of investment succeeded only slowly, despite the relatively swift creation of a legal basis.

Activities in the area of housing aim at elimination of the current deficiencies in housing resources in the segment of premises accessible to people whose income is insufficient to meet their housing demands on their own.

2.2.3. Education and training

The crucial issue that impedes a full and reliable analysis of inequalities in the area of education of young people in Krakow is the lack of adequate indicators at the local level, i.e. gmina (commune) or powiat (district). For this reason, the available statistics were aggregated mainly at regional level and nationwide.

When compared with the other countries in Central Europe studied, the situation of Poland with respect to the early leavers from education and training is relatively favourable. The figure in 2012 was 5.7%, which means that Poland ranks 3rd amongst the relevant Central European countries (behind Slovenia – 4.4% and Czech Republic – 5.5%). At the same time, it is an alarming fact that Poland, apart from Czech Republic, Slovenia and Hungary, belongs to a group of only a few countries where this indicator in 2012 actually increased on 2007 (when it was 5%).

Characteristically, in all EU27 countries apart from Bulgaria, the percentage of people aged 18–24 with at most lower secondary education who are no longer in education or training is higher in the case of men than women. With respect to the indicator under discussion, the situation in Poland is not dissimilar from the overall EU trends. Moreover, when compared with the EU27 average in 2012 (T - 12.8%, W - 11%, M - 14.5%), the situation in Poland was better in all sections under scrutiny (T - 5.7%, W - 3.5%, M - 7.8%). The increase in this indicator, however, in 2007–2012 is disturbing. At the same time, the figure is higher for men than for women, which reflects a more general pan-European tendency.

As regards students (all ISCED levels) aged 17 at regional level as percentage of general population of corresponding age, the indicator for the Malopolskie Voivodship in 2011 amounted to above 96.3%, which placed the region only in 4th place among comparable Polish regions (behind Mazowieckie, Wielkopolskie and Slaskie, and ahead Pomorskie and Dolnoslaskie). Additionally, the statistics show a downward trend which is disturbing.

Taking into account the percentage of persons aged 18–24 who can be classified as NEETs, we can say that in 2012 in Malopolska the figure was more favourable than in 2002 (14.3% compared with 22.4%). This puts the region in a better situation than Dolnoslaskie, Pomorskie and Wielkopolskie voivodships, but behind Mazowieckie and Slaskie voivodships. It must be emphasised, however, that this data applies to regions, not just to their large capital cities within them. For this reason, it may be thought that these figures as applicable to Krakow are, in fact, lower. Still, a disturbing fact is the increase in the percentage of NEETs in 2012 from 2007. Even if the issue does not affect Krakow (which cannot be verified on the basis of analysed statistical data), the tendency is nevertheless noticeable even in Malopolska, which means that its capital will not remain unaffected.

Malopolska is characterised by a high and steadily increasing share of students in tertiary education as a percentage of the population aged 20–24 (ISCED 5-6). According to 2011 data it amounted to 91%, which means that Malopolska ranks second among the compared regions in Poland (behind Mazowieckie Voivodship with 118). The vast majority of people in the region have chosen the educational offer of its capital city – Krakow – which, apart from Warsaw, is considered to be the highest-ranking university

centre in Poland (according to GUS data, the share of students as a percentage of the population aged 20-24 in Krakow was 30.6% in 2012).

Policy response⁷

The Krakow Municipality and other locally-based institutions are actively involved in the integration of young people through education. Individual measures in this area include the following:

- Approximately 35 study centres run by local non-government and church-affiliated organisations provide services to about 2,000 young people. These study centres support families, children and young people with educational and behavioural problems.
- Educational campaigns aimed at the prevention of addictions among children and young people.
- Activities and services for young people entering the labour market on completion of education. In this respect, the most dynamic are university careers offices offering training and consultancy services to their students and graduates. These are also offered by the Krakow Centre for Information and Professional Career Planning operating as part of Municipal Labour Office. Other information centres offer vocational guidance to young people with a particular focus on secondary school students.

In terms of training available to young people and aimed at encouraging them to enter sectors where growth in demand is forecast (e.g. the green sector, the digital sector and the creative sector) training is mostly organised by the universities. One excellent initiative in this area is a project aimed at attracting women to study subjects that have traditionally been perceived as male-dominated. For example, the University of Science and Technology in Krakow has participated in a campaign titled 'Girls – go for polytechnics, girls – go for sciences!' As a result, the number of young women studying sciences in Poland has increased by 10,000 people in just three years. Another example of an initiative promoting new trends in education is the Doctus Scholarship programme offered to doctoral students. Likewise, in order to help develop opportunities in the creative sector, once a year Krakow offers ca. 15 scholarships for talented individuals to implement their projects in artistic sectors.

Malopolska's institutions of higher education (located primarily in Krakow) participate extensively in student and research staff exchange programmes. Students from Malopolska are involved primarily in the Erasmus programme. In the 2009/2010 academic year, 1,760 students from Malopolska went to study at other universities, which constitutes the second best result nationwide (behind Mazowieckie Voivodship with 2,619 students). Malopolska is also attractive for international students. In the 2008/2009 academic year, it was chosen by 867 students (2nd place behind Mazowieckie Voivodship with 1,170 students). In terms of participation of academic teachers in the programme, Malopolska was somewhat further behind. In the 2009/2010 academic year, there were 338 of them, which puts the region in the 3rd place behind Mazowieckie (496) and Dolnoslaskie (385) voivodships.

⁷ This part of the analysis draws extensively on the report (Active, 2011).

2.3. Power, democracy, citizenship and civil participation

Poland is a democracy with a government formed by the parliamentary majority, with direct elections to the bicameral Parliament, municipal elections (three levels: gminas/cities, poviats and regions; elections at the lowest, gmina, level include both members of legislatures and single persons as executives). Moreover, direct elections also apply to the President and to the European Parliament. The voting right is acquired at the age of 18. In Poland, many of the biggest cities comprise their own city counties (formally "cities with county rights" or "cities with powers of a district") – Krakow is one of them. It means, that in Krakow we have two tiers of local administration (gmina and powiat), which are integrated.

In Poland, there is an institution of public consultations both at the level of local and central governments, however, their practical implementation still leaves much to be desired (Wojciuk, ed. 2012).

The political and social participation of Poles is traditionally low even in comparison with the other 'new' European Union members and with countries that chose to transform their political systems in the 1990s. Researchers cannot identify structural or institutional reasons behind this state of affairs, hinting that it is difficult to identify the factors that should be changed in order to improve the situation. At the same time, they argue that voter turnout in political elections in Poland does not show the features of path-dependency (Czeńnik 2009).

Flash Eurobarometer (2011) shows quite a different picture. Results of the survey indicate that Poland boasts one of the highest proportions of people aged 18–30 who, within three years preceding the survey, voted in elections at the local, regional, national or EU levels from among all the EU countries (74.1%)

The survey results do not correspond, however, with the other sources describing the voting habits of Poles. Leaving aside the consistent and well-recognised tendency to overestimate the proportion of people voting in political elections by all the questionnaire surveys (CBOS 2011a)⁸, the people polled may have also included the parliamentary elections of 2007, which was characterised by exceptionally high turnout, also among young people. Data coming from the European Social Survey carried out in 2010 indicate that the turnout of young voters was really high and stood at about 63% (close to the EU average, but still not higher) (ESS 2010). The analysis carried out by the Centre for Public Opinion Research in 2011 (CBOS 2011a) shows that in the year of the last parliamentary elections (in 2011) significantly fewer young people actually voted nationwide (ca. 54% of young people aged 18–24), which demonstrates that the 2007 elections can really be treated as an exception.

When analysing the situation in Krakow, it must be remembered that it is one of the largest cities in Poland, where traditionally voter turnout is clearly higher than throughout the rest of the country (in the last parliamentary elections it was ca. 10 percentage points higher).

⁸ The data quoted below (from ESS) indicate that over 70% Poles voted in the elections of 2007, but the figures released by the State Election Commission indicate that the actual figure was 54%.

In general, the analysis of data concerning the involvement of people aged 18–30 in the elections does not indicate significant differences between Krakow and the remaining largest cities in Poland. As can be expected, the involvement of this age group in all the aspects surveyed is lower than the older age band and marginally exceeds 60% (Social Diagnosis 2009). Municipal elections tend to have similar participation rates among largest cities in Poland (Social Diagnosis 2011) In the 2007 elections, young voters from Krakow, apart from Wroclaw, noted the lowest turnout from among the cities selected for comparison (Warszawa, Gdansk, Wroclaw, Krakow, Poznan, Lodz). Both in the case of municipal and parliamentary elections, the turnout of young voters is lower than in the 31+ generation for all the cities analysed (Social Diagnosis 2011).

Civil Participation

The involvement of Poles in the activities of non-government organisations compares very unfavourably with other countries surveyed, regardless of their residence or age. According to Flash Eurobarometer (2011) only 15.8% of young people in Poland participate in organised voluntary activities (EU average is 24.2%).

According to the Social Diagnosis results, Krakow does not differ from the other large cities in Poland with respect to the involvement of young people in socio-political activities or even from other parts of the country. The analysis of the index developed on the basis of questions related to political and social involvement asked in the Social Diagnosis survey indicates that about 30% of young people remain uninvolved in any sort of activity, while above 70% show little involvement. It appears that these responses do not warrant conclusions regarding a high level of inequality in the area of socio-political activities, they rather testify to a general passivity in this dimension.

Previous analyses indicate, however, that the relatively lower civil participation index among young people is neither a new phenomenon nor a sign of the present times. A more accurate interpretation would suggest that in line with increasing age and experience, involvement in this field increases noticeably. In other words, no differences are perceived between the cohort studies, with the independent variable in this equation being the age of the person studied (KPRM 2011, pp. 281–282).

Policy response

Throughout Poland, numerous initiatives are regularly undertaken in order to combat social, political and cultural passivity, including many state-sponsored advertisements run before every election in order to boost participation. Involvement in social activities pursued by civic organisations is supported first of all through the instruments made available within the framework of the Operational Programme: Human Capital, which means that to a considerable extent they are supported by the EU.

In order to strengthen political participation, not only among young people, the city of Krakow started two projects: Krakow Talks aimed at the strengthening and facilitation of public consultations using the portal <http://www.dialogspoleczny.krakow.pl> and, starting next year, a pilot participatory budget scheme

in three of the city's districts. Residents of these districts will be able to decide how to spend 250,000 zloty (ca. 60,000 euro). 2011 saw the appointment of a Commission for Civic Dialogue entrusted with the task of involving more Krakow's residents in the political decision-making process.

Krakow initiates numerous activities in order to support the activities of the third-sector organisations. In 2012, the Krakow Public Benefit Activity Council was established. During the last several years a series of events have been organised, including the granting of the title of Philanthropist of Krakow 2010 or the organisation of a Non-government Organisation Day as part of the European Year of Volunteering.

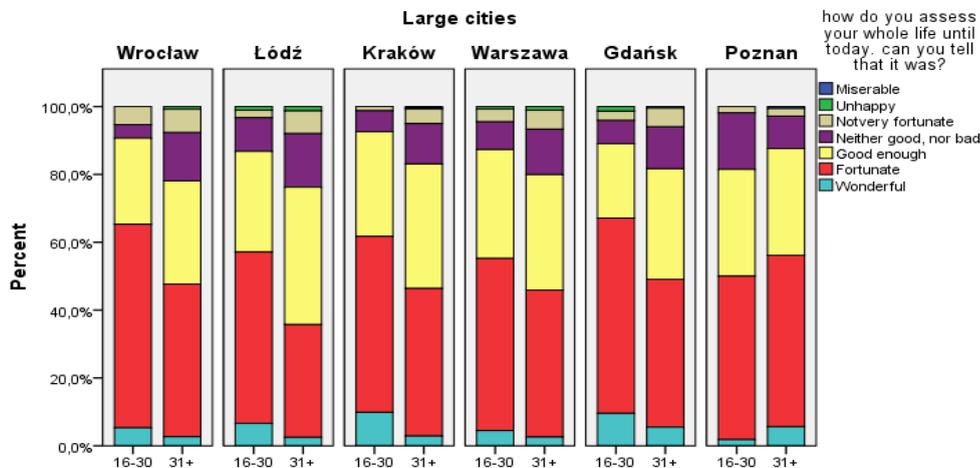
Among all the programmes targeting young people, the most important appears to be that established in 2009 called the Young Krakow (Młody Kraków) (<http://www.mlodziejz.info/>). It caters for students at all levels of education and comprises three components:

- a. The youth forum of civic education: a cycle of campaigns in support of social and civic involvement of young people in activities for the benefit of the local community and the environment.
- b. The children and young people support system: consists in, among other things, the organisation of extracurricular activities, the running of day support centres and the promotion of inexpensive and mass sports.
- c. The partnership for young people: consists in an exchange of information and skills with experts and involvement of external entities in organising activities for young people.

3. Life for young people in the city

A picture of Krakow that emerges from the analyses presented in the main body of the report is one of a city friendly to young people who are keen to settle there, primarily due to the rich educational and cultural life and an attractive labour market. Young residents of Krakow, in comparison with those of other large Polish cities, tend to be satisfied with life. Krakow has the largest share of young people choosing the highest score when asked: "How do you assess your whole life until today?" in 2011 (Fig. 3). The figure also shows that generally young people tend to be more satisfied with their lives than older part of the population (except in Poznan).

Fig. 3. Quality of life assessment in two age groups in largest Polish cities



Source: Authors' own analysis based on the Social Diagnosis survey.

As was noted previously, Krakow is the second largest academic centre in Poland whose universities earn high positions in domestic rankings (just as Krakow's secondary schools). It is a city where young people, particularly university students, make their presence distinctly felt, which is especially easy to notice when looking at passengers of municipal transport services during the academic year.

Processes occurring in the educational market and those related to the implementation of appropriate public policies targeted at young people in Krakow are affected both by positive and negative developments. The report shows that there is a decrease in the number of people who continue studying past the age of 17. At the same time we can see an increase in the number of people classified as NEETs.

As regards the competences of the analysed age groups in Krakow, it can be said that too few young people have a good command of foreign languages and too many people follow a liberal arts education. Experts from HR consultancy companies in Malopolska also mention the need to develop skills in the building of long-lasting relations, analytical thinking and independent problem solving (Sendrowicz 2013). Another problem is posed by the mismatch between the skills acquired by young people and the needs of the labour market. The results of the study commissioned by the Voivodship Labour Office (WUP 2013b) demonstrate a diminishing demand for graduates of the most popular university specialties such as economics and administration, social sciences, liberal arts and teaching. The same study shows that the Krakow labour market is still short of specialists in the following areas: analysts and operators of data systems, car diagnostics specialists, truck drivers, financial and book-keeping staff with a good command of foreign languages, computer programmers and website administrators, database designers and administrators, welders, applied computer science specialists and chefs.

The problems and weaknesses affecting the economic activity of young residents of Krakow reviewed in this report do not translate directly, however, into difficulties on the local labour market, a robustness which is possibly influenced by the internationally acknowledged image of the city as a BPO centre. In

consequence of the favourable educational and economic position of Krakow, the city boasts one of the lowest youth unemployment rates in Poland. Young people living in Krakow can be said to represent two fundamental approaches: most of the population remains economically inactive due to the long-lasting process of education, in turn, those few who do work, are employed mainly on the basis of fixed-term contracts and tend to work full time (in commerce, catering, tourist services and in BPO centres). Nevertheless, despite their late entry into the labour market (which, as a matter of fact, constitutes a characteristic feature of the entire labour market in Poland), young people in Krakow, once they turn 25, cope pretty well on the labour market. Conversations with young people in Krakow, however, reveal that lack of jobs seem not to be the problem for them but the cost of living, difficulty to acquire bank credit and absence of affordable housing (the cost of a standard flat in Krakow exceeds 100 mean gross wages).

In terms of the access to social welfare, Krakow positions itself in a quite favourable situation, although it features all the general problems that can be observed in urban areas, i.e. violence, alcoholism, drug-addiction and poverty. The institutional infrastructure assigned to counteract those phenomena carry out several social programmes aiming to alleviate the social problems. Nonetheless, despite funding from the European structural funds, the financial and human resource needs of those organisations have not been met yet. The problems of young people, especially coming from poorer and less educated families can pose a future threat to the city social situation, in particular in old urban areas. On the other hand, the report *Malopolskie Voivodship 2012* (UM, ROPS 2012) indicates the fairly good and improving situation of the poorest families in Krakow and in Malopolska. The poverty index and numbers of families eligible for social welfare in the entire voivodship have consistently decreased and now rank amongst the lowest nationwide (in 2011, 3.7% residents were eligible for social welfare in Krakow). It has to be noted though that even social workers privately suggest that this figure may be biased due to the fact that it includes mainly people who come to social assistance centres by themselves with too little institutional proactivity.

The fairly good situation of young people in Krakow does not translate into their socio-political involvement. Krakow does not compare favourably with other large cities in Poland with respect to voter turnout in parliamentary and municipal elections or activity in non-government organizations. There seems to be an emerging trend with some educated young people involved in a host of somewhat spontaneous activities using programming and social media to counteract social problems (during so-called hackathons in a similar manner to Code for America⁹), but the public perception of this movement is still low.

It can be seen that rather positive image of Krakow as a city friendly for young people obscures a significant disparity of development opportunities and does not always reveal problems and pathologies that affect all the age groups in all large cities. The Children of the Streets Report compiled in 2006 at the behest of the Urban Programme for Combating Juvenile Crime in Krakow (Sierocka, Drewniak 2006) showed that at that time in various places throughout Krakow (housing estates, supermarkets, the central

⁹ see e.g. <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Otwarta-Ma%C5%82opolska/206854136124515>

station and its vicinity, streets and squares associated with prostitution) were regularly attended by several hundred people aged 15–18 who were wandering there aimlessly for a long time. This phenomenon was related to an increase in the occurrence of negative phenomena such as theft, drug trafficking, cruelty to animals, prostitution, cases of assault and battery as well as contacts with criminal groups. The report associated the appearance of entertainment-seeking children in the streets with the lack of infrastructure for parties, games or other outdoor pursuits, with the low quality of social infrastructure (certain services were offered on payment of a fee or were contingent on the fulfilment of certain conditions) , with the low quality of social capital in housing estates (no public response to young people drinking alcohol and smoking tobacco, no restrictions on the sale of alcohol and cigarettes in local shops) and in social housing areas. It is not the case that “children of the street” are homeless or don’t attend school. They just spend significant portion of their time on the street which they treat as a way of socialising and getting things they need. Among the causes of becoming the child of the street poverty, alcoholism and domestic abuse are being quoted. According to the report being a child of the street reduces ones chances to attain educational success (higher drop-out rate) and consequently to cope well on the labour market.

Despite specifically naming young people in the Strategy for Solving Krakow’s Social Problems, the city does not sufficiently address the issue of NEETs (whose numbers have increased over the recent years), neither does it show a desirable commitment to supporting university graduates in their transition from education to employment. This state of affairs may have two explanations. First, most students do not ‘officially’ live in Krakow since they are not registered there. Secondly, issues related to higher education do not constitute the main remit of municipal authorities. This kind of situation, and the lack of coordination between different levels of authorities make some young groups targeted by no social policies.

One final remark. When assessing the situation of the city one cannot forget the consequences of the demographic dividend that produce many short term benefits, but can cripple the society in the long run in the following areas:

- labour market – relatively lower supply of younger workers now/lower demand for them in the longer run,
- social care – with changing patterns of fertility, the families with the higher number of children become scarcer causing the drop in the rate of dysfunctional units,
- health-care and pension system – higher amount of resources may be temporarily allocated to the care for old people – until the time when baby-boomers retire raising the dependency-ratio,
- schools – the indexes of number of children in a class or per teacher tend to look good, however in the long-term, many schools and jobs in education will be closed down – the school infrastructure had been built in the 1970’s to account for higher number of students.

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Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across
Europe

Cities in their national contexts

MALMÖ

Symptoms and causes of inequality affecting young people

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This report is part of Work Package 2 of the research project entitled “Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across Europe” (CITISPYCE). CITISPYCE has been devised against the back drop of research which shows the disproportionate impact of the global economic crisis on young people across Europe. This includes excessively high rates of youth unemployment (particularly amongst those who face multiple social, economic and cultural disadvantages) and threats to the social provision enjoyed by previous generations. CITISPYCE partners are working on a three year multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral programme to examine the current state of the art and ideas concerning social innovation against inequalities faced by young people, explore socially innovative practices being developed by and for young people in urban areas, and test the transferability of local models of innovative practice in order to develop new policy approaches. The CITISPYCE consortium covers ten European countries and is funded by the European Commission (FP7, Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities).

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1. Malmö – a presentation

Malmö, located in the south-west corner of Sweden in the Scania (Skåne) region, has 304,849 inhabitants (2012), which make it the third biggest city in Sweden. The notion of Malmö as a city dates back to the 12th century. At this time, large parts of southern Sweden, including Malmö, belonged to Denmark, which it did until 1658.

Malmö is a growing city. The population is calculated to increase to 324,500 by 2017 (Malmö stad, 2012). Malmö is situated on the border to Denmark, separated by the narrow strait of Öresund. Connecting Malmö with Denmark’s capital Copenhagen, the Öresund Bridge was inaugurated in 2000. Since then, the Öresund region has become of increased importance to Malmö. Often, Malmö and other cities in the Scania region are described as part of the Öresund region with a population of approximately 3.8 million (2011).

Since the late 18th century, the population of Malmö has been steadily growing - however with the exception of the 1980s and 90s, a period which often is described as a major regression in the history of Malmö. As industry peaked at the end of the 60s, Malmö had a population of 265,000. The industrial city of Malmö was relying on in particular ship-building and textiles. Work force immigration was at this time a significant factor of the population growth. But as a result of the crisis, many industries were shut down in the 70s and 80s, causing the city to lose much of its power of attraction. A lot of people chose to leave Malmö and settle in detached houses in residential areas outside of the municipality. During the period 1970-1984 Malmö lost more than 35,000 inhabitants, equivalent to a decrease with over 13% of the city's population. In the early 90s, the majority of the remaining industries closed down, causing a massive unemployment. Coinciding with this, the number of immigrants,¹ mainly refugees, increased dramatically, contributing to the population starting to increase again.

¹ In this report, the terms immigrants and foreign background will be used. The term immigrant refers to people born in another country than Sweden, while foreign background is defined as having two parents born in another country than Sweden.

During the last two decades, Malmö has undergone a profound change in its character. As the character of the industrial city faded, Malmö was forced to solve the situation. Since the mid-90s, the local government, led by social democrats, has paved the way for a transformation of Malmö to a post-industrial city. A number of key actions have been symbolic for the transformation, such as the building of the Öresund Bridge, the establishment of Malmö University and the transformation of former industry areas in the western parts of the harbour to areas of environmentally sustainable residential, commercial and office buildings. In this area the city's landmark Turning Torso stands 190 metres tall.

Population growth has been part of the transformation. The connection to Copenhagen and continuous high immigration has been important factors explaining the growth rate during the last 15 years. The transformation has also turned Malmö into a younger city, to some extent explained by the establishment of the University. 36,143 persons are between 16-24 years old, equivalent to 12% of the total population (2011). The young population sets a mark on the city's cultural life. In the city area around Möllevången in the central city, there is a vibrant music-, art- and nightlife. Many artists emerge from different parts of the city, expressing different genres and cultural backgrounds.

Indeed, Malmö is often described as a multi-cultural city, as 170 nationalities are represented in the population. During the 50s and 60s, workforce immigration was the main reason that the share of immigrants raised from 5% to 12%. From the 90s and on, the refugee and family reunification immigration has contributed to the current figures, where 30% of the population is born outside of Sweden (2012). This is one of the highest proportions of foreign born residents in Swedish cities. Furthermore, 10% are born in Sweden with both parents born in another country. It should be taken into account, however, that the second largest immigrant group comes from Denmark, which is just 30 km away over the Öresund Bridge. Other large immigrant groups come from Iraq, former Yugoslavia and Poland. Malmö also have the largest population of Roma in Sweden, around 8,000 persons.

When it comes to politics and administration, the system of Swedish government is divided into three administrative levels: the central state, the 20 regional counties (landsting) and the 290 local municipalities (kommuner). There is a high degree of decentralisation. Regional and local authorities are being granted considerable autonomy, although the national government provides the framework and structure for local government activities. The regions are responsible for, amongst other things, health care and public transport. The municipalities impose tax on private income and are legally bound to be in charge for several key institutions, such as social services, education and child care, elderly care, planning and building and environmental issues. An important part in the decentralisation of power is that the municipalities in Sweden have a planning monopoly, meaning that the municipality decides how land and water in the municipality should be planned.

Malmö is a municipality divided into five city areas. Each city area has a local parliament and self-government regarding certain areas such as social service and elderly care.

2. Inequality in the city and the response to it

Swedish society has historically been associated with certain values. Safety, equality and state-provided welfare are attributes that often comes up when the “Swedish model” is lifted in international discussions. In the post-industrial globalised society, however, the Swedish model is under reconstruction (Stigendal, 2011: 20).

The societal changes during the last decades have had consequences for the equality among young people. The development of the Swedish society has created different opportunities for different groups of young people, often coinciding in what part of the city they live. The opportunities coming with the transformation of Malmö have proven to be unevenly distributed. Malmö has become a segregated city, where people with different conditions are living separated from each other. Many young people are living in areas characterised by social exclusion.

2.1. Economy and labour market

In Sweden, employment policies, strategies and legislation are set out by the central governmental institutions. The Swedish national agency for employment, Arbetsförmedlingen, is the nation’s largest provider of jobs, also responsible for national programmes for labour market policies and collecting data on employment and unemployment. Arbetsförmedlingen is a state-controlled organisation, but local and regional actors might also pursue in actions and projects to deal with the unemployment in the local context. There is also a tradition among NGOs and private actors to work against unemployment among young people.

While unemployment rates in Sweden are not high in general and have been relatively stable during the last 10 years, the labour market has become gradually harder to enter for young people. This is evident when looking at the unemployment data for young people in Sweden. The relation between general unemployment and youth unemployment has moved from 1:1.5 to 1:2.5 during the time span 2003-2008 (Håkansson, 2011: 4). Recent statistics show that Swedish youth unemployment is above the European average, while the general unemployment is one of the lowest in the EU.

It’s hard to get a job for young people in Malmö

According to the EU statistics, the national youth unemployment rate (2011, age span 15-24) is around 23% (Eurofound, 2012: 5; European Commission, 2012: 21). Current national figures (March 2013), which use the age span 18-24, gives a rate of 17.4%. The difference could be explained by the difference in age span. In the European statistics, a large number of young people who attend primary or secondary education are included in the statistics, hence the larger figure.

In Malmö, unemployment rate figures (March 2013) show that 23.2% of the young people (18-24) in the workforce are unemployed. Looking at the total youth population (18-24), the unemployment ratio is 12.3%, compared to 10.9% for the national average (Malmö stad, 2013b: 21). The corresponding national

figure for young people in the age span 15-24 is 11.5%, according to the EU Youth Report. (European Commission, 2012: 22).

Compared to the other major cities in Sweden (Stockholm and Göteborg), youth unemployment seems to be greater in Malmö, regardless what statistics are used (see table 1 below). The larger figure in Malmö may, however, have a statistical explanation. A problem with the unemployment rate is that full-time students are often registered at Arbetsförmedlingen in order to get a part-time job. These full time students are consequently seen as part of the work force, although they have a full-time occupation. Another, more Malmö-specific, problem is that the figures do not include people working in other countries. Statistics show that 1,172 young people aged 16-24 worked full-time in Denmark in 2010 (Malmö stad, 2013b: 29). But according to the official statistics, they are not working at all. The statistical problems considered, the figure 23.2% might be exaggerated.

	Malmö	Sweden	Stockholm	Göteborg
Unemployment rate (18-24) (March 2013)	23.2	17.4	9.3	15.1
Unemployment ratio (18-24) (March 2013)	12.3	10.9	N/A	N/A
Employment rate (16-24) (2011)	34.2	43.9	42.3	40.5
NEETS (16-29) (2010)	15.6	11.1	10.1	10.9
Long-term rate,% of unemployed (18-24) (March 2013)	20.6	7.9	N/A	N/A

Table 1: Summary of youth unemployment rate, unemployment ratio, employment rate, share of NEETs and long term unemployment rate.

Nevertheless, there are inequalities in the labour market for young people. The local varieties in Malmö are high. The housing areas Herrgården and Sofielund have significantly higher figures than other parts of the city. There are also substantial inequalities connected to where you are born. 37.8% of young people in Malmö born abroad are unemployed. Moreover, a greater share of young men are unemployed, compared to young women (26.7% compared to 19.5%).

As a way of compensating the uncertainty in methods calculating the unemployment rate, the *employment rate* can be used as a supplemental method of comparison. According to the EU statistics, the national youth employment rate is slightly above 40% (Eurofound, 2012: 11). National statistics, which use a slightly narrower age span (16-24 compared to 15-24), gives an employment rate of 43.9%. Again, this higher figure could be explained by a smaller proportion of the population who likely are attending education. The employment rate among young people (16-24) in Malmö is 34.2% (2011), compared to 33.9% in 2008. The figures are lower than Stockholm (42.3%) and Göteborg (40.5%). Studies show, however, that the percentage should be around 5 units higher when taking the young people working in Denmark into account (Malmö stad, 2013b: 32). As in the case with unemployment rates, there is a great difference in employment rate between young people born in Sweden and born abroad. Young men (20-

24) born in Sweden have an employment rate of 54.2% (2010) while 29.1% of the young men born abroad are employed (Salonen, 2012: 29). For women, the difference between natives and immigrants is even larger.

The employment rate measure also has the problem of including people who are in education, and might or might not be looking for a job. Both the unemployment figures and the employment rate are heterogeneous measures that include many different types of situations for young people in Malmö. Furthermore, it does not tell us what kinds of employment the young people have. Nor does it take into account the work that that is done in the households, often by women (Stigendal, 2007). The data seems to be hard to rely on. During the last couple of years, authorities have started looking into the *NEET* (not in Employment, Education or Training) indicator, as it might provide a more accurate picture of the situation.

According to the EU statistics, the national figure of NEETs is 7.5% (Eurofound, 2012: 29; European Commission, 2012: 58). This is a bit lower than the figure of 11.1% in a recently published report on NEETs in Sweden (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2013). The larger figure in the Swedish report can again be explained by the different age span (16-29), compared to the age span of 15-24 used in the European reports. A younger population in the statistics means more people potentially in education. Also, the Swedish figures are from 2010, while the EU Youth Report uses a figure from 2011.

The Swedish report shows that 15.6% of all young people (16-29) in Malmö could be categorised as NEETs in 2010. In absolute numbers, this is equivalent to 10,305 young people in Malmö who do not go to school or have a job. The statistics also state that the share of NEETs in the age group 16-29 has increased from 14% in 2008. The share in Malmö is the highest of the three largest cities in Sweden (see table 1). The area of Herrgården in the area Rosengård in Malmö is extraordinary. Here, nearly every third person in the age group 16-29 is not in employment, education or training. Another area with a high share of NEETs is Sofielund, which is more centrally located in Malmö. Here, the share of NEETs accounts to at least 20%.

Those born abroad are overrepresented in the NEET category. The share among young people born abroad is 21.6%, compared to 8.8% of the young people born in Sweden (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2013: 26). Furthermore, almost one third

Local response: Jobb Malmö

The city of Malmö is running a number of activities and projects under the umbrella '*Jobb Malmö*'. Activities including mapping of competences, guidance, help with job search and assessment of work and vocational practice. All unemployed aged 18 or above are welcome to participate.

Other activities include *SEF UNGA*, a municipal 'employment agency' for young people, which offers young people employment within the city areas and administrations. *SEF UNGA* aims to give participants networks and working life experience. The jobs are 'real' in the sense that they give a normal wage. All young people employed in the project are also offered a tutor.

Jobb Först (job first) is a measure for young people 18-24 living in areas within the areas in the city's Area programme (see chapter 2.2.1). The programme gives young people possibilities for a 12 month employment in the city area where they live.

of the NEETs in Sweden have not reported to the unemployment office or any other institution. In Malmö, this corresponds to several thousand young people (Salonen, 2012). Thus, what they do for a living or how they get by is not known. As Arbetsförmedlingen states, there is a risk that *“this is a core of young people with very large establishment problems and with high probability risk of becoming permanently excluded from society”* (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2013: 6 (my translation)).

Short-term unemployment is increasing more than long-term

The long-term youth unemployment rate (18-24) in Malmö is 20.6%, compared to the national figure of below 10% in both the 18-24 age group used by Arbetsförmedlingen and the 15-24 age group used in the EU Youth Report (Malmö stad, 2013b: 26; European Commission, 2012: 23). Statistics show that the long-term unemployment rates have increased during the last ten years. The share of young people remaining in unemployment for longer periods is, however, relatively small.² The majority of unemployed young people are unemployed for shorter periods, which could be explained by an increase of temporary employments (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2013: 16).

56% of young women and 44% of the young men (16-24) in Sweden have temporary employment (2011), a small increase since 2007.³ In Malmö, the numbers are higher than the national average and higher than the figures in Stockholm and Göteborg.

Inequalities - caused by a changing labour market, welfare changes and/or structural discrimination?

The relatively high youth unemployment in Sweden is often argued to have its explanation in the fact that the labour market of today is in need of skilled and well-educated personnel and thus resistant to hire non-experienced work force. As in most western countries, the shift on the labour market from production to service has struck young people in particular. Many jobs in the current sectors demand a university degree and/or several years of experience. This has caused many of the previous entry-level jobs to disappear. Young people without a degree are left to low-qualified jobs within the service-sector. Another possible structural cause is the fact that Sweden has a system that makes the transition between education and work complicated, compared with for example Denmark and Germany where apprentice-systems integrated into the education has made the introduction to labour market easier (Håkansson, 2011).

Local Response: Sofielund Agency

Sofielund Agency is an NGO-driven project aimed at young unemployed people in the age of 16-29 in Malmö. The project offers a variety of activities that are formed according to each individual's needs and wishes. The project aims at, using theory and practical training, making it easier for young adults to establish themselves on the labour market or to begin studying. Young people can attend in three so called workshops; re-design/re-cycling, events and media.

The project is funded in part by the European Social Fund (ESF) and run by the NGO *IRUC*, in cooperation with the unemployment agency in Malmö and several other actors.

² Compared to older age groups and to EU-levels of long-term youth unemployment.

³ Own calculations based on data from ULF/SILC 2011, SCB AKU Quarter 4 2007). Note that the age span (16-24) differs from the one used in the Eurofound report (15-24).

Increase in shorter terms of youth unemployment could be explained by the increase of temporary employments. Young people are certainly facing uncertainty on the labour market. Many are jumping from one short, insecure employment to another, often managed by manpower companies. Thus, in between these jobs, they are having short terms of unemployment. As research has shown, the temporarily employed are the first ones who get unemployed in times of economic crisis (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2013: 26).

Entering the labour market seems to be especially hard for young people living in areas characterised by social exclusion, which are statistically marked by high unemployment. This coincides with a high share of immigrants, low education rate among parents and low results in schools. As some of the young people have immigrated to Sweden, the lack of language skills might make it harder to enter the labour market. Many also argue that the Swedish system of validating foreign education is failing.

Thus, structural and social obstacles hinder many young people from a foreign background from completing their education and thus qualifying for a job. Another possible cause is the lack of social relations. Many of the young people in socially excluded areas do not socialise with people who have a job. On the contrary, the norm is *not* having a job. Many young people leave school without any social relations to adults or people outside the sphere of close friends and family. Thus, participation in the civil society might be crucial for getting a job (Håkansson, 2011: 85). Statistics show that the citizens in socially excluded areas have a relatively high participation in NGOs. The thing that matters here, though, is what kind of organisations they are involved in. Are the NGOs homogenous, or do they offer the young people possibilities to meet with people other background, people who are representing the society, for example by having a job?

Local Response: Ung i Sommar

A problem for many school age young people is the lack of summer jobs. The city of Malmö is running the *Ung i Sommar* (Young in the summer) scheme, to which young people in Malmö can apply. The scheme is a 4-week summer internship for young people aged 16-19. The internship aims to provide an insight into the world of work, to give experience and is an opportunity to earn some money. During the internship, the participants get an allowance, however, not comparable with a regular wage.

2.2. Welfare regimes

The Swedish model of welfare has been labelled by Esping-Andersen (1999), in his division between three types of welfare regimes, as the Nordic or Social Democratic welfare regime. In this regime, the state is primarily responsible for providing economic security and welfare. The welfare regime is characterised as general, as benefits are not means tested, based on previous income and financed by taxes, not insurances.

Unemployment benefits are to a large extent funded by taxes, but administered primarily by trade unions, where membership has traditionally been high.⁴ To be eligible for unemployment benefit, you need to

⁴ In 1993, the proportion of trade union membership was 85 %. Since then it has been decreasing, and policy changes in 2006 caused a massive drop in membership rate between 2006 and 2008-. In 2011, the membership rate was around 70 %.

register at the National agency for employment, showing that you are willing to take a job. Most Swedes are members of an unemployment fund (A-kassa), to which a monthly fee is paid. Membership entitles to up to 80% of former salaries for the first 200 days of unemployment. There is, however, ceiling at 680 kronor (around EUR 70) per day. Thus, only people on relatively low incomes will receive 80% of their previous earnings. If you are not a member of any fund, or do not fulfill the conditions (being a member for a full year before becoming unemployed and working twelve months prior to applying for the benefit), you are entitled to a basic payment of 320 kronor (around EUR 35) per day. This is the case for many young people, coming from studies or short term employments.

Social allowance (försörjningsstöd) is available to persons who cannot support themselves, for example unemployed who are not eligible for unemployment benefits, study loans/benefits or other types of income or support. Social allowance should provide what is called 'a reasonable standard of living'. The assessment of social allowance is individualised and takes into account the circumstances of the specific case. Social allowance covers, among other things, the cost of food, clothing, health care, telephone and TV license. Persons eligible for social allowance can also receive support for housing costs, electricity, home insurance and union fees.

Support for sick leave and parental leave is also general and supplied by the state. Sick leave pay normally amounts to 80% of your salary. The employer pays for sick leave for the first two weeks. After 14 days of sickness, the Swedish social insurance agency (Försäkringskassan), pays the compensation instead of the employer, usually also around 80% of the total salary. Benefits can be applied for a maximum of 364 days during a 15-month period.

To conclude, the welfare system has traditionally been general and generous. Policy changes are, however, changing the Swedish welfare model. In the transition from an industry-based society, the state's role in providing welfare has become less dominant and is less efficient in providing welfare for people that are sick, unemployed or on parental leave (Malmö stad, 2013a: 102). We are seeing a shift from 'welfare' to 'workfare', from public sector to market driven collaboration and from understanding marginality in terms of institutional and structural causes to a focus on individualised problems and solutions (Stigendal, 2012). This chapter presents indicators on how these changes affect young people in the city of Malmö.

2.2.1. Access to social income

Material poverty? No. Increasing gaps? Yes.

Comparisons of the proportion of the population receiving social allowance are often used as an indicator of inequalities between and within cities. On a national level, the percentage of the Swedish population receiving social allowance is 4.7% (2010). Among young people (19-25) the proportion is double. Furthermore, the proportion is three times higher among young people born outside of Sweden than

young people born in Sweden (Ungdomsstyrelsen, 2012: 153). Malmö is one of the municipalities with the highest share of young people receiving social allowance.

In comparison with other EU-countries, Sweden is not a poor country. According to EU statistics, Sweden has amongst the lowest at-risk-of-poverty or exclusion rates, at risk-of-poverty rates and material poverty in the EU (European Commission, 2012: 48–51). The risk of poverty rate has, however, increased during the period 2005-2010, and the local differences are large. According to a recent study using data from Statistics Sweden, the at-risk-of-poverty rate in Malmö (18-64 years old) is 29% (2008), almost double the figure of the national average (Salonen, 2012: 46; European Commission, 2012: 48).

Statistics on young people’s economic situation in Malmö are sparse. There is no information on youth exclusion rate, at-risk-of-poverty-rate or material deprivation rate for young people in Malmö. However, it is likely that the figures for Malmö are significantly higher than the national figures presented in the EU Youth Report. This could also demonstrate by consulting another indicator: poverty rate among children. According to a recent study (Angelin et al., 2012), poverty⁵ rate among children (up to 18 years old) in

Malmö has during the last decade been 30-35%, compared to the national average of 11-15%. The precarious situation for children is also evident when consulting the figures in the EU Youth Report, which shows that the risk of poverty for Swedish children (up to 18) is over 30% (European Commission, 2012: 48).

Despite the lack of indicators, we can see that the inequalities are increasing. In recent reports, Statistics Sweden shows that the at-risk-of-poverty rate has increased with 50% during the period for a specific group; the unemployed (Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2012). A report from OECD shows that Sweden has the fastest growing social inequality in the OECD, as the difference between the average earner and those with the lowest incomes has increased the most since 1995. Sweden has dropped from first to fourteenth place on the list of countries with the least differences (OECD, 2013). At the same time, the median income after taxes has increased dramatically, to one of the highest in EU.

Local response: The area programme

With the aim to tackle the lack of social sustainability in Malmö, the city of Malmö is running five area-based programmes during 2010-2015. By influencing development in five selected areas, the programme seeks to enhance the social sustainability throughout Malmö. The aim is to create a programme wherein environmental, economic and social sustainability are mutually reinforcing.

Both physical and social changes are to be made within the programme: New train stations, densification of buildings, parks, streets, and gardens are planned in all areas. At the same time, social measures are to be made in the fields of schools and local communities. The areas will be seen as innovation areas; ideas will be created and raised, and a climate to attract new start-ups in business, culture and education will be encouraged. Participation and involvement of the people living in the areas is crucial as the programme seeks to strengthen citizens’ knowledge and ability to influence their lives, their income, their housing and their education.

⁵ Defined as children in households which incomes are not enough to pay for accommodation and basic living expenses, or have had occurrences of social allowance during the current year.

Looking at Malmö level, a sharp increase in income inequality between households in Malmö has emerged during the last decade. The poorest households have become poorer, in absolute numbers, while the most financially well-off households have improved considerably since the early 1990s. Malmö's richest decile has gone from being six times richer the poorest decile in 1990 to be twelve times richer in 2008. Thus, the poorest households have not benefited from the economic recovery. This increase in economic diversity, often described as an increase in *relative* income poverty, is larger in Malmö than in the rest of the country (Malmö stad, 2013a: 100).

To conclude, we don't know much about young people's economic situation in Malmö. Every third person of working age in Malmö is, however, at risk-of-poverty and child poverty is more than double the national average. At the same time, differences between people living in different parts of the city are increasing. Those who have jobs are doing well. But for those who are outside, who are not established in the labour market or on sick leave, the increases in relative income poverty have been dramatic during the last decade. The poorer in Malmö are getting poorer.

A question of politics?

What could be the reasons for the increase in inequality between people who work and people without a job? A possible explanation is the cuts in the welfare system, described earlier in this report. There are some recent policy changes in taxation policy during the last decade that can illustrate this. The increase in inequalities can be argued to coincide with the so called 'jobbskatteavdraget' (work-tax deduction), a tax deduction for all employed people. This priority is part of the current government's strategy of motivating people to work, the so called "work first principle", which implies that rather than providing social benefits, the government should strive to reduce unemployment so people can work and support themselves. The deduction has increased the disposable income for all people having a job, while it has not affected the economy of unemployed, sick or people not able to work for other reasons. Parts of the tax deduction have been financed by increases in the fees for the unemployment insurance funds, which has led to a political debate.

Indeed, this is a highly political question. The national government is acknowledging the increase in difference between those who work and those who are unemployed, meaning it should be seen as an incentive to put more effort in order to get employed, while the left wing party and Social Democrats, but also the governmental advisor Lars Calmfors of the Swedish Fiscal Policy Council, claim that the tax deduction is worsening the divides (Calmfors, 2011).

2.2.2. Housing

The large increase in Malmö's population during the last decades has put a strain on Malmö when it comes to city planning and the supply of housing, especially for young people. The EU Youth Report puts it well: "*Housing has a crucial significance for young people. Their progress towards full independence involves finding – and paying for – their own home*" (European Commission, 2012: 54).

The same report discusses the lack of dwellings in terms of different concepts of homelessness: inadequate housing, insecure housing, houselessness and rooflessness. While the latter two are not widespread problems for young people in Malmö, inadequate and insecure housing is very common among young people. Thus, the supply and conditions of housing in Malmö is a highly debated issue.

Housing policies in Sweden – an important part of the welfare regime

The majority of residences in Malmö consist of apartments in apartment blocks. Around 62% are apartments in apartment blocks and 38% detached houses (Boverket, 2007: 129). Of the apartments in apartment blocks, 62% is rental apartments. Condominiums (owning your apartment in an apartment block) are something that has just recently been implemented in Sweden and is slowly increasing its share in newly built apartment blocks. The remaining 37% of the housing structure in Malmö is so called 'bostadsrätter'. A bostadsrätt can be described as a share in a housing cooperative, where you buy the right to live in your apartment, but the apartment is owned by the cooperative, where you become a member. You can only own a share by living there and only members are allowed to live there. The members pay a monthly fee to cover costs for heating, maintenance and interests in the cooperative's loans. Sub-letting rules are restrictive.

The housing cooperative apartments have been one cornerstone in the housing policy of the Swedish welfare regime. Another cornerstone has been the public housing companies, which are mostly providing rental apartments. Since the 1930s, Swedish public housing companies, 'Allmännyttan', has been an important part in the Swedish welfare system (Boverket, 2008, Pagrotsky, 2010). Traditionally, the public housing companies in Sweden have been a way for municipalities to offer non-expensive housing available for the general public. Public housing has often been spread out in the city to counteract housing segregation. The public housing companies have also been setting the norm for the rent in general, meaning that private housing companies have been obliged to follow the annual increase in rents set out by the public housing companies.

Except for the task to provide dwellings, the public housing companies have had a tradition of working against social inequalities in projects and activities. Research (Grander and Stigendal, 2012) has shown that these projects and activities often make a difference for the inhabitants of the cities, especially in areas characterised by social exclusion. Since the share of people living in public housing companies is considerable, so is the potential for making a change. Around 15% of the total share of rental apartments in Malmö is owned by the public housing company MKB, owned by the city of Malmö (Boverket, 2008).

Public housing in Sweden is sometimes incorrectly labelled as social housing. Public housing in Sweden differs from social housing in other European countries since the apartments in the public housing are available for everyone, not only people with low income or other special needs. Recent changes in legislation are, however, forcing the public housing companies to act on the same conditions as private housing companies, endangering the existence of public housing as we know it. For example, the

legislation might make it harder for public housing companies to work against social inequalities, since all actions pursued by the companies since 2011 must result in economic profit.

Generally, the quality of housing in Sweden is high. During the most extensive growth of the public sector and welfare system, the so called ‘million dwellings programme’ was initiated in 1965. The government decided to build one million dwellings during the period 1965-1975, in order to solve the issue of the lack of apartments and to increase the quality of living in Sweden. Two thirds of the dwellings built were rental apartments built in large scale housing areas on previously unexploited land outside of the city centres, much like the French *banlieus* (see e.g. Wacquant, 2008). Examples of this are Husby in Stockholm and Rosengård in Malmö. Many of the houses were built by the public housing companies, who received generous subventions and benefits from the state. Thus, the million dwellings programme resulted in that the municipalities becoming the country’s largest provider of dwellings in apartment blocks (Boverket, 2008: 13). The strong position of the public housing companies is regarded as an important part of the general welfare model, since the apartments were available for the general public. Today, 25% of the Swedish population reside in apartments built in the million dwellings programme.

Many of the large-scale housing areas on the outskirts of the cities are today, however, associated with social exclusion. This can somewhat be explained by miscalculations in the establishment of the million dwellings programme. The high demand for apartments cooled off in the early 1970s, coinciding with economic stagnation. This led to vacancies in the newly built houses. Instead of the industry-workers the houses were built for, the apartments came to be populated by households that had had a hard time financially, as well as newly arrived immigrants and refugees. Another problem was that the areas were built according to a functionalist approach, the planning ideal of that time. The areas were mainly planned for sleeping and spending time with your family after work. Working, shopping and meeting people should be done in other parts of the city. This functional approach resulted in areas lacking opportunities for recreation and social activities. The unemployed people and newly arrived immigrants who ended up in the apartments did not have the possibility to do very much in the areas (Grander and Stigendal, 2012).

Thus, the million programme areas started – unintentionally – to develop into one of the edges of the currently segregated cities. The polarisation has continued, especially during the 1990s. The housing segregation has become stronger in the sense that the million programme dwellings primarily are occupied by people from a foreign background. Mobility patterns in the housing market emphasise the ethnical dimension of inequality and segregation. Households with native Swedish backgrounds tend to move to higher status areas, whereas people with immigrant backgrounds tend to move to other, equally low-status areas (Andersson et al., 2007).

A problem for young people in particular or a problem connected to social exclusion?

Since young people in general have limited economic resources, they are more limited in their possibilities in the housing market, and the supply is small. There is a lack of inexpensive and small rental

apartments. A recent study by the Tenants' Association on young people's housing situation in urban areas shows that 49% of young adults (20-27 years old) in Malmö and the nearby city of Lund live in their own dwelling. This is the lowest measured rate in history. Ten years ago, 64% had their own places to live. Furthermore, the proportion of young people living in insecure tenure (subletting, living with kin, friends or in private rented rooms) has raised from 23% in 2003 to 31% in 2013 (Hyresgästföreningen, 2013: 15f).

This situation is confirmed in the statistics regarding young people leaving the parental household. The mean age of young people (born 1985) in Malmö leaving the parental household is around 21.5 years old for women and 22.2 years old for men (Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2006: 24). The mean age has been steadily increasing compared to people born 1970.

While these figures may not be alarming for people from other parts of Europe, it is important to see the figures in a context. In Sweden, there is a tradition that young people move away from home and make their own living at a relatively young age. The welfare system is not based on the family living together in order to take care of elderly or young people. In this sense, the increasing proportion of young people living with their parents might be seen as a problem. Crowded households are a problem in many of the socially excluded areas, which make it hard for young people to find peace and quiet when doing homework.

When talking about the lack of apartments for young people, it should be said that being young is not the main reason for having trouble finding a place to live. Instead, it seems that the difficulties have to do with the increased inequality in general. With the current situation, where there is a lack of small apartments, especially among the public housing company's dwellings, young people have to rely on either money to buy a housing cooperative apartment or personal networks to increase the chances of getting a private rental apartment.⁶ Thus, the inequalities regarding income, employment and social networks also have influence on young people's possibilities to get an apartment.

To solve the problems, many actors argue for an increase of the share of small and inexpensive rental apartments by building new apartment blocks designated for young people or people with limited resources. This has, however, proven quite hard to do. Many argue that this is caused by regulations when it comes to producing houses to affordable prices, whether it is rental apartments or apartments in housing cooperatives. Many also argue that the regulations (Sweden's Planning and Building Act) cause a long building process, where it can take 5-10 years from a plan to a built house. The municipalities' planning monopoly definitely creates possibilities for democracy in the planning process and gives the cities tools to control the establishment of different housing tenures, thus decreasing segregation. It has, however, been criticised for being ineffective when it comes to solve quickly emerging lacks of dwellings in larger cities.

⁶ Some of the private companies are connected to the city's public queue-system. However, this is only compromising a small share of the total amount of rental apartments in the city.

2.2.3. Education and training

The Swedish school system consists of pre-school (one year normally at age six) and then nine years of compulsory school. After passing compulsory school you have the option to apply for upper secondary school. A reform in 2011 divided the upper secondary education into 12 vocational educations and six university preparatory programmes. After a university preparatory education, you can apply for university. If you have chosen a vocational programme, you still have the possibility to continue to higher education, for example by attending a Folk high school. A Folk high school is non-formal adult education which could be run by municipalities or NGOs. If you choose not to continue to upper secondary education or if you drop out of school at any stage, there is municipal adult education and/or supplementary education, which could pave the way for higher education.

Educational institutions in Sweden can be run by municipalities as well as private companies and NGOs. Private for-profit schools are competing with non-profit public (municipal) schools. The same legislation and inspection policy is applied. The Swedish system of independent schools, inaugurated in 1992, differ in several respects from other countries. Independent (private) schools are funded entirely by taxes. Each school, regardless what kind of body who runs it, gets a compensatory transfer voucher ('skolpeng') from the municipality. The voucher is a pre-determined amount of money per pupil and is supposed to cover costs for education, pupil care and food.

10% of the pupils in elementary education attend independent schools. At upper secondary level, the rate is 20%. Besides municipalities, the bodies owning and running education establishments range from small NGOs to large investment companies based in international tax havens. There are no restrictions on the profits or dividends to the owners of the school. An independent school is like any business. This means that a school can make a profit, which is paid directly to the owners. There is no obligation to re-invest the profits in the school. This kind of profit outtakes are prohibited in most other EU states. The system also makes it possible for an independent school to go bankrupt. Recently, one of the largest Swedish independent school providers, JB, owned by a Danish private-equity firm, went bankrupt. 14,500 pupils now wait to be placed in other schools. The teachers are losing their jobs.

With the reform that inaugurated the independent schools in 1992, parents also got the possibility to choose a school for their children. Instead of automatically being placed in the nearest public school, parents could now choose to place their children in a queue for any school, public or independent.

Indicators of a school system with difficulties

During recent years, alarms have been raised regarding the quality of the Swedish school system, which for a long time has been regarded as amongst the best in the world. The Swedish school system has dropped in international rankings. The score in the international PISA-evaluation, which ranks reading comprehension and mathematical skills among 15-year olds, have deteriorated. The share of students who do not meet basic reading comprehension has become larger (Skolverket, 2010). Furthermore, measurements and research show that the Swedish schools have become less equal. The results of the

pupils often correlate to the socio-economic status of the area the school is situated in, and many argue schools can not provide the same level of quality of education in all parts of the cities. Reports of disturbance and tough working conditions for teachers are more and more common among schools in socially excluded areas.

Results and grades among pupils are almost the only indicators on education being lifted in the national debate. An indicator often used in Sweden, although not used in the EU Youth Report, is the proportion of pupils qualifying for upper secondary school. In 2010/11 87.7% of all pupils in Sweden in year 9 qualified for secondary school. There are, however, large local differences between and in cities. For example, the share of pupils in Malmö's public schools qualifying for a vocational education at upper secondary school is 76.1%. The corresponding figure among independent schools is 93.4% (Malmö stad, 2013a). Furthermore, there is a wide gap between different areas. The highest proportion (nearly 90%) of pupils qualifying for a vocational education at upper secondary school is found in Limhamn-Bunkeflo, while the lowest share is found in Rosengård (40-50%). At a specific school in Rosengård, the rate of pupils with grades necessary to qualify for upper secondary school is 29% (Malmö stad, 2012b: 19).

Looking at the indicators asked for in the strategy report, the national rate of early leavers from education and training is around 8% (European Commission, 2012: 38). Unfortunately, this definition of early leavers is not used at local level. It is, however, likely that the rate for Malmö is considerably higher. A recent study shows that 45% of pupils in Malmö who begin upper secondary school leave education or need more time to complete the education (Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting, 2012: 32). This is noticeably higher than the national average of 31.7%. In fact, the Malmö rate is amongst the highest in Sweden. The rate is also increasing over time to a much greater extent in Malmö than the national average.⁷ This suggests that the rate of early leavers in Malmö would be much higher than the national rate, also when using the definition in the EU Youth Report.

Although the drop-out rate can be regarded as high, the Swedish school systems various ways of completing your education have led to the majority of Swedish youth completing at least upper secondary education. 79.7% of the young people in Malmö (20-24) have completed at least upper secondary education, according to the City of Malmö's statistics. This could be related to the national average slightly below 90%, stated in the EU Youth Report (European Commission, 2012: 36).

From the people's school to a neo-liberal schoolbook example?

The statistics tell us that there are problems related to the schools in Malmö. But it does not tell us why young people drop out of school, or why they do not succeed in getting the grades necessary. There is often a tendency to blame the young people attending these schools, or their parents. But it must be stated that the living conditions of people in a specific area do not only depend on the people living there, but on the systems as well as the results of the systems (Malmö stad, 2013a). The school is such a system.

⁷ My own calculations based on the appendixes to the report from Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting.

The basis of the Swedish school system is - according to the legislation – to create as equal education opportunities as possible. As the figures presented in this report show, this is clearly not the case. We are witnessing a rapid deterioration in the Swedish school system. We are seeing growing inequalities in and between schools. The possibilities for young people to succeed in school are highly dependent on which school they attend. This inequality between schools, often referred to as school segregation, is highly debated in Sweden. Many fear that school segregation leads to young people growing up in specific areas getting lesser possibilities for applying for future higher education, thus increasing the gaps in the cities further.

The independent school system and the freedom of choice between schools may explain why the differences between schools with good and poor outcomes have increased dramatically. Many pupils (or their parents) opt out of schools with a bad reputation since they fear that they risk getting poorer education and poorer life chances. There are also signs that the opportunity to choose has created a ‘white flight’, i.e. native Swedes leaving schools with higher rates than pupils from a foreign background, thus increasing the segregation in cities. Thus, a downward spiral is seen in schools in many areas marked by social exclusion. The consequences could be drastic. We have seen examples of the municipality shutting down schools with problems, forcing pupils to travel to other schools further away from their homes.

The large inequalities that are marking the Swedish education system are by many regarded as a consequence of the development of the school system; from an equal public school to one of the world’s most neo-liberal educational systems. As an article in *The Economist* states: “*When it comes to choice, Milton Friedman would be more at home in Stockholm than in Washington, DC*” (*The Economist*, 2013).

2.3. Power, democracy, citizenship

As previously mentioned, the system of government is divided into three administrative levels. The three levels contain both directly elected councils and administrative units. The municipal level, for example, consists of a directly elected city council (*kommunfullmäktige*) and a municipal executive board (*kommunstyrelse*), appointed by the city council. The executive board is managing the overall political work, by delegating power to a number of political committees. Municipal authorities perform the practical work at the local level. Malmö is led by a political coalition of Social Democrats, the left-wing party *Vänsterpartiet* and the green party *Miljöpartiet*, while the regional and national government is constituted by liberal-conservative coalitions.

In Sweden, elections are held in September every fourth year. To be able to vote in the elections for the national parliament you need to be a Swedish citizen. Citizenship is not required in order to vote in local and regional elections. Instead, you have to be a registered permanent resident of the county or municipality and have lived in Sweden for three consecutive years. According to the EU Youth Report, the participation rate of young people (15-30) in political elections in Sweden is above 90% (European Commission, 2012: 77). Lacking national statistics using the same definition, we have looked at the national average rate of participation among first time voters (18-22 years old) in Sweden. For Sweden, the rate was 79% in the national parliament elections in 2010 and 76% in 2006 (Ungdomsstyrelsen, 2012: 119). In Malmö, the corresponding rate was 70.2% in 2010 and 65.5% in 2006 (Malmö stad, 2010: 4f). Thus, Malmö has a significantly lower turn-out than the national average. Within Malmö, the local differences are large. The highest rate of participation can be found in the western parts of the city (around 80%) while the areas Herrgården and Sofielund have the lowest rates (around 60%) (Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2013).

Local response:

Demokratiambassadörerna (youth democracy ambassadors)

As the 2010 election came close, the city of Malmö hired 45 youth democracy ambassadors. For five months the ambassadors worked using outreach methods and met thousands of young Malmö residents. The evaluation of the project points to a substantial increase in the participation rate as well as increased possibilities for more general societal participation and involvement for young people in Malmö (Malmö stad, 2010a).

The strategy report is also asking for participation rates in NGO-based activities.⁸ According to the EU Youth Report, the national rate is around 11%. While I have not been able to find these figures for Malmö, we have found other indications that might be of interest. Statistics point to that young people's participation in the representative democracy's traditional channels of influence, such as party activities and union membership, is at historically low levels. For example, the proportion of Swedes who are members of a political party in Sweden has more than halved since the early 1980s; from 14% in 1980 to 5% in 2006 (Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2008: 35). Among young people (16-25) in Sweden, the rate was 3.5% in 2009. A lower share of young people with immigrant background and young people living in metropolitan areas are members of political parties. There is no data on political participation on the Malmö level, but the average rate in the larger cities (Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö) is 2.9% (Ungdomsstyrelsen, 2012: 129). Furthermore, the proportion of unionised young people (18-24) has fallen, from 45% in 2006 to 27% in 2008/09. In contradiction, political interest among young people is increasing. Around 50% of young people are interested in political questions, and more than 65% are interested in questions concerning society (Ungdomsstyrelsen, 2010).

⁸ "Self-reported participation in activities of a political organisation or political party or a local organisation aimed at improving their local community and/or local environment in the last 12 months. Age 15-30."

The civil sector has traditionally been an important part of the Swedish welfare model. In the national youth policy, NGOs have had an especially important two-fold role: to provide meaningful recreation and to be a ‘school of democracy’ (Ungdomsstyrelsen, 2012). Although fewer young people are active in political parties and trade unions, the overall participation in NGOs among young people (16-25) in Sweden (2009) is still high at 61% (Ungdomsstyrelsen, 2012: 218). Included in this rate is membership in all types of NGOs, including sports, trade unions, political parties and consumer associations. 47% of young people born abroad are members of an NGO (Ungdomsstyrelsen, 2010: 99).

3. Life for young people in the city

As we have shown, there are differences in young people’s living conditions. Many young people, but also their parents and others in their networks, are unemployed or have temporary positions. The relative poverty is increasing. School and housing segregation is increasing, further deepening the gaps in the city. At the same time, the welfare system is changing towards a more selective, restrictive and market-oriented system. All in all, the situation for young people in specific areas of the city seems to get worse over time. Many young people’s provision is unknown. There is a fear that this might lead to deepening long-term social exclusion for a relatively large group of young people.

But what is it like living in Malmö? How are the inequalities described in this report manifested in the everyday life of young people? To be able to tell, we would need to hear the voices of young people from different parts of the city. But the interesting stories are perhaps mostly told by the young people living in areas characterised by social exclusion. How are young people in the areas characterised by social exclusion leading their lives?

During earlier empirical studies of such an area, Hermodsdal, we have learned that many young people have a feeling of hopelessness and disbelief in society. Much of the hopelessness is related to a feeling of discrimination, which could be connected to the segregation of the city. Many young people we have met express a huge sense of futility, and most of them link their situation to their foreign background. The young people express mistrust in society, which they mean has given up on the parts of the city where they live. This goes for private and public employers who won’t employ people from their part of the city (*“I have no education. But even if I had one I would never get a job”*), police discriminating young people in the areas (*“Every day, I see their eyes, how they eye-ball me. Police treat us immigrants harder than Swedes”*) as well as the public authorities who are withdrawing public institutions such as shutting down schools, youth centres and other meeting places. The disbelief in the future has an effect on young people’s motivation to finish elementary studies and to apply for higher studies. Since there is doubt among young people that they will get a job, why should they try to get high grades or proceed with university studies?

The young people we have met also express an isolated existence where they do not move outside their residential area to any greater extent, and where their social network is restricted to friends in the area. Most of them don't even try to find a place to live in the central city. Firstly, they do not have the money to afford the rents, or to buy a place. Secondly, they have no contacts who could recommend them to private landlords. Thirdly, they are certain that the landlords won't let an apartment to a youngster from the suburbs. Instead, many of the young people are still living with their families in overcrowded apartments. As not very many activities or meeting places are offered, they have nowhere to hang out but the streets. The young people we have met state that the perceived discrimination creates an aversion against society and its representatives, such as politicians "*who makes decisions over our lives but never visits the areas*", but also police and firemen. The neglecting of young people in these areas could mean that a lot of competence among young people is not used. The risk is that their potential is channelled into more violent forms, such as torching cars and buildings or smashing windows. Scenes like this have been witnessed in Herrgården in Malmö in 2009, and just recently in Husby, a suburb of Stockholm.

Young people in the larger cities have gathered in grassroots organisations to oppose the developments of inequalities in the so called deprived areas. Examples of this are Megafonen in Husby or Pantrarna in Lindängen, Malmö. Young people in the organisations form a collective identity as being outsiders, being from the suburbs, claiming that the rest of society is discriminating against them, thus reinforcing segregation and structural racism. Although organised and searching contact with the established actors, these groups of young people are often looked upon with suspicion, and are not given much space in the serious debate.

Whilst the riots in Herrgården 2009 and Husby 2013 might have come as a surprise to many in other countries, still seeing Sweden as the Social Democratic welfare model creating equal opportunities, young people living in the areas are not surprised. Nor are researchers or the practitioner working at schools or other institutions in the areas. The riots could be regarded as symptoms and manifestations of young peoples' hopelessness when they are not getting a job, living on social allowance and are being seen as a burden for society. Discrimination on the labour market and in general from society is a structural problem that colours the everyday life for young people in Malmö. As the economic polarisation and welfare transformation continues, we should not be surprised if we see new riots in the cities.

A key for changing the situation, according to the young people we have met, is social relations. In order to re-establish the relations between young people in socially excluded areas and the society, meetings and mutual trust is needed. Young people are in need of meaningful relations with adults who listen, understand and care about what young people have to say. Shutting young people out of potential meeting places further decreases their opportunities for enlarged social networks, not only with friends, but also with adults and representatives from the society. These kinds of contacts can help getting a job or a place to live, or just feeling empowered by being listened to and taken seriously. Thus, structural changes of the societal systems as well as innovative ways of re-establishing a mutual trust between young people

characterised by social exclusion and the representatives of society are needed to change the development in Malmö.

Finally, this report might paint a somewhat dark picture of Malmö. There are definitely inequalities that strike young people in Malmö. At the same time, the young people have a lot of competences, potential and often show creativity in dealing with their own situation. There are also a large number of players in Malmö, in the public administration and within the civil society, that are combatting the causes and effects of inequalities together with young people. A lot of great things are happening. Malmö has to build on this potential.

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Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across
Europe

Cities in their national contexts

ROTTERDAM

Symptoms and causes of inequality affecting young people

Henk Spies and Suzanne Tan

This report is part of Work Package 2 of the research project entitled “Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across Europe” (CITISPYCE). CITISPYCE has been devised against the back drop of research which shows the disproportionate impact of the global economic crisis on young people across Europe. This includes excessively high rates of youth unemployment (particularly amongst those who face multiple social, economic and cultural disadvantages) and threats to the social provision enjoyed by previous generations. CITISPYCE partners are working on a three year multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral programme to examine the current state of the art and ideas concerning social innovation against inequalities faced by young people, explore socially innovative practices being developed by and for young people in urban areas, and test the transferability of local models of innovative practice in order to develop new policy approaches. The CITISPYCE consortium covers ten European countries and is funded by the European Commission (FP7, Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities).



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1. The city – a presentation

1.1. Introduction to the city

Rotterdam is a large harbour town in the Southwest of The Netherlands. It is the second largest city after Amsterdam. Around 1.2 million people live in the wider city-region, the most urbanised area in The Netherlands, of whom 616,528 (January 1st, 2013) live in the city of Rotterdam.

Rotterdam is part of the *Randstad*, a metropolitan area in the west of The Netherlands that comprises the four biggest cities, and is one of the most important urban areas in North-Western Europe. The Netherlands has almost 17 million inhabitants, of whom 7 million live in this metropolitan area.

Rotterdam is divided into two parts (north and south) by a river, the Nieuwe Maas, one of the rivers in the Rhine and Maas delta. This river is one of the connections between the harbour and the rest of Europe, especially the *Ruhrgebiet* in Germany.

The Rotterdam harbour is the largest and most important in Europe, and also one of the most important harbours in the world. The most important activities are container and bulk handling (especially oil).

The harbour and the city expanded rapidly since the 19th century, attracting workers from everywhere, but mostly from the poorer south of the Netherlands, that suffered from an agricultural crisis. Between 1880

and 1900 the city expanded from 160,000 inhabitants to 315,000, and by 1920 it had already grown to 500,000.

Many cheap houses were built on the south side (the left bank of the Nieuwe Maas), which is still the poorest part of the city. When the ministry of housing, spatial organisation and environment compiled a list in 2009 of the 20 ‘most problematic neighbourhoods’ in The Netherlands (for internal use), eight of the 20 neighbourhoods are in Rotterdam, the majority of them in the south part.

In the beginning of the Second World War the inner city was completely destroyed by a bombardment. The inner city was not rebuilt, but was newly developed by modern architects. The skyline nowadays consists mostly of skyscrapers, with very little reminder of the long history of the town.

Rotterdam is a working class city, not only by income, but also by mentality. A popular saying is that in Rotterdam the money is earned, and in Amsterdam it is spent – reflecting the rivalry between the two cities. Politically, the social-democratic party is traditionally the biggest party. Rotterdam was also one of the first cities where the populist parties that grew up in The Netherlands after 2000, became popular. The then leader of the national populist party LPF, Pim Fortuyn, who was murdered in 2002 for political reasons, was a resident of Rotterdam.

Culturally, Rotterdam is a modern city with mostly modern architecture, art museums, theatre and dance companies. It is also a culturally very diverse city, with as many as 173 different nationalities in 2009. Because of the harbour there has always been an influx of people from all over the world. There are, therefore, some specific minority groups in Rotterdam that are not found in other Dutch cities, e.g. a relatively large (but in absolute numbers still small) Cape Verdean community.

1.2. Demography

Rotterdam is a culturally diverse and relatively young city, and increasingly so. The tables below show the increase of the share of inhabitants of migrant descent in Rotterdam and The Netherlands, and the age structure of Rotterdam compared to The Netherlands.¹

¹ Most of our data are from the website of the Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (CBS): statline.cbs.nl/statweb. When ‘CBS’ is mentioned as a source we are referring to this data set. Publications by the CBS are referred to in the regular way.

Table 1: The Netherlands: increase of migrant population

	2005	2005	2012	2012
Indigenous	13,182,809	80.85%	13,236,155	79.12%
Non-western migrants ²	1,699,042	10.42%	1,937,651	11.58%
Western migrants	1,423,675	8.73%	1,556,542	9.30%
Total population	16,305,526	100%	16,730,348	100%

Data: CBS

The indigenous population in The Netherlands decreases with 1.73% between 2005 and 2012, whereas the migrant population from non-western origin increases with 1.16%, and from western origin with 0.57% (Table 1).

Table 2: Rotterdam: increase of migrant population

	2005	2005	2012	2012
Indigenous	327,730	54.95%	318,435	51.67%
Non-western migrants	20,9410	35.11%	227,762	36.96%
Western migrants	59,267	9.94%	70,063	11.37%
Total population Rotterdam	59,6407	100%	616,260	100%

Data: CBS

The indigenous population in Rotterdam decreased with 3.28% between 2005 and 2012 – almost twice as much as the national figures. The migrant population from non-western origin increases with 1.85%, and from western origin with 1.43% - more than twice as much as the national figures.

² In the definition of CBS people born abroad and people born in The Netherlands with at least one migrated parent are considered migrants. Sometimes a further distinction is made between non-western and western migrants. Non-western migrants come from Asia (including Turkey, but excluding Japan and the former colony of Indonesia), Africa and South America. Migrants from other countries are considered western migrants.

Table 3: Age structure Rotterdam and The Netherlands in percentages

	Rotterdam	Rotterdam	The Netherlands	The Netherlands
Age group in years	1-1-2005	1-1-2010	1-1-2005	1-1-2010
0-15	17.16	16.49	18.44	17.57
15-25	13.80	13.86	11.95	12.24
25-65	54.69	55.40	55.56	54.86
65 and older	14.35	14.24	14.02	15.11

Data: CBS and COS

Contrary to the rest of the country, Rotterdam has a relatively large population of 15-25 year olds – which is common for cities that attract students. It is also a city that, faster than the rest of the country, is becoming multicultural: in 2012, 48% of the population in Rotterdam is counted as migrant. The prognosis is that by 2017 almost half of the population will be of non-western origin (Bik, Ergun and Stolk, 2006).

2. Inequality in the city and the response to it

2.1. The welfare state in transition

The Dutch welfare state has been characterised as a ‘Rhineland model’, corporatist welfare state, or ‘polder model’, based on consensus building. Over the last 20 years the Dutch welfare state, however, has been in transition, partly guided by elements from Anglo-Saxon welfare state models, partly guided by populist sentiments, and partly through windows of opportunity arising from among others changing political constellations.

The most important issues on the welfare state agenda seem to have been:

- Too many people are on incapacity benefits and sick leave (1980s - 1990s). Work has become top-sport (something for the super-fit), and too many people are permanently excluded from the labour market;
- Health costs are continuously rising, and make up approximately half of the government budget. This rise cannot go on forever (1990s-2000s)
- The state has taken on too many responsibilities (2000s)
- The state is not very efficient in policy delivery because of bureaucracy (2000s)

WP2 Rotterdam

- An ageing population (1990s-2000s)
- Limited participation of women in work (1980s-1990s-2000s)
- Policy development is too top-down; development and implementation of policies are not integrated enough (2000s)
- There are real problems with integration of migrants (1990s-2000s)

‘Solutions’ that have been found, and that change the nature of the welfare state, include:

- Increasing the obligation to work. Almost all municipalities in The Netherlands have adopted a form of ‘work first’ policy, partly substituting the right to a benefit with the right to a (subsidised or created) job. This is especially true for young people.
- Limiting access to benefits and to social support, increasing the responsibility of people themselves and their social networks. There is more pressure on being or becoming self-reliant.
- Privatisation or marketization of services, as the private sector is seen as more efficient in delivering services than the public sector.
- Decentralisation of responsibilities and resources to local government, to fill the gap between policy development and policy implementation, and to counter silo-approaches. This started in the field of social assistance in 2004, and is currently broadened to three more policy areas: youth care, social support, and public health care. The aim is to facilitate the development of integrated approaches, close to the users of services, and to put policy development and implementation responsibility in the same (municipal) hand.
- Individualisation of rights and responsibilities, rather than at a household level, to promote women’s emancipation and labour market participation.
- Other developments, that may have less impact on the welfare state model as such, include a stronger focus on individual and integrated services (e.g. individual plan for clients in social assistance, ‘one family, one plan’ in youth care), a shift from cure to prevention, stimulating an inclusive economy in which less productive people can also participate (work as a ‘solution’ instead of a ‘problem’).
- Budget cuts as a response to the economic crisis may intensify the increased emphasis on a person’s own responsibility (i.e. intensify the developments outlined above). For example, the budget for reintegration activities aimed at bringing people (back) into employment, over a period of four years has been cut by approximately 60%, in Rotterdam from approximately 200 million euro in 2011 to 60 million in 2015. Most of the remaining budget will have to be spent on long-term commitments from previous policies, in other words: there is hardly any budget for new policies, while the number of social assistance clients is rapidly rising. The decentralisations

mentioned above are also accompanied by budget cuts of approximately 15% - legitimised by an envisaged better efficiency of an integrated local delivery.

Although it is probably too early to tell where these developments are taking the Dutch welfare state, it seems plausible to assume that privatisation, decentralisation and an increased emphasis on a person's own responsibility, are changing the welfare state as we know it. These reforms seem to have a two-sided effect, in that for many people their situation (eventually) improves, that they may be more self-sufficient than was assumed before, but at the expense of (further) marginalising effects for a minority – usually those who already had the worst starting position (Spies, 1996; 2001; forthcoming). Quantitative successes seem to go hand in hand with small-scale worsening of qualitative problems.

2.2. Economy, labour market and unemployment

2.2.1. Economy and employment

From the 19th century onward the harbour and the economic activity that comes with it, has been the most important source of employment in the region. Low-skilled work and low-skilled workers have traditionally dominated the labour market. Because of technological developments a lot of low-skilled work has disappeared, and still is disappearing. For example, where before 20-30 men were needed to off-load containers from a ship, it now takes only six, and the prospects are that through computerisation this will decrease even further to two to three people.

The fastest growing economic sectors in Rotterdam are the health care sector, education and the government sector. These are all dependent on government funding, so budget cuts may affect employment opportunities. Most job openings are found in the health care sector and through temporary work agencies; on a low-skilled level also in consumer services, on a middle to average skilled level also in transport and knowledge services, and on a high-skilled level also in knowledge services and the educational system (COS, 2011). Even though unemployment is currently high because of the economic crisis, in the next few years shortages on the labour market are expected as the baby boom generation will start leaving the labour market. Education, industry, construction and transport sectors will be most affected by this, leading to new job openings even though the sectors themselves are not growing or even shrinking. Employment has remained stable in Rotterdam, even though the economic crisis that started in 2008.

A recent study shows that flexibility on the labour market is increasing in The Netherlands. Of the economically active, fewer people have a permanent job. Employees with a flexible employment relationship and the self-employed form an increasing proportion of the working population.³ In 2001

³ Definitions: having a permanent jobs means the employee has a contract for a job of unlimited duration for a fixed number of hours per week. Having a flexible employment relationship or flexible contract means either having a contract for a limited period of time, or having a contract for a flexible amount of hours. The category 'self-employed' encompasses both entrepreneurs with personnel and enterprises consisting of one person.

76% of the economically active had a permanent job, in 2012 this was 69%. In the same period, the proportion of employees with a flexible contract increased from 12% to 16%, and the proportion of self-employed from 12% to 15%. Employees with a flexible contract become unemployed or inactive more often, and change job more often than employees in permanent jobs. They have less job security, they experience more pressure and little autonomy in the workplace. They risk more health issues and have fewer learning and development options (Van Galen e.a., 2013).

The Dutch are European champions when it comes to part-time work. In 2008 almost half of the working population worked part-time. Sweden follows in second place with 26% part-timers, other countries have even lower percentages. Three quarter of working women in The Netherlands work part-time, compared to half in other EU countries. Part-time work in The Netherlands is also quite common among young men (62%), mostly students who have a job on the side (Portegijs, 2009).

2.2.2. Unemployment

According to European statistics, the Dutch unemployment rate is 5.3% in 2012. This is low compared to other European countries. It is roughly half of the average of the EU-27 (10.5% in 2012). Although the unemployment rate may be low in a European perspective, it is a topic of great concern to the Dutch government. The unemployment rate - rose from 2.5% in 2001, to 5.3% in 2012 (Eurostat).⁴ In February 2013 it further increased to 6.2% (CBS).

Eurostat uses the ILO-definition of unemployment, which is based on the age category of people between 15-74.⁵ Dutch data are collected by the Central Bureau for the Statistics (CBS) which uses a different definition for unemployment: the number of people aged 15 to 64, who have no job or work less than 12 hours a week, who are actively searching for a job of 12 hours a week or more, and who are available for such a job. As people aged 65-74 are not included in unemployment data, Dutch statistics show higher rates than the European data on The Netherlands. To be able to dive deeper into the national and Rotterdam data, we need to use data from the Dutch Central Bureau for the Statistics.

⁴ Data from Eurostat: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/images/2/20/Unemployment_rate%2C_2001-2012_%28%25%29.png.

⁵ An unemployed person is defined by Eurostat, according to the guidelines of the International Labour Organization, as someone aged 15 to 74 without work during the reference week who is available to start work within the next two weeks and who has actively sought employment at some time during the last four weeks. The unemployment rate is the number of people unemployed as a percentage of the labour force.

Table 4. National unemployment rate (%) and economic growth (%) 1996 – 2012.

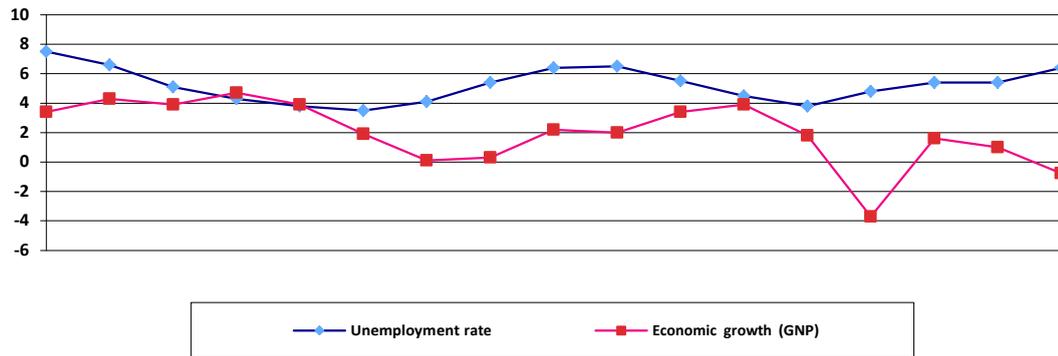


Figure: CBS

The economic crisis has led to increasing unemployment, although not as severe as expected at the beginning of the crisis. As a result of the continued crisis, however, and possibly a time-lag effect, unemployment has increased to 8.1% in April 2013 (CBS). Compared to the national average and to other big cities, Rotterdam has a high unemployment rate. In 2011 the average national unemployment rate was 5.4%, compared to 9.5% in Rotterdam, 8.3% in The Hague, 7.1% in Amsterdam, and 5.2% in Utrecht. Unemployment increased more among men than among women, probably because the economic crisis hit traditional male sectors (e.g. building industry) hardest.

The self-employed have been hit harder by the economic crisis than the employed, but do not show up in unemployment statistics. The self-employed face having less work (assignments), increasing competition and decreasing rates of pay because of this. Of households with an entrepreneur as breadwinner 12% are living below the poverty line, compared to 3% of households with an employed breadwinner. In 2011 the number of entrepreneurs living in poverty exceeded the number of poor people in employment for the first time (175,000 and 170,000 people respectively) (SCP/CBS, 2012).

Other forms of hidden unemployment are people in part time jobs who would like to work more hours, people who are in education because of the bad labour market, and graduated students who are getting working experience as a volunteer or trainee.

2.2.3. Youth unemployment

The youth unemployment rate in The Netherlands increased from 7.6% in 2011 to 9.5% in 2012. However, it is among the lowest in Europe, and much lower than the average unemployment rate of 22.8% of the EU-27 in 2012. (European Commission, 2012). The youth unemployment ratio, i.e. the share of unemployed among the population aged 15-24, increased from 5.3% in 2011 to 6.6% in 2012, while the EU-27 average in 2012 was 9.7% (European Commission, 2012).

Youth unemployment rates are generally much higher than unemployment rates for all ages. This also applies for The Netherlands. In 2012 youth unemployment is 1.8 times higher as overall unemployment (9.7% versus 5.3%).

In the Rotterdam region, youth unemployment is somewhat above the national average from 2010 onwards – the economic crisis has affected young people in Rotterdam more than in other regions (UWV/SBB, 2013).

A low educational level increases the chances of becoming and remaining unemployed. Two third of unemployed young people do not have a starting qualification (i.e. two years of vocational training on top of secondary education). In Rotterdam in 2008 this percentage was 89% of those on social assistance.

Table 5: Unemployed youth aged 15-23 years in the Netherlands and Rotterdam by sex

	The Netherlands			Rotterdam		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
2007	23,550	11,310	12,230	1,050	410	640
2008	16,900	8,170	8,703	880	380	500
2009	17,650	9,490	8,160	840	440	400
2010	27,940	16,440	11,500	1,600	910	690
2011	24,260	14,360	9,910	1,750	1,050	700
2012	23,980	13,980	10,000	1,880	1,070	800

Data: CBS Jeugdmonitor⁶

Table 5 shows that between 2007 and 2009 the number of unemployed young people aged 15-23 in The Netherlands decreased substantially, and strongly increased in 2010 due to the economic crisis. After 2010 numbers decreased again until the amount of unemployed youth in 2012 reached roughly the same level as in 2007. In Rotterdam we see a more modest drop of unemployment numbers between 2007 and 2009, and a much larger increase (doubling) of youth unemployment compared to The Netherlands in 2010. After 2010 unemployment further increases while in the Netherlands as a whole numbers decrease.

When we look at the division between the sexes, we see that young men are hit much harder by the economic crisis than young women, and this effect is even stronger in Rotterdam. Before the crisis more young women than men are unemployed and in 2009 this turns around: men are roughly 1.5 times more often unemployed than women.

⁶ The Central Bureau for the Statistics has a separate dataset on youth called the CBS Jeugdmonitor. This dataset is available at: jeugdstatline.cbs.nl. When 'CBS Jeugdmonitor' is mentioned as a source, we are referring to this data set.

Table 6: Unemployed youth aged 15-23 years in the Netherlands and Rotterdam by origin

	The Netherlands			Rotterdam		
	Total	Indigenous	Migrant	Total	Indigenous	Migrant
2007	23,550	14,410	9,140	1,050	300	750
2008	16,900	9,770	7,130	880	190	690
2009	17,650	10,410	7,230	840	180	660
2010	27,940	17,430	10,390	1,600	400	1,170
2011	24,260	14,510	9,410	1,750	410	1,310
2012	23,980	14,750	8,870	1,880	410	1,410

Data: CBS Jeugdmonitor

When we look at origin (table 6), we see for The Netherlands as a whole that unemployment decreased much more among indigenous Dutch young people between 2007 and 2009, but also increased more in the period after 2009. The division between unemployed young people of indigenous and migrant origin remains roughly the same though when data of 2007 and 2012 are compared. The ethnic composition of youth in The Netherlands aged 15-23 did not change in this period, nor did it in Rotterdam. In Rotterdam, however, much more young people from migrant origin became unemployed between 2007 and 2012: of the extra 830 people that become unemployed in this period, 110 are indigenous and 660 are of migrant origin, so six sevenths of the increase can be contributed to migrant youth. In contrast with the rest of The Netherlands, in Rotterdam young migrants were hit much harder by the economic crisis – on top of already high unemployment among young migrants. Of the 1,880 unemployed young people in Rotterdam in 2012, 410 persons are indigenous, 120 are western migrants, and 1,280 non-western.

Unemployed people are generally less healthy than employed people. A survey of the Rotterdam public health department in 2003 showed that unemployed people had lower scores on all health aspects, ranging from physical functioning to bodily pain, mental health, vitality, role limitations for emotional or physical reasons (Gezondheidsonderzoek 2003, GGD Rotterdam). A study by Schuring et al (2011) showed that for unemployed people a better health increases the likelihood of finding employment, and that health improves in all aspects for re-employed people.

Long-term unemployment is rising among young unemployed in the Rotterdam region. While short-term unemployment (less than 6 months) increased only slightly between 2011 and 2012, longer-term unemployment (6-12 months) increased with 25%, and long-term unemployment (>12 months) increased with 21%. Long-term unemployment in itself can limit chances on the labour market.

2.2.4. Labour market paradox

Relatively high youth unemployment that is increasingly becoming long-term unemployment, and a vast amount of job opportunities emerging in a few years because of the ageing work force, create a labour market paradox in Rotterdam (and the region). The challenge is, somewhat cynically, to keep the current unemployed fit enough so that they will be able to fill the upcoming vacancies.

2.3. Access to social income, social and health services

2.3.1. Social assistance and social security

One in five people in Rotterdam receives an incapacity, unemployment or social assistance benefit. In the other big cities the percentage of benefit recipients is lower. Nationally this percentage is 16%. The mean income in Rotterdam is 19,600 euro per household per year, which is lower than the national average of 21,600 euro and also lower than in the other big cities.

Social security in The Netherlands consists of employee insurance and minimum income provisions by the state. The most important benefits are currently WW (unemployment insurance for employees), WIA (work incapacity insurance for employees), and WWB (general minimum income provision). A right to WW exists if one has worked in 26 of the last 36 weeks. This level amounts to 70% of the last wage for a period of 3 months minimum and 38 months maximum, depending on one's work history. A right to WIA exists if one's earning capacity has decreased at least 35% due to medical reasons. The level amounts to 70% of the last wage (75% if permanently work disabled). The employer continues to pay for two years, with optional private insurance for this risk. The WWB is a last resort for citizens with insufficient income, no rights to other benefits and no property or fortune. For individuals the level amounts to 50% (661 euro) of the minimum wage plus a housing cost allowance of a maximum of 20% (264 euro). Couples receive 100% of the minimum wage (1322 euro), single parents 70%. For young people aged 18 – 20 years old the amounts are lower: 228 euro for individuals, 457 euro for married couples, 493 euro for single parents, 721 for married couples with children.

Over the years, entitlement for employee insurance (unemployment and incapacity) has been tightened and the duration of unemployment insurance benefits has been shortened. Restricting access to employee insurance has not led to a (relative) rise in social assistance claimants (Table 7). The relative importance of social assistance compared to insurance has remained stable. The number of people on social assistance has dropped even faster between 2000 and 2008 than the number of people on unemployment benefit. Activation policies are seen as an important explanation for this. The shift in the relative importance of unemployment benefit and social assistance in 2011 can be interpreted as a result of growing unemployment resulting from the economic crisis. The strong increase of the importance of unemployment benefit will probably lead to a further increase of the importance of social assistance, as

the economic crisis continues and unemployed people reach the time limit of their unemployment insurance (Spies and Van de Vrie, forthcoming).

Table 7: Division of insurance and social assistance in 2000, 2008 and 2011

	ABW/WWB	WW	WAO/WIA	Total
2000	23.6%	12.6%	63.8%	1,499,970 (100%)
2008	23.6%	13.8%	62.7%	1,241,200 (100%)
2011	24.5%	18.6%	56.6%	1,451,000 (100%)

Data: CBS

Social assistance for young people in many cases may take the form of a (created or subsidised) job and/or training offer rather than a benefit. Recently a four week waiting period has been introduced for young people. When becoming unemployed, they have actively to look for work for four weeks before they can claim a benefit, which – if granted – will also cover these first four weeks. From 2009-2012 there was a special social assistance act for young people under 27 years of age, granting them the right and obligation to an activation offer rather than to a benefit (activation meaning the person gets help to become active on the labour market). If they do not have a starting qualification (two years of vocational training) the aim is to get them back to school. Other activation offers can include subsidised, created or voluntary work, training and education, or combinations of these.

2.3.2. Healthcare and youth (health) care

Health services in the Netherlands are covered by private insurance. All citizens are obliged to have a more or less fixed priced basic health insurance. Children are insured for free until the age of 18. People with a lower income are entitled to a tax-credit based on their income, to be able to pay for their health insurance. This counts for young adults as well, whether they are employed, unemployed, studying or on benefits. Health care covered by the state consists of long-term care for the elderly, chronically ill and handicapped: health care that cannot be profitably organised through private insurance. This way there is a wide system of good and affordable healthcare available for everyone.

The costs of the Dutch health care system are of great concern though, as costs are rising and the Dutch population is ageing. The Netherlands spent 70.1 billion euro on health care in 2010. This expenditure corresponds to 11.9 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP), the second highest percentage in the world after the United States, although the difference against a number of other European countries is small (CBS 2012a). A debate on budget cuts concentrates on more efficiency and on contributions of people with a higher income. Young people are not experiencing inequality when it comes to (access to) health care.

Municipalities organise the youth health care system: all children aged 0-19 are invited for routine health examinations. This service is free of charge and organized in the neighbourhood. It consists of several services for every age group, amongst which are the vaccination programme for younger children and education on a healthy lifestyle (smoking, drinking, drugs, sexual transmitted diseases) for older young people. The youth health care system plays an important role in the early identification of physical, psychosocial and child-raising problems. Youth health care works closely together with organizations that need to help and protect children in order to develop safely.

In order to adapt better to contemporary problems, youth health care organizations are changing course in two directions. Attention is being focused more on specific groups at risk instead of one general treatment for all, and attention is being focused more on socio-medical aspects of life.⁷

The Youth Care office aims to help youth at risk and their parents. Youth care has two functions: prevention of a worsening of the situation by referring to lighter or heavier means of help, and intervention when a young person is at risk. Youth care participates in a structure with signalling parties like the youth health care system, social workers and schools on the one hand, and with the police and judicial organizations on the other hand, when protection of children at risk, guardianship or foster care is needed.

As mentioned before the organization of youth care is being revised at the moment. From 2015 on municipalities will be responsible for offering youth care. A transfer to the local level will have to solve two major problems. First of all, not all children at risk are seen by the system. Especially among people of non-western origin there is lack of trust and a lot of fear of the youth care taking the children away. In general, migrant children get seen too late, when problems are more severe than necessary. Secondly, there are too many different types of specific help executed by too many different organizations.

2.3.3. Health and wellbeing in Rotterdam

The services mentioned above, and the conditions for getting access to them, do not cause problems of inequality. These social income, social and health services, however, cannot prevent a number of problems continuing to exist. Almost all of these problems are more pronounced in Rotterdam than in the rest of the country. In Rotterdam 28.7% of all children aged 12-18 years old grow up in poverty (CBS Jeugdmonitor). Nationally this is 11.9% (CBS/SCP 2012).

- In Rotterdam 4.8% of young people run into contact with the police, nationally this is 2.6% (CBS Jeugdmonitor)
- Rotterdam has the lowest percentage of people saying their health is good or very good (77.5% in 2009-2011, Dutch average 80.5%), and people in Rotterdam score higher on mental health problems, obesity, diabetes, physical limitations, chronic respiratory problems and the degree of

⁷ www.ggd.nl/over-ggd-nederland/standpunten/innovatie-jeugdgezondheidszorg

contact with a general practitioner and with medical specialists. Rotterdam has the highest percentage of smokers in The Netherlands (30.4%) and the least physically active inhabitants in the country, with only 48.8% having sufficient physical activity (according to prevailing norm). In the period 2008-2011 the proportion of overweight children in The Netherlands was 13.3%, in Rotterdam 17%. Young people of Moroccan or Turkish origin are likely to be twice as often overweight and obese as indigenous youth (TNO, 2010). Rotterdam has significantly fewer heavy drinkers though, with 6.1% one of the lowest scores of The Netherlands (average 9.8%).⁸

Research shows that an unhealthy lifestyle is mostly related to gender, educational level, broken families, and not so much to ethnicity. Teenagers in lower secondary education in particular seem to be less able to control their behaviour with regard to substance abuse (Verdurmen et al., 2012).

People on benefits have a three to four times higher likelihood of psychological disorders (anxiety, depression, mood disorders, attention deficit, behavioural disorder, substance abuse). Unemployed people use facilities for psychological help twice as much as people with a job, and get medication prescribed three times as much (De Graaf et al., 2010).

- Of all children aged 0-16 in Rotterdam, 9% are severely threatened in their development. 4% of them are in an acutely dangerous situation. Child abuse can be physical, psychological, sexual and emotional. Neglect is part of the definition of child abuse, as is witnessing domestic violence. (GGD Rotterdam, 2010).
- In Rotterdam there are significantly more teenage mothers than in other big cities in The Netherlands. Although absolute numbers are not high (316 in Rotterdam in 2011) and seems to be declining, the problem is concentrated especially with girls from the Antilles, among whom there are six times as many teenage mothers than average (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2012b).
- There are too few general practitioners in many 'problematic' neighbourhoods in Rotterdam, as work for them is difficult there; they often see people who stay illegally in the country, do not have health insurance, but do need medical help; because there are already few general practitioners, they have too many patients; and as people living in these neighbourhoods are relatively unhealthy and more readily visit a doctor, work pressure increases even more.

2.4. Housing

In The Netherlands, in 2012, 57% of all houses are owned, 43% are rented: 37% under a social housing price regulation, 4% on free market prices. 82% of all social housing estates are owned by housing corporations (CBS, 2013). Between 2011 and 2012 there is a slight (1%) increase in house ownership, probably because housing corporations tried to sell some of their houses to raise capital, that has shrunk because of the economic crisis. People with a low income most likely live in a house rented from a

⁸ (<http://statline.cbs.nl/StatWeb/publication/?VW=T&DM=SLNL&PA=81976NED&LA=NL>)

housing corporation. Municipalities have an Internet system for allocating these houses. In most municipalities there are waiting lists. Waiting time can vary between approximately one year (Rotterdam) and six years (Amsterdam). In the regulations there are income criteria (below 34,229 euro per year) to qualify for social housing. The size of, and number of rooms in the house, depend on the number of people in the household. People with low incomes are compensated via the tax-system.

Although social housing is reserved for people with a low income, many houses are rented by people who choose to stay in the relatively cheap social housing when they are doing better financially. There is therefore a constant shortage of social housing. Attempts to stimulate people to move on to a house that fits their income have not been very successful. The most important problem is that the 'entrance level' to buy a house is quite high, especially in bigger cities where one income is not enough to buy a family home. To get a mortgage one must have a steady job, which is increasingly difficult in a flexible labour market.

In Rotterdam the total percentage of social housing is 69%, considerably more than the national average. More than two thirds consist of houses owned by housing corporations, one sixth are rented out by private owners, and one sixth is owned by its occupants (cheap houses below 140,000 euro) (COS, 2012).

Other ways to obtain a house are through squatting, and more popular: cheaply to rent without normal legal protection as a way to prevent squatting (anti-squatting). If houses or offices are temporarily not used, owners often prefer to rent their property out cheaply in this way. In some neighbourhoods in Rotterdam youth work organisations can use government buildings for a period of for example two years, to use these buildings for community activities, and to develop and rebuild these buildings together with young people. Collectives of artists also sometimes use buildings and offices in a way similar to 'anti-squatting'.

The average age of young people leaving their parental homes is 21.7 years old.

Although there is much social housing in Rotterdam, and waiting lists are relatively short compared to other big cities, there are still several problems with regard to housing. The most important is the concentration of problems in certain areas, creating 'problematic neighbourhoods'. These neighbourhoods are generally characterised by combinations of low income, debts, unemployment, school dropout, criminality, health problems, concentration of specific ethnic groups, family violence, criminality, and so on. This means that a significant proportion of young people in Rotterdam grow up in an unsafe environment. 56% of 10 and 11 year olds mention they sometimes or (very) often do not feel safe in their neighbourhood. 10% of the 12-13 and 14-15 aged have committed a violent crime themselves in the preceding 12 months; of youth aged 14-15, 9% carry a weapon. More than one fifth of the age group of 12-15 years suffer from problems at home (GGD Rotterdam, 2010). In many of these areas 70% or more of the population are migrants.

Lastly, homelessness is increasing. It is estimated that there are 9,000 homeless young people in The Netherlands each year (Brummelhuis and Drouven, 2011). Homeless young people are defined as "de

facto homeless young people below 23 years of age, and those living in care institutions, with multiple problems”. In Rotterdam the Youth Counter organises an integrated approach for homeless young people, in cooperation with a multitude of organisations. In 2011 there were in total 142 young people without a roof over their head, 147 homeless young people (a bed for the night, no permanent address), 387 potentially homeless young people (at risk), and 214 others. This makes for a total of 890. As a rule of thumb, Rotterdam normally has 10% of the national figures when it comes to social problems, so the national estimates and the (somewhat lacking) municipal registration seem to point in the same direction.

The relatively new integrated approach of homeless young people in Rotterdam does not seem to decrease the total number, but does help making problems less acute; that is, there is a shift from ‘no roof over their head’ and ‘homeless’ towards ‘at risk’.

2.5. Education and training

2.5.1. The educational system

The educational system in The Netherlands is organised by age: primary education from 4-12 years of age, secondary education from 12-16/18 years of age, vocational training or scientific education from 16/18-22 years of age. Secondary education is divided in several educational levels: practical education, preparatory vocational education (both ‘blue collar’ and ‘white collar’), higher administrative education and preparatory scientific education. Schools can be public schools or special schools, based on ideology, religion, or pedagogical background; for example, catholic schools, Islamic schools, anthroposophist schools, Montessori schools. Children have to choose an educational level at aged 12, but it is possible to change or to stack (after finishing a lower level of education entering a higher level mid way). Primary education is closed off with a test (CITO) that determines the level of further education. Private schools and home schooling are not common, but do exist. The Programme for International Student Assessment (OESO) ranked the Dutch education system as the 11th best in the world in 2009. In recent years the emphasis in education has shifted from gaining knowledge to acquiring competences, where competences are defined as a combination of knowledge, skills and (professional) attitude.

Going to school is free until 18 years of age, or as long as one is still in secondary education. After that a fee has to be paid. There is a system for study financing through government loans, but it is increasingly difficult to study for a long time or to stack educational experiences.

There is a policy that everyone should obtain a starting qualification: two years of vocational training on top of (lower) secondary education, or finish higher secondary education. Roughly speaking: successfully stay at school until 18 years old. Education is compulsory between 5 and 16 years old; parents can be fined if their children do not go to school. Until 18 years old there is the obligation to obtain a starting qualification. As long as one does not have this, you are not allowed to work fulltime – work is only

allowed if it can be combined with education. If one does not meet this obligation, he or she can be fined, child allowance can be withdrawn, or schools (i.e. school directors) can be prosecuted.

Special education exists for children with specific problems, organised in four clusters (1. visually impaired children, 2. deaf or hard-hearing children, 3. other physically handicapped children and children with severe learning difficulties (e.g. Down syndrome), and 4. children with behavioural or psychiatric disorders). Access to special education requires an indication by a committee. There are also possibilities for additional guidance and support for pupils in regular education. Schools receive additional funding for those pupils (Leerling Gebonden Financiering).

Schools for vocational training have developed special 'entrance classes' for school drop outs from secondary education (AKA, qualifying for an 'assistant' level).

As with many measures that aim to raise the bar, the requirement to obtain a starting qualification has a double-sided effect: it stimulates pupils to acquire higher educational levels, but at the same time has an excluding effect on those who in all probability will not be able to attain those levels.

The transition from school to work is especially hard for pupils from practical education (indication: IQ between 55 and 80), early school leavers, drop outs in the transition from secondary education to vocational training, and pupils in special education (mainly the ones with severe learning difficulties (indication: IQ less than 55), and psychiatric disorders. For other groups with 'obvious' handicaps there are relatively good supportive structures, in the form of subsidies, work place adaptation, job coaching and so on. For people with mental problems support is generally less evident, as their problems are less visible for untrained professionals.

Approximately 50% of all pupils in practical education flow into the 'Wajong', a regulation that provides special support for people who were handicapped before they are 18 years old. The uncertain factor being 'handicapped'. In the Rotterdam region only 24% enter this regulation (Spies et al, 2010). Pupils from cluster 3 schools generally all enter the Wajong regulation, as their handicaps are relatively obvious. From cluster 4 schools (for behavioural and psychiatric disorders), however, only 10% enters the Wajong (Stoutjesdijk and Berendsen, 2007). This is worrying; indications at the Rotterdam Youth Counter are that these young people make up a substantial part of the 'hard core' young unemployed. As their background is not registered as such when they enter social assistance, they are often not 'recognised', and often considered as lacking motivation rather than lacking competences, i.e. approached in a more suppressed way rather than in a supportive way. Also, the 'time horizon' used in social assistance is much more short-term (an action plan is often for six months) than the time horizon used in the Wajong, where an action plan can take up to ten years.

2.5.2. Education results

The average level of pupils in primary school in Rotterdam is lower than in the rest of the country, including other big cities. In the south part of Rotterdam the level is especially low. Compared to other

big cities in The Netherlands, a higher percentage of 60% attend preparatory vocational education (lower secondary education). Compared to other cities, there is a relatively high proportion of pupils from indigenous background among them. This is in line with a picture of Rotterdam as a working class city (Van Rhee and Roode, 2012).

In upper secondary education migrants are under-represented. In Rotterdam, the percentage of pupils that get their diploma is lower than in other big cities.

Early school leaving (i.e. at most lower secondary education and who is no longer in education or training) has dropped in The Netherlands from 15% in 2000 to less than 10% in 2011 (European Commission 2012). In line with the situation in other European countries, men are more affected than women. Almost 80% of the 20-24 year olds have at least finished upper secondary education in 2010, in which The Netherlands stand at the average in Europe.

The number of NEETs (not in employment, education or training) is the lowest in Europa with 3.8% in 2011 in The Netherlands and a EU average of 12.9% in 2011.⁹ School drop out has been on the policy agenda in The Netherlands for at least 10 years. Policies that have developed include an active policy in social assistance provision to get young people back to school rather than into work; organising guidance and social work at schools; and monitoring school drop out and follow up with house visits. Rotterdam has developed an active and integrated approach on NEETs early on, since 2004 with the establishment of the Youth Counter, and this is often regarded as a good practice. It should be noted, however, that registration of NEETs may not always reflect the actual situation; if a NEET cannot be motivated to take up school or work again, they may be taken off the list as being 'processed', not necessarily as being back on track.

Early school leaving in many cases occurs in the transition between preparatory vocational education and vocational education. This is a transition from a rather small scale school where people know your name, to a large, anonymous school of close to 30,000 pupils where it is easy to get lost or unnoticed. Another problem in some sectors is a lack of trainee places. But on the other hand there is a demand for people with a technical education (too much vacancies and trainee places) that cannot be filled as too few pupils choose a technical education.

2.6. Power, democracy, citizenship and civil participation

Interest in politics is considered a stepping-stone to involvement in community affairs. According to the European Social Survey (ESS), one in three young people (aged 15 to 29) in The Netherlands was at least 'quite interested' in politics in 2010 (European Commission, 2012).

In 2006, however, only 2% of the Dutch aged 18 to 25 and 25 to 35 had actually tried to influence politics through a political party or political organisation in the previous five years, or was a member of a political

⁹ (http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/themes/17_youth_unemployment.pdf).

party. 30% of the 18-25 year olds and 24% of the 25-35 year olds consider themselves to be able to play an active role in politics if they wanted though. In the national elections of 2006 71% of youth aged 18 to 25 and 68% of youth aged 25 to 35 voted (CBS).

Analyses of Dutch voters show that the lower the education the least trust people have in politics and politicians. People of non-western descent and people with little education vote the least (CBS). Not surprisingly in Rotterdam the turnout of voters is lower than in The Netherlands as a whole.

In Rotterdam youth voted considerably less than older inhabitants. Prior to the council elections of 2006, the city of Rotterdam invested in activities stimulating her inhabitants to vote. Special attention was given to two subgroups: migrants and youth. Activities for youth were developed and organised in close cooperation with youth and youth organisations (Aghris, 2005).

In The Netherlands youth participation is seen as important for developing citizenship skills, and for realising a positive youth policy. The former Ministry of Youth and Family stated in 2007 that by 2011 every municipality should have organised some form of youth participation: young people should have a say in local policies that affect young people. (Ministerie voor Jeugd en Gezin, 2007).

In order to get a grasp of the status quo of young people's participation, the Ministry ordered an investigation among the Dutch municipalities. A consortium of research and youth organisations defined five stages of youth participation in municipalities, ranging from informing to actual participation and encouraging young people to set up their own activities and give advice not asked for.

The outcome was that 95% of all municipalities had a policy on youth participation, and more than 90% had a budget for it in 2009. The majority of municipalities formulated her policy on youth participation in the broader context of youth policy; 10% of the municipalities had specific youth participation policy. Young people mainly participated in the field of leisure facilities, neighbourhood facilities and the design of the public space. Regarding the first two topics there was consultation, engagement in dialogue and voicing, next to informing. On most topics though, informing was the level of involving youth (Vandenbroucke et al, 2010).

Youth policy in Rotterdam is partly carried out at the city level, and partly at the city-district level. Rotterdam youth has a say in local policies in many different ways and youth is stimulated to develop their own talents. The Youth Council of Rotterdam, which has an official status in the municipality, is one of these ways. The Youth Council can advise the local government, but also initiate plans and help to carry them out. There are also youth councils on the city-district level. The youth panel in the district Overschie, for example, won a price for the best youth project in a contest for positive youth policy. The project consisted of young people helping to find internships and work experience jobs for other young people in Overschie. Other examples are 'Talenthouse' in IJsselmonde (youth workers do not organise activities for youth, but stimulate them to make their own plans, carry them out and evaluate them), and 'Wijkpedagogiek' ('neighbourhood pedagogy') in several neighbourhoods, in which everyone involved

works together on a good and save climate for youth to grow up and strengthen own initiatives of youth themselves (Nederlands Jeugd Instituut, Dossier Lokaal Jeugdbeleid).

2.7. Policies and organisations

Since the early 1990s The Netherlands has developed an active youth policy. In 1992 came the Youth Employment Act, a first social assistance reform that focused on work rather than income. Young people who became unemployed were offered a guaranteed, created or subsidised job in the public sector, or a training and work experience place, with a work contract instead of a benefit. This act was later integrated into the general social assistance act. In 2009 there came another special act on the placing of young people, that was abolished again in 2012, and with some adjustments reintegrated into the general act on work and social assistance.

Rotterdam generally is an active city, where new policies are often piloted or even developed. It is also a big city with many policy layers, and more than one manager between policy design and implementation.

Rotterdam is divided into 10 districts that have their own (elected) authorities. Some policies are the responsibility of the district level, some of the city, some of the national government, and some are the responsibility of (mandated) regionally operating organisations and organisations cross-cutting localised authorities. City districts will be abolished from 2014 onwards.

Regarding young people there are several relevant policy areas. In short, we find social benefits and activation/reintegration/employment policies, educational policies (especially those on prevention of drop out), municipal health service and police policies on youth groups in public areas at the city level; special education and Youth Care are organised at the regional level; and social welfare is organised at the district level. Social housing corporations are not connected to a specific policy level.

A lot of effort is made to coordinate the different policy silos in order to realise an integrated approach. The most important coordinating instance is the 'youth counter' (Jongerenloket): the office in which social assistance administration for young people, the municipal education department and the public employment service and employee insurance organisation cooperate, and as an organisation cooperate with organisations in most other policy areas.

Other coordinating platforms are the DOSA (Deelgemeentelijke Organisatie Sluitende Aanpak) at district level: social teams with a coordinator that has delegated authority from the city level, that monitor young people that are known with several organisations, and that professionals (including the police) are worried about.

On a policy level, important themes are:

- Addressing the transition between lower secondary education and vocational education. There are three streams:

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- developing new educational forms: neighbourhood schools for stressed young people, close to where they live; craft schools and top schools that are a combination of lower secondary and of vocational education, in which pupils learn their profession from the first day on;
 - care and support at school, where they already spend most of their days, rather than in an unfamiliar environment;
 - additional information and guidance in choosing a profession and education (with an eye to possibilities on the labour market).
- Support and care for pupils to prevent drop out and to ensure that pupils develop their talents. In co-operation with Youth Care a plan called 'Every child wins' has been made to ensure a full coverage of social work at schools, and of care institutions.
 - Monitoring early school leaving without a starting qualification, and making plans with schools to combat drop out.
 - Youth unemployment: as a reaction to the economic crisis a campaign was launched to stimulate young people to continue education, rather than entering the labour market and becoming unemployed. Also additional work experience jobs and training opportunities are created.
 - Municipal team youth work: outreach youth workers go to areas where there is most nuisance. Youth work is carried out by an NGO.
 - Compulsory education, qualification obligation, and absence are strictly observed by a team of approximately 40 officers.
 - Youth Counter supports young people up to 27 years of age who need help in finding employment, education or some other daily activity, because they lack a starting qualification and/or because they have other (multiple) problems. Services and provisions include among others school and career advice, job search training, matching candidates to an education or a vacancy, wage subsidies, work experience jobs, created work, skills training, job coaching, day care for children, social work and so on.
 - Action plan on youth unemployment as a response to the crisis. The national government in 2009, 2010 and 2011 gave extra budgets to combat youth unemployment to 30 regions covering all of the country. Municipalities and their partners, such as schools and youth care together made action plans without much bureaucracy, in order to organise a swift response to rising youth unemployment. Actions in the Rotterdam region included careers guidance for final year students, subsidising and creating additional jobs, and life coaching for school leavers from practice education.

- DOSA: social teams with a director with delegated authority to address annoying and criminal youth groups that work in every city-district.
- Establishing centres for youth and families where organisations such as youth care, social work, public health and mental health cooperate in a single location.

3. Life for young people in the city

In a European comparative perspective, The Netherlands are generally doing quite well. Within The Netherlands, Rotterdam is quite a problematic city on a lot of indicators. It is traditionally a working class city, and a working class culture is handed over from one generation to the next; the educational level of young people (a high percentage of lower secondary education) is relatively low, just like the previous generation. Rotterdam is also a culturally very diverse city with migrants making up almost half of the population. Many problems are concentrated with migrant groups. Rotterdam is the city with the most 'problematic neighbourhoods' in The Netherlands, the highest unemployment of the big cities, and there is an unhealthy underclass. All of these 'symptoms' can also be seen with young people living in Rotterdam: there is intergenerational transmission.

At the same time, the employment structure of the city is changing. Blue-collar work, among others in the harbour, is declining. The economy requires better-educated workers. Although unemployment is high at the moment, the outlook is that there will be shortages on the labour market in just a few years, when the baby boom generation will retire. Especially in technical jobs there are already shortages. It is not just that 'the workforce will have to change jobs', it is also about people who have hardly any work experience, because of high unemployment, having to become employees.

The labour market discrepancies are partly 'solved' through mobility. Almost 170,000 people work in Rotterdam, but do not live there. Only approximately 75,000 people live in Rotterdam, but do not work there. This means that people from outside meet a lot of the economic needs of the city. This is to some extent true for all big cities (in Amsterdam even more). But there is a constant threat that a large part of the inhabitants will not profit from economic successes, and that two worlds coexist close together: the skyscrapers and their business, and problematic neighbourhoods with their unemployed, unhealthy, low educated, mostly migrant populations.

Of course such a pessimistic picture does not do justice to the vitality, innovation and hands on mentality that also defines the city. A lot of (initially) controversial policies have been developed in Rotterdam. For example, preventive body searches by the police in problematic neighbourhoods in the 1990s, allowed them to stop any citizen to search for weapons or drugs. Many criticized this as a violation of citizen's freedom, but it was also one of the things that has helped to 'conquer' back the no-go areas that existed in the 1990s. Other unorthodox measures that were taken include the appointment of 'city marines' who would have the authority to coordinate municipal departments to address urgent problems, but also, for

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example, setting up a (then new) organization for social activation, called ‘unused qualities’, by providing long-term unemployed people with opportunities for voluntary work and meeting other people, to help them become less socially isolated.

Current initiatives include a policy on who can establish oneself in some neighbourhoods (to ensure diversity); a full engagement policy for unemployed, aimed at getting all unemployed active in one way or another, through ‘obligatory voluntary work’; a project to get migrant boys a blue collar job in the harbour, where workers are generally still white and grey-haired, to name just a few initiatives.

Rotterdam is generally seen as an innovative city. In the government sector, because there is a continuous need for social innovation, as problems are bigger (and often earlier) than in other cities. In the economy, it is needed because a lot of industrial work is affected by technological developments and there is a need for constant technological innovation. Culturally, there is a lot of room for innovation, and a necessity to ‘make things work’ in a culturally diverse city.

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Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across
Europe

Cities in their national contexts

SOFIA

Symptoms and causes of inequality affecting young people

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This report is part of Work Package 2 of the research project entitled “Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across Europe” (CITISPYCE). CITISPYCE has been devised against the back drop of research which shows the disproportionate impact of the global economic crisis on young people across Europe. This includes excessively high rates of youth unemployment (particularly amongst those who face multiple social, economic and cultural disadvantages) and threats to the social provision enjoyed by previous generations. CITISPYCE partners are working on a three year multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral programme to examine the current state of the art and ideas concerning social innovation against inequalities faced by young people, explore socially innovative practices being developed by and for young people in urban areas, and test the transferability of local models of innovative practice in order to develop new policy approaches. The CITISPYCE consortium covers ten European countries and is funded by the European Commission (FP7, Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities).



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1. Sofia – a presentation

1.1. Brief historical overview

Sofia is an ancient Balkan city with rich historical heritage and strategic geopolitical significance. It was founded in the Roman period under the name of *Serdica*. After becoming part of the Medieval Bulgarian State in 809, its name changed to *Sredets* (related to the Slavic word *sreda* meaning “middle” or “centre”) to symbolise the fact that it was located approximately in the geographical centre of the Bulgarian realm. In the 14th century, the name Sofia was mentioned for the first time in documents (including a Bulgarian Royal Decree), styled after the St. Sofia church. In 1382 the city was conquered by the Ottomans (Vaklinova, 2000, p. 27).

The modern Bulgarian state was constituted in 1878 as a result of the Russian-Turkish War (1877-78). According to the clauses of the Treaty of Berlin (1878), Bulgarian lands were divided in three parts, with only the Principality of Bulgaria (Northern Bulgaria) gaining independence from the Ottoman Empire. Acquisition of the remaining Bulgarian lands became a strategic national ideal, which influenced political developments in the new state, including its participation in both world wars. Even today, this is a sensitive topic of public debate.

The described political situation was decisive for the choice of Sofia as the Bulgarian capital. The National Assembly members, who selected Sofia, were convinced that the national unification was attainable in the foreseeable future (Petrov, 2000, pp. 30-31). In the 20th century, the political map of the Balkans changed indeed, but these changes did not fulfil the Bulgarian national dream. In reality, today the city is located in the western part of the country less than 60 km from the border with Serbia.

At the time of liberation from the Ottoman rule, Sofia was a sizeable but not very large city with a population of about 20,000 people (Hristov, 2000, p. 78).¹ Contemporary authors described it as typically Oriental, with narrow dirty streets and small poor houses.

However, the status of the capital led to a swift change in demographics and architecture. Sofia became the focal point for political activists, administrative personnel, intellectuals, craftsmen and service providers, as well as many unskilled labourers. While many of the Turkish inhabitants were leaving, numerous Bulgarian refugees from the un-liberated territories arrived and settled (Katzarov, 1970, pp. 16-17). The period 1900-1946 was characterized by the greatest growth of the city population – the inhabitants increased from 68,000 to over half a million people (Hristov, 2000, p. 79).

As a legacy from the Ottoman period, the population of the modern Bulgarian state is diverse: Orthodox Christian Bulgarians live together with different minority groups: Turks, Roma, and Jews. After the Armenian genocide, a significant number of Armenians found asylum in Bulgaria. The same is the case with Russians after the October Revolution in 1917. In Sofia, the number of Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox population steadily increased as a result of migration from other parts of the country and from regions inhabited by Bulgarians, which remained outside the borders of the new state.

Table 1: Ethnic composition of the population of Sofia

Ethnos	1880	1910	1934
Bulgarian	63.3%	78.9%	84.4 %
Jewish	19.9%	12.5%	9%
Turkish	2.6%	0.2 %	0.2%
Roma	3.7%	2.3%	1.4%

Source: Kiradjiev, 2001, p. 40.

Table 2: Population of Sofia according to religious affiliation

Religion	1880	1910	1934
Eastern Orthodox	67.4%	80.1%	86.2 %
Judaism	20.5%	13%	9%
Roman Catholic	3.4%	3 %	1.5%
Islam	6%	2.5%	1.6%
Protestant	-	0.7%	0.5%
Armenian-Gregorian	-	0.5 %	1.1%

Source: Kiradjiev, 2001, p. 44.

The expansion of the city and the population growth continued during the Socialist period. The establishment of large metal workings led to a new wave of migration of workers from the countryside. The state stringently controlled the migration process by introducing city residence permits. The general practice was to provide the right to permanently reside in the capital to workers who would undertake jobs, which were unattractive to the local residents (Vezenkov, 2000, pp. 237-244).

¹ For comparison: at the same time the city of Plovdiv had a population of 33,032 inhabitants, followed by Rousse – 26,163 inhabitants, Varna – 24,555, Shumen – 23,093, Sofia – 20,501, and Sliven – 20,000.

1.2. Sofia today

Sofia is the main administrative, industrial, transport, cultural and university centre of the country. It is the seat of all branches of state government – legislature, executive and judiciary. In addition, the city hosts the central offices of most financial institutions, the management bodies of officially registered confessions (and their main temples or places of worship), political party head offices, the major trade union headquarters.

According to the 2011 census, the total Bulgarian population is 7,364,570 and the population of Sofia Municipality is 1,291,591. The population of the City of Sofia is 1,202,761, which makes it the largest city in Bulgaria inhabited by 16.3% of the country's total population. Experts and journalists estimate that the actual number of people residing in the city is much larger (almost two million).

Table 3: Sofia population according to age

	Total	0 - 14	15 - 24	25 - 64	65 and above
Bulgaria	7,364,570	975,272	866,392	4,161,509	1,361,397
Sofia	1,202,761	147,556	170,062	699,018	186,125

Source: National Statistical Institute, <http://www.nsi.bg/census2011/pagebg2.php?p2=175&sp2=190>

The above table indicates that the share of youth population in Sofia (14.13%) is larger than the country average (11.76 %).

According to official statistics,² the ethnic groups in Sofia are distributed as follows: 96% Bulgarian, 1.5% Roma and 0.6% Turkish.³ Based only on this data, the city would appear ethnically and religiously homogenous.

Experts and Roma activists contest the official data as many Roma identify themselves as Turks or Bulgarians in the census (Grekova, 2008). Most estimations place their number around 30,000 to 40,000 (Trud, 2010; Georgieva, 2012). The “Municipal Strategy for the Decade of Roma Inclusion in Sofia for the period 2007 – 2013” quotes NGO data, which estimate the number of Roma in Sofia to be 120,000 (Sofia Municipal Council, 2007, p.10). In the description of research project from 2009, a team of sociologists stated that only in the two Sofia neighbourhoods covered by the research, the number of Roma was 51,000.⁴

1.3. Politics and administration

Bulgaria is a unitary state with a high degree of centralization. The government is divided into three main levels: central government, 28 provinces (named after the city, which is their administrative centre), and 264 municipalities.

² The question about ethnicity was not compulsory in the 2011 census. In Sofia this question was answered by 91% of the registered respondents.

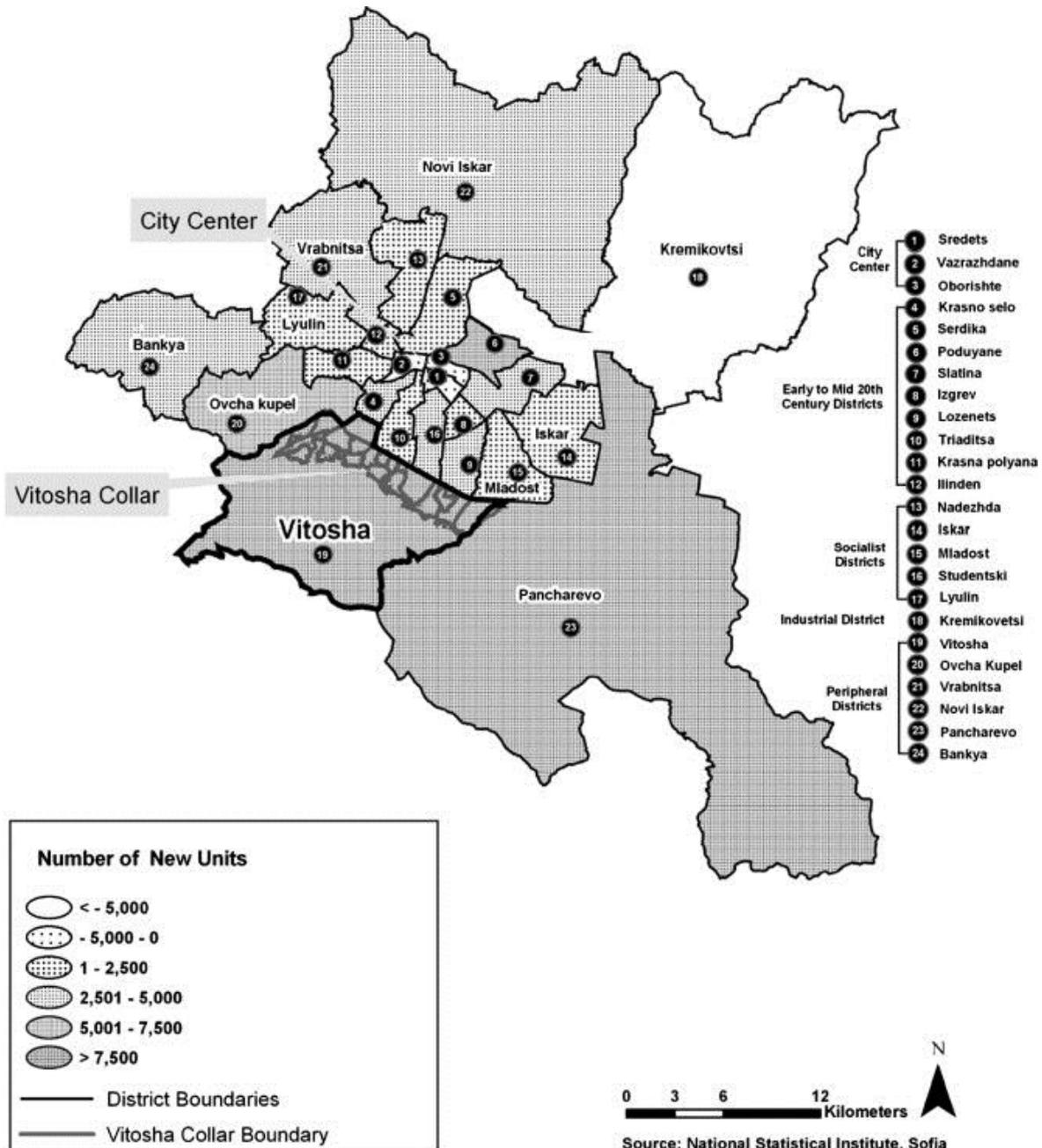
³ See NSI: Population by municipality and ethnic origin, http://www.nsi.bg/census2011/PDOCS2/Census2011_ethnos.xls

⁴ http://www.seminar-bg.eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=136&Itemid=66

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The National Assembly (consisting of 240 deputies elected to four-year terms by direct popular vote) is the body of the legislative. It enacts laws, approves the budget, schedules elections, selects and dismisses the Prime Minister and the government, and ratifies international treaties and agreements. The most important executive position is that of Prime Minister, while the President (elected directly for five years) has largely ceremonial role.

The Council of Ministers (government) directly appoints governors of the provinces. Municipalities are run by mayors, who are elected to four-year terms, and by directly elected municipal councils. Although Sofia is the administrative centre of both Sofia Province and Sofia municipality, Sofia Province does not include the city of Sofia in its territories. Rather, Sofia-Capital is a separate province (one of 28).



Sofia Municipality is an administrative and territorial unit governed by the Sofia Municipal Council. Territorially, it covers the areas of four cities and towns - Sofia, Bankya, Novi Iskar, Buhovo, and 34 villages. Administratively, it is divided into 24 city districts. District mayors are appointed by the Sofia Municipal Council on proposal of Sofia mayor. Each district has its own administration, which is in charge of activities and development of the district. Districts are further divided into geographically defined residential quarters, which do not have their own administration.

2. Inequality in Sofia and the response to it

2.1. Economy and labour market

General situation in Bulgaria

The Bulgarian post-communist transition to democracy and market economy was an exceptionally difficult process (above all during the 1990s). Unfavourable international factors like the sudden loss of the Soviet market and the war and sanctions imposed on the neighbouring Serbia/Yugoslavia combined with the closure of numerous state-owned enterprises and political instability. The result of all these factors was the collapse of economy and the banking sector, a sharp decline in the standard of living (by 40%) and a hyperinflation. Swift and extensive economic reforms, which included a currency board regime, introduced in 1997, have stabilised the economy and since 2000, Bulgarian economy has witnessed a modest, yet stable growth and regular budget surpluses. Bulgarian gross debt is the second lowest in the EU after Estonia (18.9% of GDP in 2012) (European Commission, 2013a).

Relatively stable macro-economic picture came with a heavy price. The standard of living remained strikingly low (compared to other EU countries), the welfare state was all but abolished, corruption remained endemic. The population of Bulgaria declined considerably – from 8,992,000 in 1989 to 7,365,000 in 2011 (mostly through the economic emigration to EU countries and North America).

The current global financial and economic crisis has not bypassed Bulgaria. The GDP fell by 5.5% in 2009, as did the private (7.6%) and public consumption (6.5%). A sluggish, yet stable, growth resumed in 2010. The modest GDP growth was not followed by similarly positive tendencies on the labour market. On the contrary, since 2008, the employment rates have been steadily dropping (from 50.8 in 2008 to 47% in 2012). In the same period, unemployment rate has more than doubled from 5.6% in 2008 to 12.3 in 2012 (NSI, 2012a; NSI, 2012b).

Labour market and youth

The **employment rate** among Bulgarian young people is **considerably lower than the EU average** (33.6%). At 20.1%, it is among the five lowest in the EU (Eurofound, 2012, p. 10). The current youth

employment rate is the lowest since 2003. After reaching the peak in 2008 at 26.3%, the numbers have been decreasing by roughly 2% per year.

Part-time work and temporary employment, which are very important tools in numerous EU countries for school-to-work transition or first employment experience, are practically non-existent in Bulgaria, which ranks lowest among EU27 in both categories (Eurofound, 2012, pp. 14-16). The already very limited job market for the Bulgarian youth has further shrunken in the recent years as a result of the global crisis.

Not surprisingly, **long-term unemployment** among the young people in Bulgaria is **exceptionally high**. According to the Eurofound report, 49% of jobless Bulgarian youths have been without employment for more than 12 months. Bulgaria is second only to Slovakia in this unfavourable indicator and much above the EU27 average of 30%. Even more worrying is **the negative trend**, as the share of long-term jobless young people has increased by 8%-units from 2007 to 2011 (Eurofound, 2012, p. 9). This is an exceptionally important problem, which will have tremendous consequences in the coming years. Being without employment for a long time affects negatively all people regardless of their age, but it has thoroughly damaging consequences for the young. The long period of inactivity decreases their chances of finding employment, discourages them, and widens the gap between the skills and qualification obtained in their education and the labour market needs. In cases when the young people do find a job after longer period of unemployment, it is more likely to be a low-paid job with unfavourable working conditions (Dimitrov, 2012, pp.10-11).

Table 4: Unemployed aged 15 years and over:

Year	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total (in thousands)	499,6	428,8	362,3	315,2	315,2	228,8	222,2	341,0	402,0	421,4	456,4
Total (%)	15.6	13.3	11.3	9.7	8.0	6.5	6.4	10.2	12.2	12.9	13.8
15-24 (in thousands)	95,9	79,1	65,6	57,0	45,7	41,8	41,4	60,2	64,8	74,8	68,1
15-24 (%)	30.8	26.8	26.8	20.9	16.0	14.4	14.2	21.2	27.2	31.4	29.5

*Data are for the first quarter of each year

Source: http://www.nsi.bg/ORPDOCS/Labour_3.1.3_EN.xls

As mentioned above, despite a slow economic recovery that started in 2011, **the employment trends remained negative**. This is especially evident among the young as the youth unemployment in 2011 and 2012 has been growing faster than the general unemployment.⁵ This could mean that in addition to the poor economic and business environment, there are various **structural factors** pushing the young people out of the labour market. The most important such factors are the lack of appropriate education and skills.

⁵ The data for the first quarter of 2013 could be seen as a sign for cautious optimism, as the negative trend reversed for the first time since 2009.

Among those young people with only primary education, 65.3% were unemployed in 2011, while among those who have finished lower secondary school, 44.6% were without work. On the other hand, having an upper secondary or higher education is by no means a guarantee for employment. This is closely linked to the fact that the quality of Bulgarian education had been progressively declining over the past decade. As a result, after finishing their education numerous young people enter the labour market thoroughly unprepared and ill-qualified to meet the challenges of the competitive market. Another problem related to the education is **the mismatch** between the labour market needs and the education system. On the one hand, there are numerous young persons who cannot find jobs after finishing school, and on the other there are a number of vacancies (about 16-17,000 per year over the past three years)⁶ for which no appropriately educated/skilled employees can be found (Dimitrov, 2012).

An overwhelming majority of young people with jobs work as employees in private enterprises (153,400), while the second largest group are those employed in public companies (15,600). In terms of economic activity, most young people (47,700) work in wholesale and retail trade, or repair shops for cars and motorcycles. Another two large activity areas are manufacturing (35,900) and accommodation and food service activities (27,900) (NSI, 2012a, p. 47).

These sectors were among the ones most affected by the crisis and as a consequence numerous jobs were lost. Given the fact that almost 70% of employed youngsters work in these professions, the rise in youth unemployment is not a surprise. An additional aggravating factor is that these occupations often do not require good education and specific skills, and as discussed above – the lower the education, the higher the risk of losing one's job.

The already unfavourable picture regarding youth employment is in fact even more dramatic when we add the number of disaffected **young persons**. The Bulgarian statistics define an unemployed person as a “person aged 15 to 74 who did not work at all during the reference period, were actively seeking work within the preceding four weeks, and was available to start working within two weeks following the reference period.” The discouraged persons are those who want to work but who are not seeking a job, because they do not believe they will find one (NSI, 2012a, pp. 3-5). This means that if an unemployed person did not “actively seek work” (e.g. through an employment bureau) because she/he was discouraged, she/he is not counted as “unemployed.” There were 237,000 discouraged persons in 2011, out of which 47,000 were aged 15 to 24 (NSI, 2012a, p.66).

Sofia

It can be said that compared to the rest of the country, Sofia is thriving. The latest data (first quarter of 2013) show that the **employment rate in Sofia is the highest in the country** at 55.6% (the national rate is 45.6%, with numerous Bulgarian regions having the rate from 35 to 40%). In absolute numbers, out of

⁶ See National Statistical Institute: Job vacancies statistics – Table data, http://www.nsi.bg/ORPDOCS/Labour_1.1.3_EN.xls

2,855,000 employed persons in the country, 627,500 work in Sofia.⁷ At 7.3%, the unemployment in Sofia is well below the national average (12.3%). Nevertheless, this rate means that there are 49,400 unemployed persons in the Bulgarian capital.⁸ As seen from the table below, the trend is markedly negative.

Table 5: Unemployed and unemployment rates in Sofia

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
In thousands	17,1	26,6	44,2	41,5	49,4
%	2.5	3.9	6.6	6.1	7.3

Source: http://www.nsi.bg/ORPDOCS/Labour_3.2.3_EN.xls

As elsewhere in the country, young people under 29 represent an important share of jobless people in Sofia – 16.3%. The high youth unemployment represents a difficult challenge for Sofia and the city authorities. One of the most urgent tasks is to address the changes in the labour market by providing innovative ways to create jobs for young people. Creating new labour opportunities and especially enabling the smoother transition from education into labour market is another important task, which has become a priority in the recent years (Eurocities, 2011).

Just as Sofia is very different from the rest of Bulgaria, some neighbourhoods in Sofia are strikingly different from the rest of the city. The accurate statistical data is nearly impossible to find, but numerous studies state that **the levels of unemployment and poverty in certain parts of Bulgarian capital** are far above the national average and **reach 80-90%**. Two such neighbourhoods are Fakulteta, populated almost exclusively by Roma, and Hristo Botev, which has a “mixed” population, but with a strong Roma majority. In addition to enormous levels of unemployment, including among the young, these two areas of Sofia suffer from a wide range of problems, which will be addressed in the relevant sections below. Most of these problems are tightly linked to a root problem, not exclusively limited to the Roma community, but especially characteristic for them – **generational or inherited youth unemployment**. A growing number of young Bulgarians, and overwhelming majority of young Roma, are born and raised in families where both parents have been without employment for many years (or have never been employed at all). Living in extreme poverty, and often unable to cover even the most basic human needs like food and heating, such young people do not believe they would ever be able to find a job and do not even attempt to change their way of living (Grekova, 2008; Dimitrov, 2012).

According to a research conducted by the Open Society Institute Sofia in 2012, about 70% of Roma are jobless. Out of these, 70% define themselves as unemployed persons. The rest are pensioners (12.5%), permanently disabled persons (11.3%), students (2%), or staying-at-home persons (Metodieva et al, 2012, pp. 109-110).

⁷ See National Statistical Institute: Employed and employment rates - national level; statistical regions; districts, <http://www.nsi.bg/otrasalen.php?otr=51&a1=2038&a2=2039&a3=2041#cont>

⁸ See National Statistical Institute: Unemployed and unemployment rates - national level; statistical regions; districts, <http://www.nsi.bg/otrasalen.php?otr=51&a1=2038&a2=2044&a3=2047#cont>

Institutions, policies and services

As a result of the rising levels of youth unemployment, since early 2011 the Bulgarian central and local authorities have been trying to design and implement policies that would successfully address this issue. The National Initiative “**Work for Young People in Bulgaria**” 2012-2013, the **Youth Strategy 2010-2020** and the **National Youth Programme 2011-2015** are among the most important strategic documents dealing with the youth employment policies. The documents and the measures they envisage are closely tailored on the EU models and practices, and even at the first glance, it is easy to notice that the authors have attempted to include as many innovative and workable solutions from other European countries as possible.

The implementation of these policies, however, leaves much to be desired. As paradoxical as it may sound, in the midst of the crisis, the government switched its priorities in the area of youth labour policy from job creation to training. Until 2010, direct job creation had the largest share in youth support measures. These programmes were financed through the National Employment Plan. In 2011, the Operational Programme Human Resources Development 2007-2013 became the most important financial instrument. A number of training programmes (from professional qualification to language courses to computer training) were initiated, while at the same time spending from the national budget aimed at job creation for unemployed youth decreased significantly. Critics point out two main problems regarding this development. The first is the fact that the OPHRD-funded training programmes are actually aimed at the employed, and not the unemployed. For example, in 2010 the ratio between unemployed and employed participants in the programme was 1:5! The second criticism states that the OPHRD initiatives were much more about the form rather than the content and brought little benefit to the target groups. For example, computer training for young people, which was the most popular programme financed by the OPHRD, has received the lowest score in the evaluation of how successful the programmes were in improving the job prospects of participants. In other words, quantity prevailed over the quality as the large numbers of people attending the programmes were proudly (and loudly) presented both in the country and abroad. At the same time, the quality of training courses was not examined and it remains highly questionable whether qualification and skills of participants were improved (Dimitrov, 2012; Mediana, 2012).

- One of the main aims of the **National Youth Strategy 2010-2020**, adopted by the Bulgarian government in 2010, is to improve the career development of young people and to encourage them to participate more actively in society. Special attention is given to young people who grew up in social institutions.⁹ In recent years, several initiatives were undertaken to encourage employers to hire vulnerable young people. One of the main incentives to stimulate such practices is that for up to six

⁹ Social institutions for children and youths deprived of parental care are divided in groups according to the age of the children (1-3 years, preschool children 3-6 years, and school age children 7-18 years old). Due to the process of deinstitutionalisation, which began in 2010, the number of institutions and the children accommodated there has been decreasing at a considerable pace. In 2012, 2,140 children aged 7-18, lived in 50 social homes. Three such institutions (one of which for children with mental handicap) are located in Sofia.

months, the wages of such young employees are covered from the state budget. A specific national programme for employment of young people with disabilities goes even further in this direction, as employers hiring youngsters from this group receive funds from the state to pay their salaries for up to 36 months (Eurocities, 2011).

- **National Employment Action Plan 2013**¹⁰ pays special attention to the problem of youth unemployment and envisages measures for improving the opportunities of young people to find information about the labour market.
- **National Initiative “Employment for Young People in Bulgaria”**¹¹ is coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. The Initiative is an instrument for implementation of the *National Employment Action Plan 2013* and the *National Reform Programme 2012 – 2020*. It pays special attention to the permanently unemployed who are not engaged in any economic or educational activity. As a result of the adopted measures, a decrease in youth unemployment to 23 % is expected.”¹²
- **Programme “Career Start”** is implemented by the Employment Agency¹³ to assist young people in starting work upon graduating from the universities. The target group includes young people up to the age of 29 who are registered in the employment bureaus, have university education and no work experience related to the area of their education.

2.2. Welfare regimes

Under the communist regime, medical and social care were “owned” and controlled by the state. As such, they were provided to all citizens at no cost, since they were fully covered by the state budget. In general, the communist-era social and health care is still considered as very good, mostly on account of its universal accessibility and highly educated medical personnel.

After the political changes in 1989, the medical and social welfare underwent unavoidable reforms. The management of the welfare system is the responsibility of the state (through the institutions like **National Health Insurance Fund**, **National Revenue Agency** and **National Social Security Institute**). The budget for the system comes from the compulsory contributions made by employers, employees, self-employed and the state. Due to the exceptionally low level of incomes in Bulgaria (the current minimum wage is 159 EUR, while the average wage is 385 EUR), the contributions are insufficient and the health and social security schemes suffer chronic underfunding. Thus, although the medical care remains free, it means that the patients face long waiting periods and low quality of service. On the other hand, private

¹⁰ <http://www.strategy.bg/StrategicDocuments/View.aspx?lang=bg-BG&Id=776>

¹¹ http://www.mlsp.government.bg/bg/docs/ML_INICIATIVA_prietaMS.doc

¹² Ibid.

¹³ http://www.az.government.bg/projects/prog/mladeji/frame_mladeji.htm

medical practice has boomed in the past decade and high quality health care is easily available to those who can afford it.

There has been a visible tendency over the years to **downsize and limit the social security programmes**. On the one hand, this has provoked tensions and protests in the society, which on numerous occasions demanded an increase in pensions, child allowances and maternity compensations. On the other hand, there were also demands that certain benefits should be restricted, or conditioned by certain requirements. Such demands are often driven by nationalistic/racist discourse that certain groups of people (above all the Roma community) should have no access to social benefits, as they are allegedly not contributing to the system.

2.2.1. Access to social income, social and health services

General situation

The Bulgarian social security system consists of mandatory state social security (comprised of common diseases and maternity fund, pensions fund, labour accidents and professional diseases fund, and unemployment fund), mandatory health insurance and additional obligatory pension insurance.

Unemployment benefits are paid by the **National Social Security Institute**. A person is eligible for unemployment benefits if they have been working and paying contributions for at least **9 out of the last 15** months and if they are registered with the local employment bureau. The period during which a person is entitled to unemployment benefits is conditioned by the time in which she/he worked and paid insurance contributions, but cannot be less than four and more than 12 months. Additional eligibility requirement is that a person actively looks for employment and is prepared to accept the first suitable job proposed by the Employment Bureau. The amount of the unemployment benefit is calculated as 60% of the applicant's average income over the past 24 months, but cannot be lower than the minimum benefit, which is defined annually by the Law on the budget for state public social security.¹⁴ If a person resigned from work or lost employment because of his/her own fault, they are entitled to the minimal employment benefit, but only for a period of four months (Social Security Code, 1999).

Due to specificities of Bulgarian legislation (according to Article 5(1) of the Personal Data Protection Act, it is prohibited to process any personal data, which reveal racial or ethnic origin), there are no official data about the number of Roma, who receive unemployment benefits. It is even less possible to establish how many young Roma are among the beneficiaries. The only available data are based on studies of experts and non-governmental organisations. According to the Open Society Institute study, unemployment benefit amount to only 2.5% of the income of the Roma families. Other social benefits represent a much more important source of income for Roma households (in 2011, 13.3% of Roma households received heating subsidy from the state during winter and 9.6% have received social allowances for poor families). Other important benefits include invalidity pensions and old-age pensions. In sharp contrast to prevailing

¹⁴ For 2013, the daily minimum rate for unemployment benefit is 3.70 EUR (on average, 110 EUR per month).

public perceptions that Roma families live off maternity allowances (due to higher than average number of children), the survey established that monthly allowances for children under 18 are the main income source for only 6% of the Roma families. The fact that a monthly allowance per child is less than 18 EUR tells much about the levels of poverty these families live in (Metodieva et al, 2012, pp. 122-123).

The health care system is based on the **mandatory health insurance** and governed by the Health Insurance Act (1998, *State Gazette* No. 70). Contributions are a shared responsibility of the State, the insured and the employers. As part of the ongoing health care reform process, since 2000 the ratio between the share of the employer and the insured has been gradually changing at the expense of the insured. In 2000, employer paid 80% of the contribution and the insured paid 20%. Since 2010, both parties pay exactly 50% of the contribution. If person receives unemployment benefits, the appropriate share of the health care contribution is paid by the state Unemployment Fund. The contributions of school age children (up to age of 18) and students (up to age of 26) are paid from the state budget. The same applies to persons receiving social assistance benefits (Article 40 of the Health Insurance Act).

The system is designed as a state monopoly – the institution in charge is the **National Health Insurance Fund** (NHIF).¹⁵ This however does not mean that the entire health care is owned and controlled by the state. There are a large number of specialized private medical facilities in Bulgaria, where patients often receive better and faster service compared to the state clinics and hospitals, but are required to pay the entire amount for the examination and/or treatment, regardless of whether they have health insurance.

In principle, all Bulgarian citizens, foreign nationals permanently residing in Bulgaria and people with refugee or humanitarian status, are obligatory health insured with the NHIF. When visiting a doctor, patient pays a small fee equal to 1% of the minimum salary in the country (1.60 EUR in June 2013). For each day of a hospital stay, the patient pays a fee amounting to 2% of the minimum monthly salary. Uninsured persons pay the full cost for provided medical care in addition to these fees. Children up to 18 years old, pregnant women, military personnel, and a few other groups are treated free of charge. Emergency medical and psychiatric care is provided to all patients regardless of their health insurance status.

All the above sound fine on paper. In reality, the huge number of Bulgarian citizens has no health insurance. According to the NHIF data, in December 2012 1.6 million (**22% of the population**) **had no health care insurance**. The majority of these people are the unemployed and people not in the work force (inactive). The Health Insurance Act states that the unemployed are obliged to pay health insurance contribution in the amount of 8.60 EUR per month, but those who regularly pay this sum are a small minority due to the poverty in which many of them live.

This problem is strongly exacerbated in the Roma community. According to the OSI study, **45.5% of the Roma do not have health insurance**. Even among the Roma who regularly pay their health insurance

¹⁵ <http://www.en.nhif.bg/web/guest/home>

and who should therefore have free access to medical services, many (15.2%) claim that their access to these services is not free (Metodieva et al, 2012, pp. 109-110).

One of the worst health-related problems affecting the young Roma (aged 15 to 25) is drug abuse. The number of users of heroin, marijuana, amphetamines and in recent years even cocaine has been growing alarmingly in large urban Roma ghettos in the country – for example Fakulteta neighbourhood in Sofia and Stolipinovo in Plovdiv. The drug abuse is a direct source of several other health and social risks. Many Roma heroin users share needles, engage in male and female prostitution and have unprotected sex with other members of the community, thereby substantially increasing the risk of spreading HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. In addition to drugs, alcohol and tobacco abuse are also widespread among young Roma – a problem exacerbated by the fact that they rarely use or have access to proper health and social care (Antonova, Marani, 2013).

Welfare and youth

Official data of the National Social Security Institute for February 2013 state that 392,748 people were officially registered as unemployed. Out of this number, only 121,988 (31%) had the right to unemployment benefits (NSSI, 2013).

The numbers regarding the unemployed youths represent an even gloomier picture. Out of 39,081¹⁶ **unemployed young people** (15-24), only 6,425 (**16.44%**) **receive unemployment benefits** (NSSI, 2013). It needs to be noted that due to short employment history, most young people have the right to receive benefits for no more than 4-6 months, which means that the number of youths receiving benefits varies considerably from month to month.

Bulgaria has the **second highest levels** (after Romania) **of poverty and social exclusion** for children and young people (but also for the total population) – between 40 and 45%. The ‘at risk of poverty’ indicator measures poverty in relative terms: poverty threshold is defined at 60% of the net median income. Bulgarian performance in another indicator – the severe material deprivation rate¹⁷ – is even worse. At 38% for children under 18 and 35% for youth aged 18-24, Bulgaria has the highest rate in the EU (European Commission, 2012, pp. 201-204). Both indicators show that young people are in a slightly higher risk of living in poverty and severe deprivation than the adult population.

As discussed above, the number of unemployed young people has been steadily growing since 2008. The unemployment is a source of numerous other problems the Bulgarian youth faces. A significant share of unemployed young persons lose their health insurance and therefore their access to free health care. According to the Mediana agency study from 2012, 22.2% of **unemployed young** do not have a personal doctor (general practitioner), and staggering **39.4% do not have health insurance**. The research also

¹⁶ The number presented by the National Social Security Institute is considerably lower than the number quoted by the National Statistical Institute (see Table 4).

¹⁷ Defined as percentage of the population that cannot afford at least four of the following nine pre-defined deprivation items: 1) to pay their rent, mortgage or utility bills, 2) to keep their home adequately warm, 3) to face unexpected expenses, 4) to eat meat or proteins regularly, 5) to go on holiday, or to buy a: 6) TV, 7) refrigerator, 8) car, or a 9) telephone.

pointed out an alarming tendency. What can be observed in recent years is a formation of a **youth underclass**, in which unemployment is not an exception, but a norm. Thus 11.2% of unemployed young people stated that all their friends and relatives are unemployed, and additional 38.3% added that most of them are without work. A logical presumption is that if abandoned by institutions and the society, such young and jobless underclass represents **a social time bomb**, which might explode in a very near future (Mediana, 2012, pp. 47-48).

Sofia

The unemployment rates for Sofia are much lower than for the rest of Bulgaria. At the same time, the unemployment benefits paid in Sofia are the highest. The average benefit in the capital in February 2013 was 197.60 EUR, compared to the average of 136.60 for the country. In February 2013, 15,424 people in Sofia were entitled to unemployment benefit – out of this number eight were younger than nineteen, 723 were aged 20-24 and 1,755 were aged 25-29 (NSSI, 2013).

The data of the National Statistical Institute¹⁸ show that in 2011, 22.3% of Bulgarians lived below the official poverty line. Sofia is a bit below the national average at 18.8%. Compared to 43.6% of Bulgarians who live in material deprivation, three out of 10 (29.1%) Sofia residents are unable to meet all the costs associated with the normal standard of living. The risk of living in poverty and social exclusion, this is a genuine problem for 37.1% (or 469,100 people) of Sofia residents against 49.1% for the entire country. These numbers are truly shocking – even more so when one considers that official poverty line in Bulgaria is defined at 1,746 EUR annual income for a single person or at 3,666 EUR for a family consisting of two adults and two children.

The **Social Assistance Department of the Sofia municipality** defines as one of its main priorities to facilitate diverse quality services to all citizens in disadvantaged social position, successful integration of disabled persons, overcoming the social isolation of elderly and improvement of well-being of children. **Young persons aged 19-24** are therefore **not listed as a target group** in need of special attention. Practically the only municipal programmes dealing with this age group are projects related to de-institutionalisation of children deprived of parental care, which aim at facilitating their transition from the social home to full-valued independent life.

Having said that, the Strategy for Development of Social Services for Children and Families in Sofia 2010-2013 includes among its priorities also programmes for keeping the homeless young people in schools and providing employment for young people leaving social homes. Unfortunately, the Strategy is not very concrete in explaining how these two goals could be achieved and leads to the impression that the efforts remain on declarative level.

¹⁸ See Indicators for poverty and social exclusion, http://www.nsi.bg/ORPDOCS/SILC_3_obl.xls

Strategy for Prevention of Social Exclusion in the City of Sofia 2011 - 2015¹⁹ focuses on Roma neighbourhoods with extremely high percentage of child mortality, early pregnancies (under 18 years), and addiction to drugs, alcohol and tobacco.

2.2.2. Housing

Housing has never been considered an overwhelmingly problematic issue in Bulgaria. Some of the reasons for this are historical. In the socialist period, the construction and prices of housing and property were controlled by the state. According to the Law on Property of the Citizens, each family or a single person had a right to own only one residential and one vacation property. The size and type of the housing depended on the number of family members. The state determined the prices of property, which meant that most of the Bulgarian families were able to buy an apartment (most often in ubiquitous concrete apartment blocks still dominating the landscape of Bulgarian cities today). The downside was the long waiting lists for obtaining permission to purchase the property.

All this has changed after 1989. The limited construction of new housing in combination with the increased demand pushed the housing prices progressively upwards. With the stabilisation of the economic situation in Bulgaria and a clear course towards EU membership, the Bulgarian property market became interesting for foreigners. In addition, numerous Bulgarians who emigrated during the 1990s started investing in property in the country, giving a push to a construction boom from 2000 to 2008, during which **property prices increased dramatically**.²⁰

The 2011 census data show that there are 2,666,733 inhabited housing units in Bulgaria. This means that on average, 2.8 persons live in each unit. For Sofia, this rate is slightly lower – 2.6 persons. A very telling piece of information is that out of these 2,666,733 units, 2,178,377 (**81.67%**) are **owned by people who live in them**. The residents of a further 188,376 units live there without paying rent. Although this group includes people who were unwilling to disclose that they in fact pay rent (most likely for reasons linked to tax evasion), it can be assumed that the majority of them are relatives or close friends of the owners of the property. People paying rent occupy only 6.43% (171,477) of all housing in Bulgaria. In 127,711 cases, owners live together with people who rent a part of the apartment/house (NSI, 2012c, p.36).

While it can be said that the housing situation of Bulgarians is relatively good, exactly the opposite is true for most Bulgarian Roma. A very interesting comparison between housing standards among ethnic Bulgarians and Roma can be seen in table below, which presents the living space in square meters per person.

¹⁹http://www.sofia.bg/strategii.asp?title=%D1%F2%F0%E0%F2%E5%E3%E8%E8%20%E8%20%EF%F0%EE%E3%F0%E0%EC%E8%A0&sub_open=50833

²⁰ <http://www.bulgarianproperties.bg/istoriya-na-balgarskiya-pazar-na-imoti.htm>

Table 6: Living space in square meters per person

sq.m.	less than 4	4 - 9.9	10 - 13.9	14 - 17.9	18 - 21.9	22 - 25.9	over 26
number of people							
Bulgarians	45,177 (0.8%)	630,713 (11.5%)	936,869 (17.1%)	949,618 (17.3%)	743,895 (13.5%)	573,859 (10.5%)	1,608,139 (29.3%)
Roma	52,583 (16.8%)	131,353 (41.9%)	57,060 (18.2%)	30,589 (9.8%)	16,096 (5.1%)	8,767 (2.8%)	16,737 (5.3%)

Almost one third of Bulgarians live in accommodation larger than 26 square meters per person, while **more than half of Roma live on less than 10 sq. meters per person**. In addition, 17% of Roma housing has no canalisation, and 8% have no running water, according to the census data (NSI, 2012c, pp.60-61). In opinion of experts, this is a serious understatement and the real situation is much worse – running water and sewage are available in only a third of Roma households (Zoon, 2001, pp. 134-135; Tarnovski et al, 2012).

Housing and the young

Despite the construction boom in the past decade and the fact that accommodation is anything but in a short supply, the traditionally low incomes in the country and the huge share of youth unemployment means that it is **very difficult for the young Bulgarians to leave the parental home**. Affording to buy (or rent) an apartment has become even more difficult since the beginning of the crisis. Not surprisingly, Bulgaria is among those European countries where the age at which the young depart from their family homes is the highest. On average, young men opt for (or can afford to do so) independent living after they turn 31, while young women (mostly on account of the fact that they marry slightly younger compared to men) do so when they are aged between 25 and 28. Comparing the data from 2005 and 2010, we can see that “departure age” has increased by 1.2 years for men and 1.3 years for women (European Commission, 2012, pp. 199-200).

The state has implemented only limited measures to help the young in their efforts to solve their housing problems. A tax relief was introduced for young families taking loans for purchasing an apartment. Young families who fulfil the conditions for a housing loan are in most cases couples with a permanent and stable income. This leaves out the large majority of the young who are single or/and unemployed.

Several Bulgarian municipalities have in recent years started constructing non-profit housing units to be rented to young families at prices much below the market rate. This is a new development, largely financed by the Operational Programme “Regional Development” (“Support of modern social housing for

vulnerable, minority and socially disadvantaged groups as well as other disadvantaged population groups”).²¹

Housing in Sofia

According to the Plan for Development of Sofia Municipality 2008-2013, there are 523,141 dwellings in the city. On average, the living space of Sofia residents is 27.75 sq.m floor area per occupant, which is below the standard laid down in the Master Plan of the Municipality (35-40 sq.m per occupant). The biggest challenge for the municipality is **renovation of the aged and depreciated building stock**. Many buildings in the city centre date to the inter-war period, while the outlying neighbourhoods predominantly consist of concrete apartment blocks from the socialist period (42% of all buildings in Sofia) (Sofia Municipality, 2007).

Despite the relatively high rate of available housing (436 dwellings per 1000 people) and active construction that started in the late 1990s and despite the crisis continues today, the visible degradation of huge share of older buildings represents an immense problem. The low standard of living of the population and the insufficient budget of the municipality are the reasons that for a very long period of time, this problem has not been sufficiently addressed. Some efforts were undertaken only in recent years – mostly with the assistance of EU’s OP “Regional Development.”

Another outstanding problem is the reconstruction of underprivileged Roma neighbourhoods, where living conditions often resemble the **third world slums**. Most of the buildings in these ghettos are illegal makeshift structures without heating and running water, and with improvised (often illegally connected) access to electricity.

There are no special programmes for housing accommodation for young people in Sofia. Municipal housing is provided to socially disadvantaged persons regardless of their age. With regards to young people, the Municipality provides temporary accommodation only for persons reaching the age of 18 who have to leave the institutions for children without parental care. Under these conditions, the length of stay in municipal lodgings is limited to two years. The idea is for the young people to get accustomed to more independent way of living, but this is often not possible within the prescribed time limit.

2.2.3. Education and training

General overview

Traditionally, education has enjoyed a very prominent and respected place in the Bulgarian society. It was one of the main pillars upon which the modern Bulgarian national identity was constructed. In the period of the Ottoman rule, a network of secular schools where education was conducted in Bulgarian language

²¹ <http://www.bgregio.eu/en/projects/81/bg161po001-1-2-02-2011-support-of-modern-social-housing-for-vulnerable--minority-and-socially-disadvantaged-groups-as-well-as-other-disadvantaged-population-groups.aspx>

led to the formation of the Bulgarian intellectual elite, which was one of the necessary preconditions for the success of the national liberation movement and independence of Bulgaria. Education was viewed as exceptionally important also in the communist period when the communist ideology and Marxist theory became the backbone of the educational process.

After 1989, successive governments attempted to reform the education into a modern system up to European norms and standards. The **quality of education, however, decreased dramatically**. Teachers are underpaid, schools are underfinanced, teaching methods and appliances are outdated and as a result – children are often unmotivated and unwilling to learn. Performance of Bulgarian pupils in all-European evaluations like PISA²² speaks for itself. The Bulgarian school children performed poorer than their peers in any other EU country except Romania (OECD, 2007; 2010).

The education system consists of the following levels: pre-primary education, elementary education, secondary education and higher education. Pre-primary education is optional and embraces children between 3 to 6/7 years old. Elementary and secondary education can be obtained at state, municipal or private schools, and is compulsory for children between the ages of seven and 16. According to the Law on National Education (from 1991 and amended many times since then – the last changes are from December 2012), education is secular and free of charge (Articles 5 and 6). The official language of instruction is Bulgarian, but children with a different first language have the right to study their mother tongue besides the compulsory study of the Bulgarian language.

In the 2012/13 school year, there were 2,040 schools in the country. A large majority of schools are public, with the exception of 69 private schools. The number of pupils attending these schools was 758,962. Both the number of schools and pupils has been steadily decreasing since 2000.

Most public schools are municipal schools and are financed from the municipal budgets. A smaller share of schools are state schools,²³ financed from the state budget. Although the increased investment in the recent years has improved standards to acceptable levels in many schools, especially in the larger cities, most schools across the country remain in a poor state of repair and have limited facilities due to **permanent underfunding**.

Bulgaria is around (or slightly above in case of men) the EU average regarding the share of young people (aged 20-24) having completed at least upper secondary education: 75% for females and 85% for males. Bulgaria is one of the countries with the largest gender imbalance.

One of the most alarming data is **the highest rate of NEETs** (young people not in employment, education or training) among the EU member states in 15-19 age group (15.8%) and in 20-24 age group (29%). In the 25-29 age group, Bulgaria (with the rate of 29.3%) is second only to Greece (Eurofound, 2012).

²² Programme for International Student Assessment is an internationally standardised assessment carried out by OECD.

²³ State schools are schools of national importance, financed by the state budget: they notably include schools for pupils with specific educational needs and schools that cater to the educational needs of more than one region in the country.

Main problems: Roma and drop-outs

One of the most pressing problems in education deals with the efforts to **integrate Roma children** into the education system. Until recently, a huge majority of Roma school children were segregated in Roma-only schools, where they received substandard education. Over the years numerous attempts were made to desegregate Roma schools and transfer the Roma children to general, or “integrated,” schools, but with little success. Despite the (declarative) determination of the authorities to bring segregation to an end, on the ground the resistance of Bulgarian parents (and quite often also teachers) in practice block the desegregation attempts (Hajdinjak, Kosseva, Zhelyazkova, 2012; Hajdinjak, Kosseva, Zhelyazkova, 2013).

According to the data from the 2011 census, 1.5% of the Bulgarian citizens aged nine or more are illiterate. The share of those who are illiterate is 0.5% among the ethnic Bulgarians, 4.7% among the Turks and 11.8% among the Roma. All children between the ages of even and 16 should attend school according to the law. However, **23.2% of the Roma children** in this age group **do not go to school**. The share of such children in the Turkish community is 11.9%, while for Bulgarians it is 5.6% (see NSI, 2011).

Table 7: Students and drop-outs by reasons and level of education in 2011/12

<i>Total</i>					
Students	758,962				
Drop-outs	18,450 (2.43%)				
I - IV grade					
Students	252,372				
Drop-outs	5,678 (2.25%)				
of which:					
Unwillingness	324	Family reasons	2,630	Went abroad	2,362
V - VIII grade					
Students	221,274				
Drop-outs	6,749 (3.05%)				
of which:					
Unwillingness	1,018	Family reasons	3,169	Went abroad	2,093
IX - XIII grade					
Students	282,512				
Drop-outs	6,016 (2.13%)				
of which:					
Unwillingness	1,661	Family reasons	3,176	Went abroad	912
Vocational colleges with selection after secondary education					
Students	2,804				
Drop-outs	7 (0.25%)				
of which:					
Unwillingness	..	Family reasons	3	Went abroad	..

Source: http://www.nsi.bg/ORPDOCS/Edu_2.2.1_en.xls

Table 8: Students and drop-outs

	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Total (I-XII grade)												
Students	1,074,946	1,046,477	1,043,432	1,021,671	978,693	938,365	904,911	860,042	820,210	797,036	781,665	758,962
Drop-outs (2.85%)	30,690 (2.85%)	28,000 (2.67%)	31,006 (2.97%)	31,552 (3.09%)	28,897 (2.95%)	27,255 (2.90%)	29,348 (3.25%)	23,365 (2.72%)	20,055 (2.44%)	19,583 (2.46%)	18,766 (2.40%)	18,450 (2.43%)

Source: http://www.nsi.bg/ORPDOCS/Edu_2.2.1_en.xls

The number of drop-outs (between 2.4 and 3.25% over the past decade) provided by the National Statistical Institute appears relatively small, especially if compared to the data in the EU Youth Report, which places the rate of early leavers from education at 13% (just below the EU average). A very positive development noted in the EU Youth Report is a **substantial decrease of early leavers in the 2000-2011 period** – from 21% to 13% (European Commission, 2012, p. 187).

According to a UNICEF survey,²⁴ the three most important reasons why children drop out of school are the following:

- The economic situation of the family in which the child lives. To a great extent, the economic situation of the households is associated with the ethnic background of their members (Roma).
- The ethnic background can be conducive to dropping out both for economic motives (low standard of living, unemployment, etc), as well for the so-called family reasons (early marriages and pregnancies, incomplete families).
- The school environment and the related educational factors (difficulties a child encounters in school; conflicts with classmates and/or teachers; prejudices and stereotypes towards children from certain ethnic communities).

Institutions, policies and services

- **Strategy for Prevention of Social Exclusion in the City of Sofia 2011 - 2015**²⁵ deals with the development of inclusive education for children from disadvantaged groups, focusing on Roma children.
- **Strategy for development of physical education and sports 2012 - 2020**²⁶ is aimed at developing conditions for practicing of sports in Sofia schools.
- **Strategy for Development of Culture in Sofia 2013 - 2023**²⁷ loosely touches upon the problems of the education of young people.

²⁴<http://www.erisee.org/downloads/2013/2/b/Bulgaria-UNICEF%20report%20ENG.pdf>

²⁵http://www.sofia.bg/strategii.asp?title=%D1%F2%F0%E0%F2%E5%E3%E8%E8%20%E8%20%EF%F0%EE%E3%F0%E0%EC%E8%A0&sub_open=50833

²⁶http://www.sofia.bg/strategii.asp?title=%D1%F2%F0%E0%F2%E5%E3%E8%E8%20%E8%20%EF%F0%EE%E3%F0%E0%EC%E8%A0&sub_open=57212

²⁷http://sofia.bg/pressecentre/foto/Sofia-Creative_Capital_2013-2023.pdf

Particular attention is directed towards the Roma community in Sofia and the Roma youth. The Sofia Municipality has adopted “**Municipal Strategy for the Decade of Roma Inclusion in Sofia for the period 2007 – 2013,**”²⁸ which lists the youth problems related to education and permanent unemployment together with other pressing issues of the community. As a side note, when an internet search is conducted with the keywords “Roma,” “youth” and “Sofia” – the top results include numerous news accounts about violent brawls between Roma youths or about attacks against Bulgarian youths. Only a few websites provide information about state or non-governmental institutions working to improve the situation of Roma youth in the city. This can also be viewed as an indicator of the media environment and the popular social attitude towards disadvantaged groups in Bulgaria.

2.3. Power, democracy, citizenship and civil participation

General overview

Considering most of the factors described in the previous sections (high unemployment, low standard of living, unsatisfactory quality of education and health care, inability to purchase housing, etc), one would expect that young people in Bulgaria would be at least as “indignated” and politically active as their peers in numerous other European countries. The reality, however, was much different for the better part of the last decade. Young Bulgarians were most often described as politically inactive, disinterested and unmotivated. They do not follow TV programmes or read print articles dealing with politics and are mostly interested in topics, which remain under the radar of the main political parties (Dimitrova, 2009).

Although most major political parties in Bulgaria have their youth sections, with few exceptions these youth political organisations have a rather limited range of activities and even more limited appeal for the average young person in the country. Most commonly, these organisations are viewed as incubators for the hand-picked future political leaders, whose development and career opportunities are shaped by the senior politicians (Smilova, 2008).

The majority of Bulgarians aged 18-29 believe that political activity and civic engagement make no sense because their actions would have no real impact. Public opinion surveys conducted in the periods before elections usually show that the young voters are the group with the highest share of “undecided” and those who are still uncertain whether to vote at all (Alpha Research, 2013; NCSPPO, 2013). The main reason for this, however, is not political disinterest or lack of motivation, but the fact that none of the major political parties seems to be able to attract or convince the young voters. This has been confirmed by the election results of the May 2013 general elections, as one third of the voters from 18-30 age group casted their votes for parties, which remained outside the National Assembly.²⁹

²⁸http://www.sofia.bg/strategii.asp?title=%D1%F2%F0%E0%F2%E5%E3%E8%E8%20%E8%20%EF%F0%EE%E3%F0%E0%EC%E8%A0&sub_open=41416

²⁹http://alpharesearch.bg/bg/socialni_izsledvania/socialni_publicacii.html

On the other hand, as seen from the Eurobarometer data, the political activity of the young Bulgarians fully coincides with the average EU results. In comparison with their European peers, young people in Bulgaria are less active in sports and less interested in working for the benefit of their local community, but have above average interest in environmental issues. This is confirmed by the fact that most of the youth protest movements that appeared in Bulgaria over the past years were motivated by demands for preservation of nature.³⁰

Table 9: Have you in the past year participated in any activities of the following organisations?

	EU27	BG
A sports club	35%	23%
A youth club, leisure-time club or any kind of youth organisation	22%	16%
A local organisation aimed at improving your local community	15%	9%
A cultural organisation	14%	14%
An organisation promoting human rights or global development	8%	8%
An organisation active in the domain of climate change/environmental issues	7%	10%
A political organisation or a political party	5%	6%
None of these	44%	59%

Source: European Commission, 2013b.

Table 10: During the last 3 years, did you vote in any political election at the local, regional or national level? If you were, at that time, not eligible to vote, please say so.

	Yes	Total 'No'
EU27	56%	44%
BG	56%	43%

Source: European Commission, 2013b.

Youth protest 2013

Youth protest movements in Bulgaria acquired a clear social-political agenda in the winter of 2012/13. High electricity bills provoked a series of protests, which started as an objection to the monopoly over energy distribution held by three foreign-owned energy companies, but soon grew into a nation-wide protest against the low standard of living and the established political parties. Bulgaria has seen its share of mass political protests, which on three occasions led to the fall of the government, but this has been typical for the 1990s. The February 2013 protests were the most large-scale event of its kind since the economic collapse of 1996-97. Their consequences were the resignation of the government and the snap elections in May 2013.

The fall of the government and a number of measures taken to relieve the economic pressure on the population (freezing of electricity and heating prices, additional social benefits for the most needy) have temporarily taken the steam out of the protest movement. The protestors failed to form a political organisation in the short period of time that was available before the elections.

The May elections resulted in a hung parliament. The coalition of the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) and the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF, party of the Turkish and other minorities) held exactly

³⁰ Most common causes that triggered youth eco-protests were extensive construction on the Black Sea coast, expansion of ski facilities on the territory of mountain national parks, construction of new nuclear power plant in Belene, shale gas drilling and other.

50% of the parliamentary seats and were one seat short of forming the government. The vote they needed came from the most unlikely direction – the leader of the extreme nationalist party Attack and a traditional arch-enemy of the MRF. In exchange, the Attack leader was given the post of the head of highly influential parliamentary commission for the fight against corruption. Additionally, media and social forums speculated about the financial weight of this implausible support.

In a matter of weeks, the new government demonstrated in a most unscrupulous and cynical way that its main priority was to serve interests of oligarchs and shady financial corporations. A series of absurd appointments (most notorious was an appointment of a media tycoon as the head of the State Agency for National Security) and scandalous actions and statements of the leading government officials have brought tens of thousands of protestors to the streets of Sofia and other larger towns.

At the time of writing of this report (end of July 2013), the protest are in their second month. The protestors have three main demands: immediate resignation of the government, amendments to the election code, and snap elections. The government in the meantime is playing a waiting game, convinced that the summer heat and the vacation season would somehow make the protestors go away. For now, the resolve of the protestors to continue until their demands are fully met seems only to grow stronger with each passing day.

3. Life for young people in Sofia

Sofia is the largest city in Bulgaria and it attracts many young and active people from the other parts of the country, as well as many uneducated and unqualified people who are not able to sustain themselves in their native settlements.

As in any other large city, the population of Sofia, including the youth, is very diverse and it does not have a uniform profile. Social contrasts are significant and especially evident in particular residential quarters.

On the one side, there are many well-educated, successful young professionals with a good standard of living and on the other side there are large groups of completely marginalized young people. The latter are not only Roma youth but also young people from socially vulnerable families or without families. Among these groups poverty is reproducing and spreading. In the socialist period the state artificially supported a generally uniform average standard of living with some minor differences between the different social groups. Today, analysts alert us to the existence of a second and third generation of population groups living in extreme poverty and almost at the edge of survival.

Another youth problem is the escalation of violence and aggression in schools. The media report increased number of instances of violent behaviour with serious consequences. Incidents are also registered in comparatively prestigious downtown schools. Many studies indicate a decrease in the average age of drug, alcohol and tobacco users. In the past 20 years, there is also a steady decline in the

quality of education as a whole. High school and university graduates are very often insufficiently qualified. At the same time, the universities maintain in their portfolios disciplines, which are not in demand at the employment market. Thus, many young people enter the employment market without the necessary skills, and are unable to start their first job.

The overview of different institutions (both governmental and non-governmental) indicates that the Bulgarian institutions undertake active effort to develop their youth policies in accordance with the European standards. The activities for implementing these policies are, however, fairly recent and they are still mostly at the level of declarations and expression of intentions.

It is also notable that Sofia does not yet have a dedicated municipal youth programme, while many other Bulgarian municipalities have developed such programmes based on the National Youth Strategy. Analysis of the available Sofia Municipality documents indicates that most priorities are in the area of developing health culture, conditions for practicing sports, prevention of disease and risk behaviour (use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco). There is also a focus on development of cultural and educational centres, and establishment of youth information and consulting centres.

Numerous youth events are organised in the city on various occasions, and there are many active youth organizations and initiatives. Nevertheless, the active participants in these organizations and events are mainly ethnic Bulgarians from middle and upper classes, especially ones with good education and employment. The disadvantaged youth remain isolated. This is above all valid for young Roma in Sofia – with no education, no access to the employment market, outside of the social life, and at the border with the criminal underworld.

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Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across
Europe

Cities in their national contexts

VENICE

Symptoms and causes of inequality affecting young people

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This report is part of Work Package 2 of the research project entitled “Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across Europe” (CITISPYCE). CITISPYCE has been devised against the back drop of research which shows the disproportionate impact of the global economic crisis on young people across Europe. This includes excessively high rates of youth unemployment (particularly amongst those who face multiple social, economic and cultural disadvantages) and threats to the social provision enjoyed by previous generations. CITISPYCE partners are working on a three year multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral programme to examine the current state of the art and ideas concerning social innovation against inequalities faced by young people, explore socially innovative practices being developed by and for young people in urban areas, and test the transferability of local models of innovative practice in order to develop new policy approaches. The CITISPYCE consortium covers ten European countries and is funded by the European Commission (FP7, Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities).

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1. The City of Venice – A short presentation

Geographical and administrative boundaries

The “City of Venice” is the capital of the Veneto Region, which today is one of the richest and most economically developed regions in Italy.

The label “City of Venice” refers not only to the historical centre of Venice (San Marco Square, the Rialto Bridge, gondolas, etc.), but to the entire administrative territory of the Municipality of Venice, including island territories, maritime coast territories and mainland territories.

The territory is divided into three main areas: “Old Town” (the old Venice, commonly known in the world), “Estuary” (the islands and the maritime coasts) and “Mainland” (the inner territory of the mainland). Within these areas there are six Municipalities divided into neighbourhoods.

The City increased significantly its territory in the early decades of the 1900 with the integration of the islands of Burano, Murano, Pellestrina and the integration of the industrialized areas of Marghera, Mestre, Zelarino and Favaro Veneto. After the aerial bombardments of the World War II these urban and industrial centres have significantly developed: the petrochemical and the shipbuilding industry have attained a considerable size, as well as the development of construction activity, which gave them the appearance of modern cities.

Demographic structure and dynamics

Venice has a population of 268,909 residents. The average age of the population is 47 years (Old Town 49, Estuary 48, Mainland 46). The population of the City is concentrated in the cohort aged 45-49 years (men 8.6%, women 8.2%) and in the cohort aged 40-44 years (8.1% men, 7.5% women). It should be noted the importance of the cohort aged 70-74 years, especially in the Old Town and in the Estuary. The

core cohorts of the working age (35-55 years old) are more obvious in the Mainland. As regards the youth population (aged 15-24) in the city, currently it corresponds to approximately 8% of the population.

The ageing of the population is a phenomenon particularly acute in the Old Town and in the Estuary, the migration of young couples and the newly formed families to the inland, coupled with the general decline of the residents' birthrate, make Venice a city with a high percentage of over 65-year-old-people.

The City is also involved in a double process of depopulation:

- a) an "historic", long-term and intense depopulation process, started after the World War II and intensified in the 1980s and 1990s and made up by the migration from the Old Town and from the Estuary to the Mainland;
- b) a newer and less acute depopulation process, made by emigration from the Mainland to the towns of the hinterland of the Province.

The first process is due to the availability of: job-placements created by both the industry; cheaper housing and cost of living; more modern and efficient services in the Mainland.

In the last decades, however, even in the Mainland there was a decline of residents; this process is linked to: the negative natural balance; the de-industrialization of Mestre and Marghera occurred in the late 1980s; the migration of residents to the peripheral urban belt towns, that lived a vibrant growth and lower offer prices and better quality of life.¹

There are 33,315 foreign nationals living in the city (www.dati.venezia.it) and correspond to more than 11% of the resident population, so they are considerably more than the proportion of Italy as a whole, which is 7.5%. Veneto is the third region in Italy as regards the number of foreign people.

The largest groups are from Bangladesh, Moldova, Romania, Ukraine and China. The immigrant youth population (aged 15-24) of the city is to 9,448 people, approximately 28% of the immigrant population.

The Mainland has the largest number of foreigners (almost 80% of immigrants living in the whole city of Venice). It is probably due to the fact that in the Mainland (in particular in Mestre and Marghera) there are more job opportunities and cheaper accommodations than in historic Venice.

According to the Statistical Sector of the Municipality of Venice the immigrant population is younger than the native one, and it is concentrated in cohorts of between 29 and 35 years. Immigration has contributed, in part, to the growth of the population of the Mainland, to its greater demographic dynamism, to the greater presence of residents in cohorts of working age and in contrast to the declining birth-rate.

¹ However, in the last decade the Mainland has marked a trend in contrast to the general situation of the City, being the only area in which, after years of reducing, the population has slightly increased.

Economic structure

The economy of the City of Venice is heterogeneous. In the Old Town it is heavily based on tourism and tertiary sector. Venice is the Italian city with the highest influx of tourists: nearly 30,000,000 people every year (mostly from abroad). Moreover, being the capital of the Veneto region and Venice Province, the City has got a strong presence of public administration.

The economy of the Mainland neighbourhoods characterized by the tertiary sector (in part banking, finance, insurances, marketing, logistic; in part ICT and commerce and in part low skilled jobs like laundry, catering, and care services); and industry. The industry is concentrated in the industrial district of Porto Marghera, one of the most important Italian industrial districts, greatly reduced compared to a few decades ago.

In the last 15-20 years the shape of the shipyards in Marghera has changed significantly following the introduction of new technologies and due to the systematic use of subcontracting and outsourcing.

Nowadays Marghera hosts the cutting-edge scientific park “Vega”, involved in research in new technology sectors operated especially by a highly skilled work-force.

The City is an important hub for communication and transport. The Venice port is one of the most important in Italy for the volume of commercial traffic (6%), and one of the most important in the Mediterranean regarding the cruise sector (29%).

Venice airport is the third largest airport in Italy (after Rome and Milan) for passenger traffic volume. The area is also an important railway and highway junction at national and European level.

The political culture

Starting from the beginning of the 1990s in Veneto the populist, regionalist and anti-immigrant party Northern League (Lega Nord) gained a high electoral consensus², especially at the city level (a large number of municipalities are currently governed by the Northern League), where it has deployed a strong anti-immigration political discourse.

However, the case of the City of Venice largely moves away from this regional political scenario, due to the long working class tradition. In fact, since the post-war period, Venice and particularly Mestre and Marghera have been characterized by a dominance of left parties, by an important presence of the Trade unions and of the working class.

² The Lega Nord has been the first party in Veneto (regarding the number of voters) for many years during the Eighties and currently also Veneto Region is governed by the Lega Nord, that in 2010 regional elections gained 35% of the votes.

The productive and social transformation connected with the de-industrialization process, that has emptied the trade unions and made the political weight of the communist movements less influential, changed the political scenario of the City. Despite this, the city has still been characterised mainly by leftist inclination.

2. Inequality in the City and the response to it

In this section we try to figure out the symptoms and the causes of inequalities connected to the labour market, education and training, housing and civil participation, having a particular focus on the inequalities which affect young people. Some local measures targeted to young people in order to tackle inequalities will also be presented. Moreover, we describe the main feature of the Italian welfare regime and its main critical points.

2.1. Economy and labour market

Young people in the labour market

Before the economic crisis (2007), the unemployment rate of young people between 15-24 years old in Italy was 20.3%, but in 2012 the unemployment rate increased to 35.3% and in the early 2013 is 41.9%. There are 611,000 people aged 15-24 years old looking for a work ,representing more than 10% of the population in this age group.³

In 2007, the share of unemployed young people aged 15-24 without a job for the last year or more was 8.1% (151,000), but in 2012 this percentage rose to 17.2% (297,000) and in early 2013 is 20.4% (339,000).

In 2011 Italy had one of the highest youth (aged 15-24) long-term unemployment rate in the EU 27 (47.1%), together with Slovakia (54.4 %), Bulgaria (49.8 %) and Ireland (45.8 %) (EC 2012). A few years before, in 2007, the long-term unemployment was 40%, therefore, showing a strong increase since the onset of the crisis. As regards the youth unemployment ratio (15 to 24), which represents the proportion of unemployed people over the total population in the same age group, it is approximately 8%, under the EU27 average (9.1%) (Eurofound 2012). Moreover, temporary employment in Italy is also considerably high and it has significantly increased from 2007 (40%) to 2011 (50%), while the EU27 average is 40%.

The share of young people aged 15-24 in temporary employment because they could not find a permanent job in 2007 was 30% while in 2011 it has been increased until more than 40%.

³ Source: Istat

In 2011, the employed with non-Italian citizenship between 15-30 years old were 455,000 (14.2% in this age group), and the unemployed were 100,000 (11.8%). The employment rate of 15-30 years old foreign nationals was 44.5% (32.5% of Italians), while the unemployment rate 17.2% (20.4%).

Compared to Italians, young foreigners are more stable from the contractual point of view: the incidence of “atypical” employment (which often is a precarious job) is 26.6% (33.4% of Italians)⁴ and 72% had a permanent contract (64.8% Italian).

At the same time, however, the greater vulnerability of their professional status is evident: foreigners are concentrated in services (46.2%) and industry (21.7%), like the Italians, but they are over-represented in construction and in agriculture (respectively 25% and 23.1% of total). 83.2% are simply labourers, only 10.2% officers (49% Italian), representing 26% of all workers, 3.6% of officers and 3.9% of foremen, aged between 15-30 years. 28.1% perform a low-skilled job, 64.4% a medium-skilled position (mainly semi-skilled workers), only 7.5% high-skilled (42.3% Italian).

Many immigrants of all generations have had to take out bogus work contracts (especially as domestic servants) and pay social security contributions as if “employed” and, therefore, to renew their residence permit, while they were waiting for a real work. The crisis has also prompted many young wives and adolescents to enter the labour market (the second group often abandoning their studies) to supplement the family wage and to safeguard the family residence permit, but they are forced to accept precarious and low skilled jobs (i.e. in tourism sector, or catering, or domestic work), sometimes even in the shadow economy, which is sadly a structural component of the Italian economy (Cillo, 2010). That is at least one of the reasons explaining the high number of employed amongst immigrants of all generations, despite the crisis, but it also explains the systematic professional underskilling suffered by immigrants, in addition to the disregard of qualifications and lack of access to professional associations and the public sector for those without Italian citizenship.

In the Veneto Region, 11% of the total workforce has a temporary job because they could not find a permanent one and the total number of young unemployed (15-29 years old) are 9%.⁵ Before the crisis, the youth employment rate was 54% (404,000 employed), after 2008 these amounts have dropped progressively below 50% to reach 44% in 2011 (316,000 employed). The unemployment rate has risen since 2008, to 15.7% in 2011.

The impact of the crisis on young people is strong: it is demonstrated by a delayed entry in the labour market, with reduced volume of employment in terms of the number of subjects and as average days of employment. This tendency is confirmed by the trend of hiring, decreased from 56,000 in 2008 to 34,500

⁴ Source: Fondazione Leone Moressa

⁵ Veneto Lavoro, 2012.

in 2011 for 15-19 years old , and from 120,900 to 103,700 and from 123,800 to 102,200 for 20-24 and 25-29 year old, although between 2010 and 2011 there was a slight recovery.⁶

There are no data regarding the City of Venice, but for the target of 15-29 years old people, it is possible to assume roughly the same regional trend, with the employment rate and unemployment rate slightly lower (40.8%, 13.2%), although the second one is growing.

A recent survey of 472 working students between 18-34 years old (only 4.4% of whom were more than 30 years old) in Venice (Cillo *et al.*, 2013) reveals that they are mainly employed in low or medium level and executive jobs, like salesman, administrative and secretarial works, care services.

The research highlights the frequent inclusion in tertiary unskilled, often in large companies in merchandising distribution, catering, entertainment (the so-called “McJobs”) – a segment of the labour market that has seen a progressive deterioration of working wages and conditions – but also in small and small-medium enterprises (32.9%, 26.1%) and the need for almost 20% of the sample to perform two jobs.

Projects to tackle labour inequalities

The Veneto Region has implemented a labour policy programme structured in a number of different lines of action, one of these – “Tools for youth employment” – aims to offer young people more opportunities, acting on the difficulties of placement. The objective is to contribute to the revival of the apprenticeship as a contract for stable insertion of young people through an agreement between the Minister of Labour and the President of the Region. This agreement covers a trial apprenticeship in right and duty as part of the vocational training courses and high-level courses (secondary education and university).

Veneto is also committed in strengthening the use of internships, but – at the same time – also to monitor it, in order to avoid abuse and misuse of this institution.

Moreover, Veneto has also planned an experimental programme aimed at promoting the employment of young people through the integration of the tools of practical training, vocational guidance and training contracts: The “First job agreement”, which is an agreement between students, schools and training centres and companies aimed to outline a project of vocational integration path consistent with the education-training for each student. In this way, the Region intends to encourage training institutions to develop joint projects with companies and vice versa through a technical and financial support.

The “Employment service” of the Region (“*Servizio per l'impiego*” – Spi) also organizes specific training opportunities and internship experiences, aimed at increasing the employability and targeted primarily at young people (87.5% of users, 9% foreigners) so that they can shape the academic skills acquired through

⁶ Veneto Lavoro, 2012.

a minimum of work experience. The internships take place especially in services (60%), but also in heavy industry (14.2%), in the services (13.5%) and in the so-called “made in Italy” (10.3%).

The most recent regional planning (which provides for a budget of 10 million euro) provides training interventions aimed to the insertion or the re-employment of young people without relevant previous professional experience, but with good education (high school or secondary school graduation) in need of professional competences (44 long journeys with internship in a company and the final qualifying examination). There are 98 projects of which 30 are in the energy sector, 30 in tourism and catering and 10 in the upper computer. They have involved over 1,200 users (36% women). 52,000 hours of training over 42% has been organised as an internship in a company.

The Veneto Region has also developed the following training courses aimed at providing safe employment: in the workplace, Italian for foreigners, job guidance, local language and culture, professional (re)qualification, basic computing, entrepreneurship, financial education.

The Region has also developed projects, aimed at immigrant workers, defining the following priorities in the provincial plan: training and information to workers on work health and safety (particularly in the construction building sector); training and information at the provincial level to promote awareness of the language and of local culture to foreigners operating in care work with elder people, training and updating of service operators and door business operators, online merchants and linguistic-cultural mediators; coordination with police departments and prefectures in relation to the new legislation on the so-called “integration agreement”.

With regard to the provision of training at the provincial level, the Veneto Region was one of the first to establish branches of professional placement and try to cross job supply and demand in particular for female immigrant care-workers.

Between 2009 and 2010, some pilot projects for knowledge and assistance on “new inequalities” have been started, they have the objective of pursuing employment outcomes for 20 people, they also aim to deepen the knowledge of new social phenomena and develop new models of intervention, with particular reference to that of the new inequalities. Among the expected results, as well as job placement, include research reports and policy indications.

The Province of Venice included the programme “Inclusion – Innovative System for Persons with Difficulties Place to Work”, which has been implemented in the years before the economic crisis. It aims to create the conditions for the employment of the most vulnerable subjects in the labour market and to build an inter-network system for the social and work inclusion of disadvantaged citizens.

There are, in addition, projects implemented by some social cooperatives in the City of Venice, with the support of public institutions, EU included (European Social Fund).

2.2. Welfare regimes

In his famous book *The three world of welfare capitalism* Esping-Andersen (1990) classified the Italian welfare state as part of the conservative-corporatist welfare regime, together with the states of continental Europe (Netherlands, Germany and France). This classification was due to its origin, largely centred on Bismarckian social insurance principle typical of all Continental welfare regimes. A later categorization by Ferrera (1996) points out that Italy has specific features more similar to other Southern Europe welfare states than to the Continental one. In particular Italian welfare has been marked out by two “distortions” (Ferrera 1996): an *allocative* distortion, which means that it favoured old age risks at the expense of other risks, and a *distributive* distortion, due to strong disparities of treatment across sectors and categories and between employed and non-employed. In particular, the main difference opposed workers located in the core sectors of the labour market, which benefit from a generous protection in terms of social insurances, to those located in the more peripheral sectors, as semi-regular and unemployed, which suffer an insufficient social protection.

2.2.1. Access to social income, social and health services

Italy does not have a minimum income which can support people in disadvantageous conditions, like for instance the *Revenu Minimum d'Insertion* in France; a similar device (*Reddito minimo di inserimento*) was tried at the beginning of the 2000s in a number of selected municipalities, but it has never become a national legislation, so that the possibility of instituting a minimum income is left to each single municipality. It has also to be highlighted that with the federal reform in 2001 social assistance has become an issue fully devolved to regional responsibility. Even if a minimum level of inter-regional homogeneity has been foreseen by the Law 328/2000, which has reformed the social assistance issue, actually so far the so called LEP (Essential level for the social assistance policies) has never been defined. The federal reform has, therefore, exacerbated the already existent differences among the regions in terms of efficiency and effectiveness in the social assistance measure. Four models of regional social services have been recently identified, using as indicators the level of social expenditure and the preference of the regions for service supply or money transfer (Madama 2010). A first cluster of regions is characterised either by a low level of social expenditure or service supply: the southern regions belong to this group; the second and the third cluster both represent advanced welfare system, but while the first is centred on cash transfers to families (Veneto can be included here), the second is more oriented towards the provision of services (Emilia-Romagna, Piedmont, Liguria and Tuscany have been categorized in this cluster); the fourth cluster includes regions of the centre of Italy such as Marche, Abruzzo and Umbria, where the level of social expenditure and service supply is medium. Everywhere the local level is responsible for the actual formulation of policies interventions and implementation.

Similarly to other Bismarckian welfare regimes, the Italian welfare state comprehends social security for workers and their families and social assistance for the poor. Unemployment benefits are managed by the central government and are contributory, which means that a worker can apply for this benefit just if he/she has worked at least a minimum amount of weeks (52) during the preceding 2 years. Young people looking for their first job cannot, therefore, apply for unemployment benefit and, as a minimum income benefit is lacking, they are in a disadvantageous position. In general young people suffer these kinds of inequalities (they are not covered by unemployment benefits) because they have not worked enough days for obtaining the benefit.

Referring strictly to indicators used by the EC it is possible to infer something about the extension of youth poverty at the national level, even if the corresponding data is not available at city level. The at-the-risk-of-poverty rate is 30% for 18-24 age groups, which means that it is slightly higher than for both the general population and under 18s (EC 2012). Another indicator of poverty is the severe material deprivation rate. In Italy in 2010 this rate for the 18-24 group was the same for the under 18 group (8%), but slightly higher than for the rest of the population

Concerning health care, in Italy there has been a National Health System since 1978, which means that health care does not depend on the possession of a social insurance, unlike e.g. from the unemployment benefit, which requires a minimum time of contribution in order to be delivered. Medical visits to family doctors are free, as well as hospital recovery, while for all the other health services (diagnostic test and referrals) and for drugs co-payments are required and they have been raised during the past decades.

2.2.2. Housing

Looking at the whole social expenditure in Italy, housing is probably the sector which has most suffered from the predominance of the expenditure on the pensions. As a matter of fact, housing has traditionally had a residual role in the Italian welfare state. The housing market in Italy, similar to what happens in Spain, is based to a great extent on ownership and the rental sector is in general small; moreover, the presence of the public sector (social housing) is low and insufficient. In general, there are scarce opportunities for affordable housing for young people and also young persons experience high difficulties in obtaining credit and loan in order to purchase a house. This could be one of the reasons why young people leave the parental households later than in western and northern Europe (more than 28 years old) and later than the average in EU 27 which is 25.1 for young women and 27.5 for young men).

At the city level, the high cost of housing in the Old Town (30,000 €/sqm) pushes young people to the neighbourhoods of the Mainland.

The Regional Law 14/09, known as the “House Plan” (“Piano casa”), is aimed to boost the construction activity, to expand the existing buildings and to improve their quality construction. This law, however,

aims mainly to the improvement and restoration of the so-called “first residential housed” owned by the residents themselves.

There is a specialized agency, Ater (“Azienda Territoriale per l’Edilizia Residenziale della Provincia di Venezia” – Territorial Enterprise for Housing of the Province of Venice) that, on behalf of local authorities, is responsible for construction, setting out and lease of public buildings at controlled retail prices. Ater and the City of Venice Municipality developed the project “Provo casa” (“Trying home”) which aims to assign public housing to young people aged 18-30, using also a national fund (“National Youth Plan”). The plan aims not only to assign flats, but it also aims to promote a new culture of living the neighbourhood and to promote environmental sustainable styles of life among young people (www.atervenezia.it).

Some considerations about youth policies in Venice

As is the case of most area plans, youth policies start from some specific analysis, but quickly become prey to the dominant and stereotypical categories of the social services sphere; from the issue of employment the policies move to those of social prevention, information or psycho-educational projects.

Thus, the lack of autonomy disappears in favour of initiatives aimed to guide access to the services offered. The alliances within the service – that are gradually defined in the work of network – support and launch the set of services and projects, both traditional and innovative. On the one hand, the analysis of institutional and non-profit subjects and their activities is pertinent, and ranges from innovative, preventive and promotional activities (such as in the case of new addiction: gambling, for example) to those more “traditional”, therapeutic and/or residential (as in the case of therapeutic communities for drug addicts); on the other hand, at least formally, a coherent and organic connection with the initial statements seems to be missing, which would provide an expansion of alliances with other public policy areas, other non-profit and for-profit subjects and other types of projects, such as those that appear in the Youth Participation Service.

The premises from which this service is moving are decidedly different and aimed to enhance participatory processes in which the protagonists are directly the young people, hence the interest in the issue of youth movements, peace, environmental protection, solidarity and cooperation.

Moreover, the intra-organizational dimension of the youth policies tends to create overlap; sometimes even within the same institution (region and municipality) different services co-exist that deal with similar issues with very different approaches and languages. The risk is to reproduce, on the vertical scale, ambivalent dynamics (that already characterizes the relationship between the central state and local governments) and, on a local scale, the risk is that the same institution eventually launches different signals in terms of proposals, initiatives, projects)that seem to come from different institutions.

This only remains in the public sphere: without having described the framework of the inter-institutional relations between the different types of actors (for-profit, non-profit, religious, etc.) that make up – inform and co-construct – the local policies.

The framework is fragmented and - beyond the importance of the individual projects and the validity of the skills embedded within some organizational structures – fated to discontinuity, that is to say marked by the possibility that even laudable initiatives fail to tackle the causes that make unequal the biographies of young Venetians.

2.2.3. Education and training programmes

The Italian school system

In Italy, education is compulsory for children between 6 and 16 years of age and provided either by public and private institutions.

The Italian school system provides:

- preschool education divided in two stages: from 0 to 2 years and 3 to 5 years;
- the first cycle of education, which includes primary school and secondary school of 1st level. Primary school lasts 5 years (6-10), the secondary school of 1st level lasts 3 years (11-13);
- the second cycle of education, consisting in the secondary school of 2nd level that lasts 5 years (14-18).

The secondary school of 2nd level has the following options:

- high school (classical, scientific, artistic, linguistic, music and dance, human sciences); technical institute (economic, technological);
- vocational school (services, industry, crafts). .

At the local level, Vocational Training Centres (Centri di Formazione Professionale) are also active, devoted to the attainment of a recognized professional qualification.

The final cycle of education is university: access is allowed for students ending a five-year bachelor of the secondary school of 2nd level.

In 2011, 1.5% of young people aged 20-24 finished at least the primary school (47,000); 22% had finished the whole first cycle of education (687,000); 5.8% (182,000) the vocational school; 64.6% the high school or the technical institute (2,021,000); 6.15 the university (192,000).⁷

⁷ Source: Istat

Eurostat Data (EC 2012) show a decreasing trend in the Italian early leavers from education and training (from about 24% of 2000 to about 18% of 2011), similar to the EU-27 rate (in 2011 it was 13.5 %, 3.5 percentage points less than in 2000). Early leaving has a strong gender dimension: men are more affected than women with about 21% against 15%; on average in the EU-27 men 15.3%, women 11.6%.

Among people aged 20-24 the rate of persons having completed at least secondary upper education has increased in the last decade: in 2001 there were 70% while in 2011 they reached approximately 78%, slightly lower than the EU27 as a whole (80%). There are some differences between men and women, with more men having finished at least upper secondary education (70% of women reached upper secondary education).

The proportion of NEETs in Italy is one of the highest in the EU27, corresponding to around 21% among 15-24 years old, similar to other Southern European countries, and to Bulgaria, Romania and Ireland (Eurofound 2012). These data have strongly risen with the onset of the economic crisis in 2008, whereas in the previous years it stood at 16.6%. The percentage of foreigners among NEET is 33%.

In Veneto NEET rates are lower than the national ones (15.6%), but they have been increased a lot between 2008 and 2010 (5% more). Wide differences between the south and the centre north of Italy, with NEET rates in 2010 of 26.7% and 14.9% respectively.

Although the Veneto region shows 8 percentage points lower than the national average, the figure represents an increase of 5% compared to 2008 (from 130,000 to 180,000) in the age group 15-34 years.

As regards foreign students, in Venice they are 11,515, 11.8% of the total population, one of the highest rates in the whole Veneto region.

Programmes to tackle school inequalities

The City Council has developed a sort of municipal welfare particularly inclusive to immigrant families and aimed to support the so-called “second generation”, which provides both a minimum economic support, in the most critical situations, and the activation of a series of projects aimed to this part of the population and with specific attention to the school and training dimension.

First of all, the project “Tutti a scuola” (“Everyone at school”) and the project “Ricongiungimenti familiari” (“Family reunifications”) that provide for a net-working between the City Council, Prefecture and schools, should be noted. This network aims to support the school achievement of the newcomer children through the activation of schools from the early stages of the immigrant family reunification process in Italy, mediation between school and family activities, educational advice activities for parents and teachers and guidance activities for pupils and families.

In addition to these projects, there is a “package” of programmes aimed to the “School achievement and other activities for foreign families with children”. This “package” includes:

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- cultural and linguistic mediation service in the school;
- the project “Oasincittà (Oasis within the city) – guidance in choosing the school for adolescents and families”;
- the programme “Free workshops for socialization and communication in Italian language”;
- the programme “Homework-space”;
- support for the process to obtain the recognition of foreign degrees and to start a possible re-training;
- the project “Laboratory-school for socialization and communication” - aimed to offer to the foreign students a first support in the acquisition of Italian and a more complex response to the different needs of socialization and integration in the new social context.

Furthermore, the City offers the “Service to the right and duty to education and training”, which provides information about education, training and work; information with respect to schools and training courses; advised by experienced operators and support for students in difficulty with respect to their education and to the ones that are thinking to dropout or to change school.

In the City of Venice there are 25 sites that offer free courses of Italian language for immigrants, including several courses with baby-sitting service for young mothers, as well as the project “Intrecci” (“Weaves”) which includes language workshops for immigrant women. The courses are offered by the City Council and other stakeholders (institutions for adult education, public services, social cooperatives, associations, social voluntary groups, trade unions, etc.) and coordinated by the City Council itself through the project “Italiano in rete” (“Network in Italian”). The City Council also manages – in collaboration with associations and social cooperatives – a number of projects in order to “integrate” and support the so-called “unaccompanied foreign children” and young asylum seekers which are included in educational projects.

Several subjects of tertiary sector are authors of several cross-cultural projects that, within schools, are addressed especially to young people of immigrant background.

The projects to tackle drop-out are run by the municipalities.

There are, in addition, some other projects run by NGOs that aim to limit the drop-out of pupils – in particular of those with non-Italian citizenship.

At the provincial level, it should be reported the project “Ideas against discrimination”, which aims to promote the inclusion of foreign children in secondary schools through integrated programmes of education legal information and training.

Finally, it should be noted the contribution of the Adult Education Provincial System (EdA) for the education and training after school age, which offers the possibility to resume interrupted studies, achieving a new qualification, attend a specialization in structures vocational training, fit into paths of basic education, including general education or to achieve secondary school of 1st level diploma. Several possibilities are also aimed to the young adult foreigners, including many Italian language courses. Among those actors that make up this system, in addition to the schools, should be added the Permanent Territorial Centres (“Centri Territoriali Permanenti”) for the training of adults and the wide range of evening classes.

Few of these proposals can address the structural causes of school and training inequalities. These projects give a central and fundamental role to the Italian language learning; if it is undoubtedly important, it has to be noted that it not the unique element determining inequalities between young people, especially for those who, although formally not yet in possession of the citizenship, are born and educated in Italy.

While, on one hand, the inclusive nature of the welfare in Venice should be emphasized, on the other hand, it should be emphasized that the limits of the general welfare organization and the weakness of its local dimension: a fragmentation of its administrative-territorial action possibility and, therefore, the inability to organically intervene on the structural links that inevitably require a broader coordination.

2.3. Power, democracy, citizenship and civil participation

Political turnover

During the last two years Italy has undergone a collapse in the trust in political institutions and in particular in political parties⁸, it is particularly worthy to investigate the political participation of young people in the general scenario dominated by a growing distrust in politics and politicians. It is in fact well known that in 2011, after the end of the Berlusconi government - caused either by various moral and judiciary scandals or by the underestimation of the economic and financial crisis - a so-called technocratic government, whose premier was Mario Monti, was ruling the country until the beginning of 2013. The main goal of the Monti government was recovering the collapsing Italian finance and it tried to achieve it through a number of austerity measures. In February 2013 the electoral results of the national elections were unforeseen, even for the survey institutions, given that the two main parties (the right-wing Freedom Party [*Partito della Libertà*] and the centre-left-wing Democratic Party [*Partito Democratico*]) lost millions of voters, while the Five Stars Movement (M5S), founded in 2009 by ex comedian Beppe Grillo, gained an impressive and completely unexpected percentage of votes: more than 25% at the national level

⁸ See: the Report on Italy by Eurispes <http://www.eurispes.eu/content/la-fiducia-dei-cittadini-nelle-istituzioni-rapporto-italia-2013>, last access on 5th June 2013.

(House of Deputy) and the same percentage in the Veneto region. This movement, which was born with a clear protesting aim, has collected its consensus mainly through the web and the social networks. Its leading issues are: recovering morality and honesty in politics, strong criticism addressed to traditional political parties, severe cuts in the costs of politics, focus on environment issues and promotion of a direct democracy through the use of Internet. The vote for M5S has been interpreted by many observers as a protesting vote, due to the increasing distrust in traditional parties. M5S has particularly collected votes from people who voted for left-wing parties and the Northern League (a strong populist party) in the last elections. Looking at the M5S's voters it comes to light that the great majority of them are young people, in particular under 23. A survey from LaPolis conducted in March 2013⁹ reveals that 39 per cent of young people aged 18 to 24 have declared that what has counted most in their electoral choice has been the willing of to protest and this percentage rises to 45 per cent as regards people between 25 and 34 years old.

Still remaining with the issue of the turnout of young people in political elections, it is interesting to highlight that in May 2013 there was a significant decrease in participation in the regional elections (63.38 per cent of the potential voters, the lowest turnout in the history of the republic in Italy) and a decrease for the M5S, the “young peoples’ party”, as some observers called it, because many young people have supported and voted for it in the national election just a few months before. The high percentage of non voters, in particular among young people, is a clear signal regarding the political disaffection of young people looking at the contentious and inconclusive politicians elected in the Parliament only three months before.

Participation in activities of various organizations

Looking at the traditional and structured forms of youth organization, the Flash Eurobarometer survey reveals that 52 % of Italian young people aged 15 to 30 had participated in an organization¹⁰ in the year leading up to the survey. The most common organization was sport clubs (36%, most of them aged 15-19) and youth organizations (22%), while just 6% had participated in activities of political organization or political party. Concerning the corresponding number of participation at Venice city level, there is a lack of data, making thus making it impossible to compare national and city level.

Other forms of participation

Participation in formal organizations is not the sole indicator of civil participation, especially for young people who actively are involved in other forms of participation. At the national level a survey led by

⁹ LaPolis survey, March 2013, based on 1500 interviews.

¹⁰ The options included in the survey were: sports club; youth club, leisure-time club or any kind of youth organization; cultural organization; political organization or a political party; local organization aimed at improving your local community and/or local environment; organization active in the domain of global climate change/global warming; organization promoting human rights or global development; any other non-governmental organizations”

Demos in 2012 reveals that 45% of Italian young people aged 15-24 have taken part in initiatives linked to environment and territorial issues, 39% have been involved in public demonstration on various issues, 21% have been committed in boycotting some specific brand and 32% have been active in political discussion by internet.

In relation to Venice city, in general it is important to point out that this territory has a long and remarkable tradition linked to catholic associations which have channelled civil and political participation of a great number of young people. Moreover, Venice has been characterized by a significant environmental commitment where young people have been traditionally protagonists. Two committees are currently the symbol of this commitment: “*No Mose*” and “*No Grandi Navi*”. They were born in the first decade of 2000 and supported by many young Venetians and young students in Venice’s universities. *No Mose* fights against the building of a majestic structure which eventually could stop the phenomenon of the so called “high water” in Venice, linked to the high tide (the name of the project reminds the Jewish crossing of the Red Sea as it is described in the Bible); *No Grandi Navi* committees fights against the transit of the big ships (“*grandi navi*”) next to San Marco square, due to a number of ecological reasons (noise, electromagnetic, etc. pollution).

Regarding the civil participation of young people linked to the communist tradition we mention two social centres where the participation of young people is very high: “*Rivolta*”, based in Marghera and “*Morion*” (a smaller one), based in the centre of Venice. A group of volunteers, most of them young, organize and supervise a large number of activities from course of Italian to legal advice for immigrants; they are also committed in the two environment committees *No Mose* and *No Grandi Navi*.

Institutions, policies and services

Looking at the institutions and the services in place to facilitate the activities of the organisations where young people participate, a significant organisation in Venice is “*TuttiDirittiUmanipertutti*” (Human Rights for everybody). It is a network of more than 40 organisations and NGOs based in Venice and it intends to enhance new citizenship practices and in general human rights.

Centro Pace (Peace Centre) is another important organisation founded in 1983. It is a public service that organizes and gives support to activities linked to peace, multiculturalism, solidarity. It works in a strict collaboration with many other actors such as civil society organisations, religious institutions, unions, schools.

2.4. Causes of inequalities

The deficiency and the historical distortions of Italian welfare state are surely among the main causes of inequalities in the various social policy sectors. In particular, the welfare state in Italy still suffers for some original sins, namely:

a) It has clearly favoured certain risk/functions of social policy (most notably old age) at the expense of others: family benefits and services, total lack of employment/income and the relief of poverty. For instance, by 1980 pension expenditure was almost seven times higher than that on family benefits, which was the highest ratio in the EC except for Greece. The situation has been ameliorated since the 1990s and the first decade of the 2000s due to several legislative interventions in particular in the field of pension. Italy has been forced to pass these welfare modernizations in order to join the EU monetary union foreseen by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992.

b) It has been centred on occupational status. All “bismarkian” systems give rise to some disparity of treatment across sectors and categories as well between employed and not employed, but in Italy there has been a true labyrinth of categorical privileges which has few comparative counterparts. Moreover, in Italy there is no unemployment benefit for the long term unemployed and for young people in the transition between education and labour market; at the same time active labour policies are still in their infancy.

c) It has a strong “familistic” approach, typical of Mediterranean welfare regimes such as Greece, Portugal and Spain. Familism is based on the idea that family can and has to work as social security cushion for its members and, therefore, that it can carry out a number of functions like child, elderly and disabled people care, guarantee an income in case of unemployment or other events that produce an absence of income. The state gives very few services and some money transfer in order that families can eventually find caregivers on the market.

This approach is producing more and more inequalities in particular among immigrants, which often do not have a wide family support.

In addition to those, we argue that two other factors have been responsible for inequalities. The first is the high weight of marginal and black/informal economy which Italian governments have tacitly accepted for many years, despite workers in marginal and black economy do not benefit of the social insurances and their job is extremely precarious. The second factor is linked to the disadvantage that immigrants suffer especially in the labour market and education: one of the most significant causes of it is represented by national migration policy and by regulations about the legal stay in Italy. They make very difficult for immigrants to keep a legal status. The Immigration Law of 2002 (Bossi-Fini) in particular has established a close connection between the legality of residence and the possession of a job contract; in other terms it has re-introduced the figure of *gastarbeiter* but in a context of economic recession, job insecurity and flexible labour market, that nevertheless in Italy is not accompanied by the security like in Denmark. Immigrants are thus forced to accept any jobs in order to avoid the administrative irregularity that becomes a fact after six months of unemployment. The situation has been worsened during the economic crisis.

Young people of immigrant origin seem to be more discriminated against than the young Italians in a very flexible labour market, segmented by “ethnic” lines (and, often, not sparing even those who have acquired citizenship). The need to integrate the family wage, to safeguard a residence permit, the lack of family support can explain the higher employment and activity rates and lower unemployment rate respects Italians, it adds diversity to school trajectories: while many Italians in the younger age groups are still students, foreigners are already in the labour market.

3. Life for young people in the City of Venice

The three areas of the City of Venice, despite their different forms of society, daily lives and problems, display common socio-economic dynamics.

In general, if compared to other capitals of the region, the City of Venice stands out, because of its openness and acceptance towards strangers. These features – that have to be traced back to the Old Town history of trades and cosmopolitanism, but also to the working class tradition and to the strong presence of internal migrants – are reflected either in the inclusive policies of the various local authorities towards migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, or in the attitudes of the population. In addition it should be underlined that, even though there is a significant presence of parishes and religious centres, the City is generally characterized by a secular and inter-confessional mood.

Despite the profound differences and the remarkable peculiarities of each area, the Old Town is the symbolic and cultural (as well as political and administrative) centre of the City. For this reason, the strong economic and labour imbalance towards the tourism sector that characterizes the Old Town (with nearly 30 million tourists and a sales figures of 2,700 billion euro, it is possible to define its economic structure a “touristic monoculture”) deeply influence the identity, occupational, social, housing and mobility dynamics of the other two areas.

The huge incomes related to tourism – which became a mass phenomenon only between the late 1980s and the early 1990s – in fact, imply a series of swift consequences that strongly shape life styles, sociability and possibilities of the young people in the City.

First of all, there was a progressive narrowing of job opportunities different from the unskilled and cheap work-force in the tourism sector, catering, hotel or – for the luckiest – as museum attendants (including the biennial of art and the biennial of architecture which, however, should be considered purely seasonal occupations).

Secondly, there was a dramatic rise of the housing cost in the Old Town (30,000 euro/sqm) and of the house rents due to tourism, which made it almost impossible for young people to purchase a house.

Young people have thus been forced to move from the Estuary and the Old Town to Mainland, creating the so called “exodus”.

As a consequence, a break in the relational families ties and in the groups of friends, due to the migration in the different areas of the City, has occurred. The difficult connections and the structural problems of mobility of the City worsen the feeling of mutual isolation of the different areas and, consequently, of the population.

It should be emphasized, moreover, the concentration of economic investments, carried out by the various local governments, towards tourism, at the expense of other areas considered less profitable from the economic point of view as, for example, sport, local handicrafts or culture; important meeting opportunities and professionalization trajectories for young people are missing.¹¹

The de-industrialization of Marghera led to an impressive loss of jobs, radically changing the social and working expectations, opportunities and trajectories of the new generations. Until the 1980s at the end of secondary school of 2nd level the young people had the certainty of finding secure employment (even if within the ranks of the working class) in the nearby industrial district. Today, this possibility has disappeared and the situation has been further exacerbated after the economic crisis. It leads to the possibility of innovative re-use of brownfield sites, but – more importantly – to a progressive intensification of the exodus of many young people that are moving from the Mainland neighbourhoods to the province towns (adding to the exodus from Old Town to the Mainland) and also a daily commute of many others who, despite being residents in the Mainland neighbourhoods move every day to the Old Town to work as cheap labourers in the unskilled tertiary sector.

It is possible to identify a gradual convergence of social, work, housing and mobility conditions of young natives and immigrants that meet every day in the workplaces (bars, fast-food, restaurants, pubs, pizzerias, hotels, etc..), in the living and housing spaces of the Mainland districts (especially Mestre and Marghera), in the public transport linking the Mainland and the Old Town.

As it is well known, among the young people in Venice there is a large number of university students.

It is possible to identify three types of students:

- a) the commuter student, who comes from the provincial towns to the Old Town in the morning and who goes back home to the evening;
- b) the student who is domiciled in Venice from Monday to Friday and then goes back to the town of origin during the weekend;

¹¹ Until the ‘90s, for example, there were almost 40 basketball teams – the main sport in Venice – distributed among the various neighborhoods of the City, today there are hardly two or three per area; until the ‘80s in Venice there were hundred “battidoro” (local artisans who work the gold), many blacksmiths, several “squeri” (the construction sites of the gondolas) today are reduced respectively to one “battidoro”, two blacksmiths and one “squero”.

- c) the student who resides permanently in Venice, taking part actively in the socio-cultural dynamics of the City.

It is primarily this latter type of students who participate in the numerous social, political, cultural, civic engagement initiatives promoted by the associative subjects active in the City (*No Grandi Navi* Committee, *No Mose* Committee, associations, squats/social centers, etc.). These are important experiences that offer the greatest opportunities for aggregation, engagement, but also fun and recreation for young people in the city of Venice.

Moreover, the student population keeps alive the public spaces of the City, filling the streets and squares that were going to be inevitably doomed to desertification and “geriatrification” (Davis, 2000). These urban areas (especially in the Old Town, but also in the Mainland), in fact, every day host thousands of young people (students, but also Venetians and tourists) who come together to enjoy the ritual of the aperitif.

The other ludic and recreational experiences (concerts, movies, lectures, meetings, theatre, sports, etc.) are organized and offered by squats/social centres, student collectives, parishes and by the numerous associations, the latter often sustained – albeit rather bland – even by the municipality.

Finally, the City of Venice – despite the forms of sociability and resilience described above – can be described as heartbroken by the disruption of social ties that have suddenly taken shape in the last thirty years, polarized between an “Old Town-museum” (“Old-Town-Disneyland”) and a “mainland-dormitory”, as a melancholic because of the progressive emptying of young population that appears unstoppable and because of the lack of generational turnover caused by the projection of the new generations to other contexts and by their lack of attachment to the city and to its history.

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