

A GUARANTEE SYSTEM  
FOR YOUTH POLICIES

**ONE STEP AHEAD**  
TOWARDS EMPLOYMENT  
AND AUTONOMY



# OSA



2013



**A Guarantee System for Youth.  
“One Step Ahead” Through Regional Policies**

2013



**To the memory of  
Karl-Heinz Dullmaier**

## **A Guarantee System for Youth. "One Step Ahead" Through Regional Policies**

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## **Editorial notes**

*Chapters 1, 2 and 3* are mainly inspired and partially based on results achieved in an European Study carried out by the Scientific Director on behalf of the European Commission-DG Research (see *Adult and Continuing Education in Europe: Pathways for a skill growth governance*, Luxemburg, 2013).

*Chapters 3-11* are based on OSA Survey results. Texts on regional issues are by their own representatives as listed below:

Baden-Württemberg - *Andrea Bernert-Bürkle* and *Bianka Gerlitz*

Gobierno Vasco - *Bittor Arias*

Jamtli - *Anna Hansen*

Regione Toscana - *Sergio Pacini*

Steiermark - *Peter Härtel* and *Michaela Marterer*

Welsh Government - *Steven Fletcher*

The other texts are under the responsibility of the assigned authors and editors.

*Chapters 6-7-8-9* are partially based on the research "Youth" (2008) carried out on behalf of the European Commission-DG Employment and coordinated by ISFOL. This research was published in 2008. The policies referred to were current at that time and are only used here to give examples of types of policy from that time, although in many countries policies have changed significantly.

### 3. Propensity to youth training and public policies

Paolo Federighi

#### 3.1. The propensity of young people to up-skilling

In the 2000-2010 decade, the demand for up-skilling was consistent and steady, though not equally distributed. (Beblavy et. al., 2012:29).

“Findings for the EU27 average show that:

- High skills increase over all cohorts (excepted for older cohorts in rare cases), but the effect is strongest for the youngest cohort.
- Low skills generally decrease, but the effect is strongest for the youngest cohorts (less clear-cut than for high skills). “(Beblavy et. al., 2012:16).

The following data show the behaviour of the various cohorts over the decade in consideration. The most significant data for our study consists in the behaviour of the cohort from 25 to 34 years, which is shown by the comparison between the level of qualification held in 2000 with the one held 10 years later when the same cohort was between 35-44 years old. Here are the figures relating to EU-27 and those for Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Austria is not included in this analysis since the data for 2000 are missing.

Box 7 - Cohort analysis using the LFS macro data

#### **EU27 Average**

		<b>low</b>	<b>medium</b>	<b>high</b>
2000	From 25 to 34 years	25.7	51.4	22.9
2010	From 35 to 44 years	23.8	48.3	27.9
2000	From 35 to 44 years	30.7	48.3	20.9
2010	From 45 to 54 years	28.9	48.4	22.7
2000	From 45 to 54 years	39.1	42.4	18.5
2010	From 55 to 64 years	38.4	42.5	19.1

It should be borne in mind that the European average, while positive, was affected by significant imbalances detectable in the performance of various countries. Given the results of Luxembourg or Bulgaria, with rates of decline in the low skilled between 6% and 10%, we have countries such as Italy where the pattern is negative.

**Germany**

	<b>low</b>	<b>medium</b>	<b>high</b>
From 25 to 34 years	15.4	62.1	22.4
From 35 to 44 years	13.2	58.7	28.1
From 35 to 44 years	15.4	58.0	26.6
From 45 to 54 years	13.5	59.9	26.6
From 45 to 54 years	18.8	55.8	25.4
From 55 to 64 years	16.9	57.8	25.4

**Italy**

	<b>low</b>	<b>medium</b>	<b>high</b>
From 25 to 34 years	40.7	48.7	10.6
From 35 to 44 years	40.8	43.4	15.8
From 35 to 44 years	48.6	40.4	11.0
From 45 to 54 years	48.9	39.1	12.0
From 45 to 54 years	60.6	29.3	10.1
From 55 to 64 years	61.8	27.5	10.7

**Spain**

	<b>low</b>	<b>medium</b>	<b>high</b>
From 25 to 34 years	44.5	21.6	33.9
From 35 to 44 years	40.7	23.9	35.3
From 35 to 44 years	56.3	19.5	24.3
From 45 to 54 years	52.5	21.8	25.6
From 45 to 54 years	72.3	11.7	16.0
From 55 to 64 years	67.9	14.3	17.8

### **Sweden**

	<b>low</b>	<b>medium</b>	<b>high</b>
From 25 to 34 years	12.8	54.1	33.1
From 35 to 44 years	12.7	50.2	37.1
From 35 to 44 years	17.9	50.9	31.2
From 45 to 54 years	18.7	51.4	30.0
From 45 to 54 years	26.0	43.1	30.9
From 55 to 64 years	30.4	42.1	27.5

### **United Kingdom**

	<b>low</b>	<b>medium</b>	<b>high</b>
From 25 to 34 years	31.2	37.3	31.5
From 35 to 44 years	22.2	40.3	37.5
From 35 to 44 years	34.0	36.9	29.2
From 45 to 54 years	25.7	41.2	33.0
From 45 to 54 years	37.3	34.5	28.2
From 55 to 64 years	31.9	40.6	27.5

The propensity for skill development (measured here by participation in activities that issue certification classifiable in the ISCED framework) is present in most of the European countries considered. High skilled young people increase everywhere, even in countries where the level was already high 10 years earlier. The low skilled decrease everywhere, even in countries where 10 years earlier a low level was registered. In this respect, Italy is an exception, seeing a slight increase in the low skilled people (probably due to the inability of integration by the immigrant population and the weak development policies at post secondary and university education levels).

The differences between countries are significant. A young man born in Italy has one-third less likelihood of finishing his university studies than someone born in Sweden, or the United Kingdom or Spain. In addition, for every three young low skilled people living in the UK, one has the chance to take a step forward over the next ten years, while in Italy this probability is almost nothing, and in Germany and Spain restricted to one in 10.

The conclusion is the following:

- the propensity of young people to up-skilling exists
- it is expressed more within favourable institutional frameworks.

The propensity to invest in upgrading skills is distributed unevenly across the various age groups. It waxes and wanes due to the use that people make of

them. Skill upgrading, in the case of young people, can be seen as adapting and enhancing the skills needed in working life and not achieved in school, in the second case it can be used to ensure training through the extension of working life. Taking into account that “in almost all countries inactive persons have a much higher chance for participating in formal learning than regularly employed (either full-time or part-time) or unemployed persons.” (LLL2010, 2011:113).

Box 8 - Participation in formal education and training by age groups from 25 to 34 years- % [trng\_lfs\_09]

GEO/TIME	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Europea Union (27 countries)	7,1	8,2	8,2	7,9	8,0	8,0	8,2	8,4	8,5

Source: Eurostat data

The study of the motivations that lead young people to return to training shows a very different picture in support of the thesis of the need to increase the responsibilities of individuals in managing their learning. A policy of self-directed learning involves the allocation of decision-making powers to the individual and the right to follow what motivates individuals and businesses to take recourse for training. The challenge for public policies is for the various territories to have training courses that meet the various motivations present there. The opposite route: motivate citizens to participate in the existing supply does not favour inclusion (LLL2010, 2011:124, 129).

On the grounds of policies, this means not acting exclusively through the predetermined offer of more opportunities. The assumption of responsibility by individuals can be supported through policies that act on the demand side, i.e. the construction of highly personalised paths. This is certainly based on the availability of learning resources (supply), but also relies on the existence of policies and measures that free the individual training demand, attributing powers of choice to the individual and the enterprise, even by reducing economic barriers (vouchers, tax deductions, etc.) and time barriers (paid educational leaves, etc.). The absence of this type of policy is at the expense mainly of low skilled workers and small businesses.

### 3.2. The national and local contexts make the difference

What makes the difference between the possibilities of access to opportunities for taking a step forward in training is the area in which young people live and work. The most important differences, those that create inclusion or exclusion and overcome the weight of any other factor are the territorial ones. Depending on the country of residence, a person, regardless of their social group, can have a hope of participation in educational opportunities even 30 times less than those existing in the countries with best performance.

Box 9 - Participation in formal or non-formal education and training by age groups From 25 to 64 years  
- % [trng\_lfs\_09]

GEO/TIME	2011
Belgium	7,1
Bulgaria	1,2
Czech Republic	11,4
Denmark	32,3
Germany (including former GDR from 1991)	7,8
Estonia	12,0
Ireland	6,8
Greece	2,4
Spain	10,8
France	5,5
Italy	5,7
Cyprus	7,5
Latvia	5,0
Lithuania	5,9
Luxembourg	13,6
Hungary	2,7
Malta	6,6
Netherlands	16,7
Austria	13,4
Poland	4,5
Portugal	11,0
Romania	1,6
Slovenia	15,9
Slovakia	3,9
Finland	23,8
Sweden	25,0
United Kingdom	15,8
Iceland	25,9
Norway	18,2
Switzerland	29,9
Croatia	2,3
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the	3,4
Turkey	2,9

Source: Eurostat data extracted on 18.11.12

The comparison between levels of opportunities at the regional level shows how these differences affect the citizens who live within the same best performing country, yet resident in the less favoured regions.

Box 10 - Participation of adults aged 25-64 in education and training by NUTS 2 regions (from 2000) - % [trng\_lfse\_04]

GEO/TIME	2011
Baden-Württemberg	8,8
Bayern	7,2
Berlin	9,6
Brandenburg	7,2
Bremen	9,2
Hamburg	10,3
Hessen	9,5
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	7,7
Niedersachsen	6,4
Nordrhein-Westfalen	7,1
Koblenz	7,3
Saarland	7,8
Sachsen	7,3
Sachsen-Anhalt	6,7
Schleswig-Holstein	7,5
Thüringen	8,3

Source: Eurostat data extracted on 18.11.12

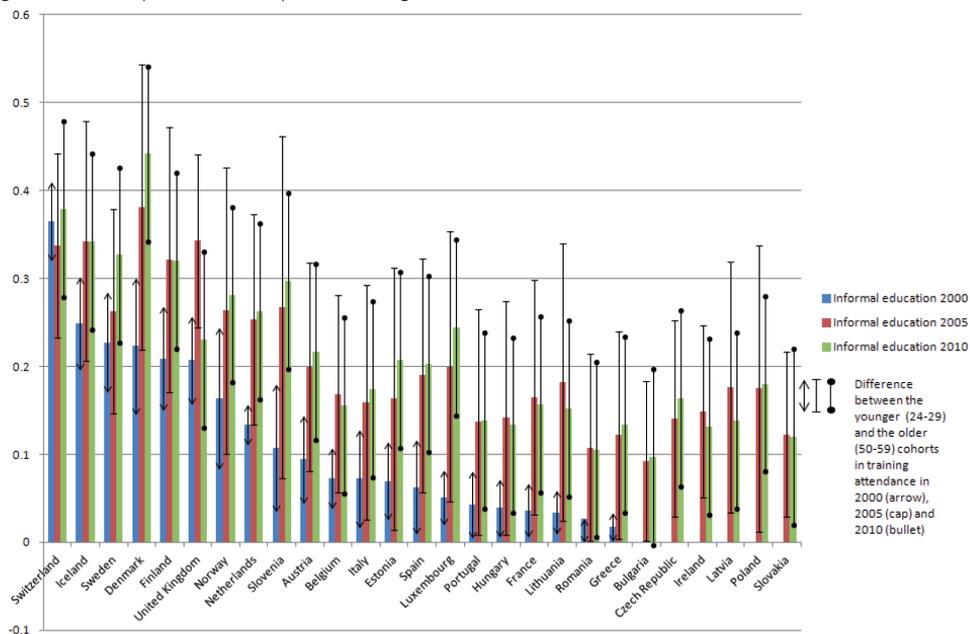
The conclusion is that what makes the difference is not made by history and national policies, but rather on their ability to have an impact on cultures, economies and the conditions of the population of the various territories.

From this point of view, the focus shifts from the analysis of the distances between countries, to the comparison of progress made at national and regional level in a given period. The comparison of the degree of positive impact of public policies is more significant than the analysis of the positioning of a territory in European ranking. This figure gives an idea of the likely future, and changes the traditional ranking of European, National and Regional Governments.

NeuJobs research provides useful feedback about it. "Figure ... shows the development over the years 2000, 2005 and 2010. It allows examining the evolution of workplace training up-skilling through generations instead of following specific cohorts. The figure shows that training participation increased particularly in countries where attendance was low in 2000. Those countries are gradually catching up with the best performers. This progression is mainly due to the new

young generation who invest much more in up-skilling than their predecessors. In the Nordic countries and Switzerland, where training attendance is the highest in Europe, up-skilling grew less than in the South and East of Europe (excepted in Denmark where participation rose considerably between 2000 and 2005).” (Beblavy et al., 2012:13).

Figure 8 - Participation in workplace training (24-34 and 50-59)



Source: European Labour Force Survey Micro data, cohort averages weighted with frequency weights

### 3.3. The institutional framework amplifies the weight of the exclusion factors

The analysis of the weight of exclusion factors from training confirms the influence of institutional contexts, and also the need to have policies that reduce the effects of demographic barriers (such as gender, age, family responsibility, small settlement barrier) and social barriers (early school dropout, unemployment or out of labour force, part-time or temporary work contract combined with low level of labour market integration barrier), low status barrier (like manual work). The combination of these variables covers only part of the panorama of disadvantaged groups identified by research. The concept varies from country to country, as well as the policies adopted to contrast it.

The barriers already identified has been the object of the comparative analysis of the data AES carried out by LLL2010 aimed to investigate the demographic and sociological barriers and the underlying causes of participation in formal adult education.

“From the demographic perspective, this analysis revealed the presence of gender inequalities in particular for mothers who have family responsibilities to take care of a young child in the family. From the viewpoint of sociological

obstacles, the multivariate analysis proved the significance of interruption in studies as an underlying mechanism for returning to formal adult education: longer interruption decreased the odds of participation in lifelong learning, particularly in those countries where attendance rates were smaller" (LLL2010, 2011:129).

These results show that participation in training is the combined product of the action of various policies and the result of their effectiveness with respect to the factors set out above. This is the main explanation of the differences between countries. The conclusions of the LLL2010 research on the weight of the working conditions, provide an explanation: "Individual participants may combine work and study differently during the various periods of their programmes, but not completely at will. Available space for individual decision in this matter is expanded or restricted by institutional settings (e.g. availability of grants, leave schemes or part-time programmes). Socio-economic factors (e.g. average income) and local labour market conditions also co-determine the participant's choices when balancing continuing formal education and economic necessities. This means that institutional and socio-economic factors together influence both the opportunity for taking up formal adult education on one hand and the likelihood to opt for a particular way to (not) combine work and study on the other." (LLL2010, 2011:114).

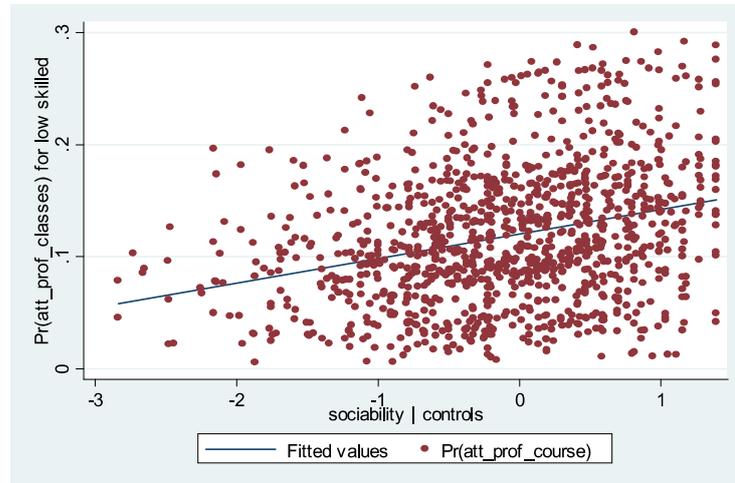
### **3.4. The availability of social capital is a source of growth**

The growth of skills is related to the opportunity of being part of networks and local or other communities, that stimulate and support individual learning needs. The exclusion from quality networks is a source of marginalisation processes. The richer and more dynamic the network of friends, acquaintances, relationships of reciprocity and trust, access to social activities, the greater the social capital you have. Robert B. Reich (1991) adopted the expression "dynamic learning communities" giving them a key role in international competition and the ability to foster the growth of the participants through constant informal exchange, depending on needs.

The NeuJobs research provided evidence of how membership in social networks has a positive effect on the ability to access opportunities for CVET and adult education: "all types of social capital (considered) have a significant and positive effect on adult learning. The size of the effect varies across the different measures between increasing the probability of participating in adult learning by 0.04% to increasing the probability by 17%. Across all measures of adult learning we identified that one more unit of the perceived importance to be socially active increases the probability of participation in adult learning by the most (17%) and that one additional friend increases this probability by the least (0.04%). We also find that the supportiveness of the social network increases the probability of participating in adult learning by nearly as much as an additional unit in the perceived importance to be politically and socially active." (Thum et al., 2012:3).

The following graphs show the predicted probabilities of attending professional classes and the relationship with social capital measures given a set of controls. The graphs show that the effect is positive given the control variables for all three education levels (Thum et al., 2012:11).

Figure 9- Scatter plot between the predicted probability to attend a professional class and the sociability scale for the low skilled.



The weight of closeness and belonging to networks and dynamic learning communities draws the attention of public policies to all the supports that facilitate prosperity (from the old infrastructure to the newest, to social life in its traditional and virtual forms). Participation in non-formal training activities measures only part of this phenomenon.

Box 11 - Participation in non-formal education and training by age groups from 25 to 64 years- %

GEO/TIME	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>(European Union (27 countries))</b>	5,3	7,3	6,9	6,8	6,7	6,9	6,7	6,7	6,4

Source: Eurostat data extracted on 18.11.12

During the years 2003-2011 it is precisely this type of activity to have witnessed a slow decrease in participation. One should ask to what extent this phenomenon deprives citizens of an important component for developing skills.

### 3.5. Conclusions

There are processes going on of polarisation of society and the labour market. **The differences between various levels of young people are growing like never before.** Public policies must prevent and reduce the effects of polarisation. They produce loss of human potential and undermine social cohesion.

Public policies have produced positive effects for some young people, whereas they have proven to be ineffective or even harmful to others. The damage, for example, was done to those young people who, despite having invested years of their lives in training systems, have ended up without learning outcomes. However, they have gradually extended by including various areas of intervention (from economy, to health, to work) and various targets.

These policies have had the characteristic of a strong segmentation in levels of young people and in transitions. Segmentation is sometimes criticised because it has effects of stigmatisation. The risk exists, but the fact remains that the appropriate measures and systems should be activated to respond to the needs of particular groups of the population. The limit lies rather in the permeability of the various systems, i.e. in their effectiveness with the objective of bringing every individual in the shortest time possible towards paths of independent living.

We have seen that the public policies of the EU countries have not yet removed the social reproduction processes from the systems, barriers to the recognition of individual merit, tolerance towards workplaces that waste the potentials of growth and development of younger and older workers.

For these reasons, the lesson that we draw from the phenomena must be examined in two dimensions.

In the first place, we have to continue or strengthen - as appropriate - a policy that allows all young people, because of the position in which they find themselves, to improve their status and in any case make a step forward. In this sense, it is certainly sensible to place the focus and priority of public and private policies now on the growth of talent, now on the reduction of early school leavers, now on the NEETs. But this is not enough.

Consequently, in the second place, it is a matter of not limiting interventions to a juxtaposed management of the various sectoral policies. The simple juxtaposition of policies gives limited results. Greater coordination by them could increase quality and impact, constructing proper integrated intervention systems. Transverse policies are the key to success, the inevitable route for obtaining real, long lasting improvement of young people's condition.

This principle is not intended to increase the efficiency of public policies, although necessary.

The goal is to provide all young people with the full range of opportunities for growth and development in all sectors. No young person should be segregated within social or health or cultural or sports policies. Through public policies, everyone should be given the opportunity to have access to the various pathways that lead to excellence. Everyone must be considered a potential talent. This is the way to overcome the limits of social reproduction and to reward merit, freeing the ambitions of those who would otherwise be excluded or segregated in inadequate positions and roles with respect to their potential.