

# NEGOTIATE

Overcoming early job-insecurity in Europe

## The strengths and weaknesses of policy coordination and policy outcomes in a system of multi-level governance: A comparative analysis

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### **National Reports Negotiate Project (internal working papers)**

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- **Ayllón, S. and Ferreira-Batista, N. (2016)** Strategies to improve labour market integration of young people: Comparing policy coordination in nine European countries - national report Spain.
- **Bussi, M. and O'Reilly, J. (2016)** Strategies to improve labour market integration of young people: Comparing policy coordination in nine European countries - national report UK.
- **Hora, O., Horáková, M. and Sirovátka, T. (2016)** Strategies to improve labour market integration of young people: Comparing policy coordination in nine European countries - national report Czech Republic.
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- **Kominou, K. and Parsanoglou, D. (2016)** Strategies to improve labour market integration of young people: Comparing policy coordination in nine European countries - national report Greece.
- **Lindholm, Ø. T., Tolgensbakk, I. and Vedeler, J. S. (2016)** Strategies to improve labour market integration of young people: Comparing policy coordination in nine European countries - national report Norway.
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- **Spasova, L., Stoilova, R., Boyadjieva, P., Krasteva, V., Ilieva-Trichkova, P. and Yordanova, G. (2016)** Strategies to improve labour market integration of young people: Comparing policy coordination in nine European countries - national report Bulgaria.

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## List of Abbreviations

<b>CSR</b>	Country-specific recommendation
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>EES</b>	European Employment Strategy
<b>EMCO</b>	Employment Committee
<b>ESF</b>	European Social Fund
<b>ETUC</b>	European Trade Union Council
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>NEETs</b>	Neither in Employment, Education or Training
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>MLG</b>	Multi-level-governance
<b>OMC</b>	Open Method of Coordination
<b>PES</b>	Network of Public Employment Services
<b>UEAPME</b>	Union Européen de l'Artisanat et des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
<b>YCA</b>	Youth Career Agency
<b>VET</b>	Vocational training systems
<b>YEI</b>	Youth Employment Initiative
<b>YFJ</b>	Youth Forum Jeunesse
<b>YG</b>	Youth Guarantee
<b>YGIP</b>	Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan
<b>VO</b>	Vocational Orientation

## Country Codes

<b>BG</b>	Bulgaria
<b>CH</b>	Switzerland
<b>CZ</b>	Czech Republic
<b>DE</b>	Germany
<b>EL</b>	Greece
<b>ES</b>	Spain
<b>NO</b>	Norway
<b>PL</b>	Poland
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom

## 1. Introduction

The Council of the European Union (EU) launched the Recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee (YG) in April 2013. The EU institutions thus recognised that young people have been affected extremely by unemployment and job insecurity due to the economic crisis and increasing labour market segmentation. The YG suggests that all young people under 25 receive a good-quality, concrete offer within four months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed (EC 2015a). The particular reference to NEETs (Not in Employment, Education or Training) pays attention to the problem that some young people have lost contact with institutions and are not registered with employment services. With the adoption of the Recommendation, all Member States – except the UK – committed themselves to implementing the YG and establishing the actions envisaged. All in all, the promoted goals enhance an enabling approach within Europe's activating labour market policy (Lahusen *et al.* 2013) that supports individual capabilities by personalized guidance and individual action planning, including tailor made individual services, training and education (Maydell *et al.* 2006). Hence, a 'holistic approach' with respect to coordination and service delivery is required (6 2004).

In order to set the ideas of an activating and enabling labour market policy approach in place, the Recommendation explicitly demands an improvement of 'horizontal' coordination between policy fields such as employment, education, youth, social affairs etc. Joint-up initiatives and a partnership approach between education and employment authorities are supposed to address the improvement of school-to-work transition. Additionally, the required partnership approach includes the cooperation of different public and private agencies, social partners and other stakeholders in decision making and policy delivery (EC 2015a).

In line with these ambitions, the European Commission (EC) emphasised that the YG is a structural reform (EC 2014). The implementation of the YG, therefore, also requires in-depth national reform of training, job-search and education systems to drastically improve school-to-work transitions and the employability of young people. In some Member States, the functioning of public employment services (PES) must be reformed to ensure appropriate personalised advice on job, education and training opportunities. Furthermore, new tools and strategies with all actors involved have to be established to reach those who are young, non-registered unemployed (EC 2015b). On account of the complexity of these reforms, it is admitted that they cannot be delivered from one day to the next (EC 2014).

YG compliance, however, depends only on soft forms of governance. The YG was subject to the Open Method of Coordination (OMC). Since 2001, this has been used in sensitive areas where Member States have not been willing to grant the EU political powers such as in European social and employment policies. Accordingly, a 'Recommendation' has the weakest binding character among all EU instruments and encourages overall intergovernmental coordination, benchmarking and best practice without threats of sanctions (Heidenreich 2009; Heidenreich and Zeitlin 2009). Hence, compliance generally takes place on a voluntary basis. This still holds true, although since 2010 with the

introduction of the European Semester, monitoring has been increased and the Commission and the Council now have the competence to make country-specific recommendations (CSR) (Prpic 2014).

In the particular case of the YG, we see a slightly deviant process from the soft governance mode. Already the word 'guarantee' implies a strong commitment both from the Commission and the Member Countries. Furthermore, with the YG a rather comprehensive framework on how the policy needs to be implemented at the national level was introduced, emphasising: a. the need to build up a partnership approach, b. the early intervention and activation as well as c. the orientation of services towards labour market integration (Dhéret and Roden, 2016). Additionally, the EU undertook for the first time to allocate a dedicated budget stream to youth employment, and even more specifically to the YG. This combined money of the European Social Fund that was dedicated to improve the modernisation of services and structures with the *Youth Employment Initiative* (YEI). The latter is to be used only in regions that are most affected by youth unemployment<sup>1</sup>, and allocated directly to individuals (Dhéret and Roden, 2016). Most specifically, the distribution of the money is related to the fulfilment of specific criteria, like ex-ante conditionality.

The YG thus indicates a slightly new approach of vertical coordination to enhance compliance and possibly policy convergence within the mode of soft governance. At the same time, an improvement of horizontal coordination in combination with structural reforms is required as a policy outcome. We, therefore, concentrate on the exploration of strengths and weaknesses of policy coordination with respect to YG implementation, asking:

- Has vertical coordination been performed (coordination between European, national, regional and local level) successfully with respect to the implementation of the YG?
- To what extent has horizontal coordination been achieved (integration of social partners, cross policy field coordination, etc.)?
- When does coordination work best to help the labour market integration of young people?
- What are the joint problems when implementing the YG in a multi-level policy system?

As per the Recommendation, the gathering of good practice on the YG scheme as well as mutual learning between the Member States is encouraged, so we further ask:

- Which approaches, experiences and achievements of European countries could be suggested as models of good practice?

In order to answer these questions, we have to find criteria with which to assess 'success' according to different dimensions of vertical coordination. Furthermore, criteria are needed to estimate the range or strength of horizontal coordination. Finally, we might consider explanations already discussed in the literature in order to identify good coordination practice as well as joint problems.

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<sup>1</sup> These are NUTS 2 level countries where youth unemployment rates were above 25 per cent in 2012. All other Member Countries, as for example Germany, must rely exclusively on national funds and the ESF to implement the YG.

## 2. State-of-the art

Vertical coordination in the European Union has been and still is the subject of research related to the Multi-level-governance (MLG) approach. We reflect the respective literature, focusing on studies dealing with European employment policy. Furthermore, we draw on comparative studies on activating labour market policy with particular emphasis on youth, and school-to-work transitions that deal with horizontal forms of coordination or holistic governance. Both lines of research should offer heuristic tools for the analysis and for developing concrete indicators to operationalize 'success' of vertical coordination; the extent of horizontal coordination achieved respectively.

### *2.1 Multi-level governance and European Employment Policy*

The concept of MLG was developed (Marks and Hooghe 2004) to understand the entanglement between domestic and international levels of authority, particularly applied to (certain) areas of European policy-making (Stephenson 2013). As some authors (Schmitter and Kim; Bache 2012) criticised the MLG approach as having a lack of explanatory power and insight, a combination of a MLG approach with other, e.g. neo-institutionalist theories, has been suggested to provide a deeper understanding of the evolution and dynamics of policy processes within the EU (George 2004: 117–18). This underlines that the MLG approach can be used as a heuristic tool to analyse the coordination of different levels, namely subnational, national, regional and local and the implementation of policies. At the same time, the involvement of non-state actors as elements of vertical and horizontal coordination respectively is emphasised as well.

The coordination of these levels, however, may vary according to the particular policy field and the forms of governance applied. Within the OMC, the outcome-oriented approach of the European Employment Strategy (EES) allows Member States to implement programmes according to national and local circumstances. This involves delegation to domestic actors of compliance with the goals set by the EU, be it in the choice of administrative models or functional administrative adaptations (Heidebreder 2011). Evaluation studies dealing with the EES, therefore, identified a kind of path dependent development within the Member Countries, as they implement it mainly according to national priorities (Copeland and ter Haar 2013). Similarly, the role of national policy legacies and of the EU social funds were used to explain different effects of the EU 2020 strategy within the Member Countries (Jessoula 2015). Others pointed at preferences of key institutional and social actors that are even more relevant than institutional design (Graziano 2011). Hence, the domestic implementation of EU policies is explained mainly by institutional factors, although discourse and financial resources seem to be relevant as well. The discovered path dependency of implementation in line with national policies is seen as a sign of weak or deficient forms of vertical coordination. Hence, the respective studies assume 'convergence' to be a criterion for successful vertical coordination.

As the YG has been subject to a partly different framework of vertical coordination – hanging on to the OMC but introducing a much more concrete framework for implementation and conditionality via the mode of financing, evaluation studies confirm previous results on the EES only in part.

Some authors persist in the criticism that the YG is still governed by relatively weak instruments and processes that affect Member States through voluntarism only (La Porte and Heins 2015). Furthermore, underfinancing is claimed with respect to the number of young unemployed in the different countries (Piqué *et al.* 2015). Hence, it is suggested that the implementation of YG is still dominated by a path dependency logic, not leading to convergence of the specific elements of the Council Recommendation (Dhéret and Roden 2016; Madsen *et al.* 2013). Most relevant influences seem to be the established youth employment policy approach, the institutionalization of the school- to- work system as well as the pressure of problems that countries are facing (Dingeldey *et al.* 2017) .

However, others highlight that the link between European funding instruments and the YG indicates stricter forms of vertical coordination and is likely to foster a greater degree of Europeanisation – at least in countries eligible for the YEI<sup>2</sup> (Dhéret and Roden, 2016). Furthermore, in 2014 the European Semester was used to address issues linked to the YG within country specific recommendations, including procedures of surveillance and a kind of semi-binding character (Costamagna 2013). This implied that the named mechanisms may increase compliance with YG goals, which would be another indicator for successful vertical coordination.

In order to solve this controversy, not only more research on YG implementation is needed, but also the development of indicators that make explicit what successful vertical coordination is supposed to mean. So far convergence of output, respectively compliance by Member States seems to be the prevalent measure. These indicators, however, may be both too broad and too ambitious to reflect adequately coordination efforts with respect to the YG and to its character as a structural reform overall that was not supposed to progress rapidly. Furthermore, the negative estimation of path dependency may hide that country specific efforts may well be in line with European goals and the respective experience may be used within processes of mutual learning to promote them.

## *2.2 Activating (youth) employment policy and horizontal coordination*

Particular effects of the YG on horizontal coordination have been noted overall in the Commission's report (Dingeldey *et al.* 2017; EC 2016c). It indicates positive effects in improvement of the governance of youth labour market policies across all countries. Structural reforms were initiated with respect to apprenticeship and traineeships as well as to an improvement of PES. Steps towards the establishment of a partnership approach have been reported in nearly all countries. However, a rather different level of change in the different countries is noted. First, countries with major challenges receiving significant EU funds demonstrate an accelerated policy development. Second, where comprehensive instruments were already in place, the YG has contributed to a scaling-up or an adjustment of existing measures. The third group of countries show limited changes. The reasons for this development are various, albeit not very systematic, for example, a lower prioritization, delays or discontinuity in key measures (EC 2016d: 8). In order to capture more detail on how to distinguish

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<sup>2</sup> Within YEI the audit and evaluation process is included in the framework of the European funds (see page 2).

strong and weak forms of horizontal coordination and conditions leading to their development, we have to draw on comparative labour market research.

With the emergence of an activating labour market policy, closely related to the social investment welfare state paradigm, the change of governance and coordination has been addressed as a convergent trend with respect to the introduction of New Public Management, the decentralization<sup>3</sup> and marketization of services as well as the integration of unemployment benefit systems (Clasen and Clegg, 2011; Champion and Bonoli, 2011). Furthermore, an increase of horizontal coordination was emphasised (Øverbye et al., 2010). Mergers of different administrations to create a 'one-stop-institution' that provides a single gateway for the unemployed, were highlighted as examples (Minas 2014), as well as interagency cooperation and partnership approaches to provide more encompassing services (van Berkel *et al.* 2011).

Some studies estimated horizontal coordination to be crucial, although not easily achieved, with respect to the implementation of an enabling or human capital oriented activating approach (Bonoli 2010; Dingeldey 2011a). This is indirectly confirmed by research which relates low youth unemployment to successful cooperation of different public and private actors, such as social partners, crafts and public authorities, in the form of 'pacts' or agreements that create rules for governing vocational training and/or (additional) supply of apprenticeships (Solga *et al.* 2014). Others emphasise that successful transitions from school to work, at least for those with low and/or medium qualification levels, are more likely to be found in formal apprenticeships or dual vocational training systems (VET) that display certain features of horizontal coordination between education and work in comparison to vocational and technical schools (Dingeldey *et al.* 2017; Eichhorst *et al.* 2015). Furthermore, Pohl and Walther (2007) emphasise that successful transitions from youth to adulthood may be influenced positively by a holistic policy approach that addresses various needs of young people.

The complexity of coordination is assumed to be influenced by universal or fragmented benefit and service structures, assuming that regional differences concerning horizontal coordination seem to be bigger in federal or quasi-federal states than in unitary states (Catalano and Graziano 2016; Øverbye *et al.* 2010). Further, relevant influences to explain country differences are the traditions concerning the (institutional) participation of social partners and other stakeholders (Heidenreich and Rice 2016: 33). Hence, the homogeneity of horizontal coordination efforts across regions and scope and institutionalization of a partnership approach may be indicators to estimate the strength of horizontal coordination.

### 2.3 To resume

Research on MLG and Europeanization indicates that overall compliance and convergence are assumed as indicators of successful vertical coordination. The structural reform goals of the YG may

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<sup>3</sup> Decentralisation has been understood more precisely as the strengthening of regions and the growing influence of local level government (Barberis et al 2010).

only be met in the long term and do not help to estimate immediate impact. We, therefore, have to find criteria more closely linked to the direct mechanisms and instruments used for vertical coordination. Comparative research on labour market policies offers some inspiration to develop indicators of the strength of horizontal coordination, namely the institutionalization of cross policy field coordination and the scope and institutionalization of the partnership approach as well as the homogeneity of reform efforts across regions and policy levels. Furthermore, with respect to how states implement the YG, the path dependency argument is rather strong. Hence, we should explore how far established institutional settings influence strengths and weaknesses of policy coordination.

### 3. Research approach

In the following study, we use the MLG approach as a heuristic tool in combination with a historical institutionalist approach (Pierson 2000; Thelen 1999). Thus, we assume that the forms of coordination both in the vertical as well as in the horizontal dimension very much depend on previous institutional settings. The assessment of success of different dimensions of vertical coordination is reflected in the already established soft mode of governance in European social policy-making, analysing, however, if particular procedures applied to the YG improve Member States' commitment. Furthermore, the assessment of strengths and weaknesses of policy coordination and policy outcomes in a system of MLG is related to the understanding of what the YG was intended to deliver and what outcomes were expected.

The analysis of vertical coordination overall, assesses various instruments that had been modified partly to implement the YG. Hence, criteria for successful vertical implementation are seen in the accessibility of funds dedicated to the YG by the Member States and the compliance with goal-setting and monitoring procedures. The establishment of processes of mutual learning is reflected as an instrument of vertical coordination, but in itself also an indicator of success, as it encourages processes of structural reform. Furthermore, within the domestic sphere overall, the homogeneity of policy implementation and outcomes may be seen as an indicator for successful vertical coordination and compliance with European goals.

In detail, various forms of vertical coordination are assessed according to the following criteria:

- **accessibility of funds and conditionality of financing**, indicated by punctual or delayed programme start, problems of co-financing, general acceptance or criticism of funding rules
- **country-specific goal-setting in combination with European monitoring and control** by quality and punctual delivery of Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans (YGIP), harmonisation of data collection, country-specific monitoring and recommendations (CSR) by EU and
- **participation in mutual learning processes** through institutionalised exchange and benchmarking in various European networks
- **differences in implementation** across regions and policy levels

According to our research questions, compliance with the YG is analysed overall with respect to horizontal coordination. This is linked exemplarily to structural reform in the Member States. Hence, building up a partnership approach, the integration of social partners, cross-policy field coordination and holistic governance of services (EU 2015) are the focus of our analysis. Taking into account findings of comparative research we try to assess the extent of horizontal coordination that has been achieved in the Member States according to the following criteria:

- **scope of partnership approach** to be differentiated according to the (in)formality of coordination bodies and structures
- **intensity and quality in the involvement of social partners** according to the form of involvement, i.e. ranging from informing to having the ability to influence the design of YG measures, plus the assessment of overall trade unions' satisfaction with the consultation process
- **institutionalization of cross-policy field coordination and holistic governance** with respect to service provision for the young unemployed, i.e. the creation of one-stop institutions at local level or the use of outreaching measures to integrate NEETs in particular

The analysis thus follows a top-down perspective highlighting policy process procedures with respect to implementation and compliance (Falkner 1998: 111). However, the strength of vertical coordination, related to the establishment or improvement of horizontal forms of coordination can be assessed only on an explorative basis. According to findings of previous implementation studies, we may expect a rather strong commitment of Member States to comply with goal-setting and monitoring processes, including those of mutual learning, although problems because of established financial procedures may prevail. Outcomes with respect to horizontal coordination, however, may vary strongly. Strengths and weaknesses of horizontal coordination may be explained by national differences of institutional settings. According to current research, we suppose that the traditional role of social partners within employment policy is most important in explaining their involvement in the YG schemes

As an empirical base for this research we selected a sample of seven European Member Countries (BG, CZ, DE, EL, ES, PL, UK) that include not only the major European regions, but also different institutional systems (See table A1 and A2). In order to see if the EU intervention makes a difference, we will integrate two countries of reference (NO and CH) that are not members of the EU<sup>4</sup>. We use official documents as sources, existing national policy/programme evaluations and secondary country-based and European literature. For country-specific information, we draw heavily on country studies conducted by different teams within the NEGOTIATE project (see above National Reports Negotiate Project). The different national teams have conducted four to five interviews with key officials from

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<sup>4</sup> As Norway has a national Youth Guarantee, we may compare how this is coordinated in a rather unitarian state. With Switzerland we mirror vertical coordination in another federal state.

agencies involved in the implementation of these programmes. Additionally, the authors of this report have conducted seven interviews with policy experts at EU-level<sup>5</sup>.

Our analysis proceeds in the following way: First, we present understanding of the YG and its implementation by different actors at European level. Against that background, we assess particular elements of vertical coordination in the EU and in the national sphere (4.). In the next step, horizontal coordination is analysed within the MLG system (5.). In order to reflect the different advancements of institutional coordination, we mirror compliance not only in cross country comparisons, but also highlight singularities. We particularly focus on administrative reforms towards one-stop-shops that combine all services to the young unemployed, and work experience measures (6.). Finally, we discuss the possibilities and pitfalls of the YG implementation. This may help to support and improve YG policies in the future (7.).

## 4. Vertical coordination of the YG

First, we elaborate the vertical coordination of the YG at European level in more detail. Then we switch to vertical coordination at national level.

### *4.1 Vertical coordination of the YG at European level*

First, understanding of relevant actors at European level and the particular character of the YG and vertical coordination is revealed, and then distinct features of funding, country-specific goal setting, monitoring and mutual learning are assessed.

The positions presented and findings are based overall on interviews with representatives of the European Commission (EC), the Employment Committee (EMCO) as well as the Network of Public Employment Services (PES Network). The EMCO is an advisory committee for the Employment and Social Affairs Council in the employment field and the majority of its work concerns advising the Employment and Social Affairs Ministers on the European Semester (EC 2017a). The PES Network consists of the respective representatives of 28 Member States plus Iceland and Norway (Interview PES Network: 1). Since 2014, its role is to foster monitoring, mutual learning and policy support with a focus on the efficiency of the PES (PES Network 2015: 3). Attention has also been paid to selected interest groups such as BusinessEurope, the European Trade Union Council (ETUC) and the Youth Forum Jeunesse (YFJ).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Interviews with EU level policy experts of the European Trade Union Confederation – Interview ETUC 30.05.2017; the European Commission – Interview EC 12.06.17; the Employment Committee –Interview EMCO 12.06.17; the European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises – Interview UEAPME 13.06.17; the European Youth Forum – Interview YFJ 13.06.17; the European network of Public Employment Services – Interview PES Network 13.06.17; BusinessEurope – Interview BusinessEurope 19.07.17

<sup>6</sup> The list of actors involved in the YG design and coordination is not comprehensive. The overall aim was to include a variety of relevant actors in the interviews.

#### 4.1.1 Perspectives of European actors on the character of the Youth Guarantee

Generally, actors at European level see political momentum as crucial to the establishment of the YG. Moreover, they do not understand the YG as a policy that is able to promote convergence of outputs in the Member States. However, we find different points of view on the scope of reform activities that are expected of the YG in the Member states.

The Commission and the Employment Committee are very aware that the competences of the EU are limited, and that employment policy is still within national powers. 'Soft law' and 'soft governance' are the basis for coordination in the context of the YG. Hence, actors at European level try to be realistic and pragmatic as they know that their resources are limited, and they depend on the political sentiments in the Member States: *"We have to proceed carefully."* (Interview EC: 4). They don't see themselves in a position to present blueprint solutions to the problems at Member State level. *"[...] if we're coming and go 'here is our top-down solution we propose'. It just doesn't work. What you need [...] it doesn't have to be absolute consensus, but you need a majority of the committee members on board if you're going to do something. So people are happy for us to trying to improve the situation without coming in with a whole sort of fundamental change [of how things shall be done]."* (Interview EMCO: 2f.). However, some strengths of this approach are underlined: *"Sometimes these things work better when you do it on a voluntarily basis"* (Interview EC: 3). In line with the principles of the OMC consensus, negotiations are regarded as important to the governance style, while sanctions are not considered to be part of the set of EU instruments for YG coordination. *"I wouldn't say carrot and stick because we do not have much of a stick"* (Interview EC: 3).

Actors agree with the perception that the commitment of Member States to YG was high, even if they admit that the aim of the YG was not to introduce a binding guarantee. The term 'Youth Guarantee' was chosen mostly to send a strong political signal in view of the urgent problem of high youth unemployment after the financial crisis (Interview EMCO: 2; Interview UEAPME: 1). Political momentum supported the establishment of the YG and created a *"feeling that business as usual was not accepted"* (Interview EC: 1). But the commitment of the Member States was not only reflected in this political message but also in a comparatively high engagement in the implementation of the YG. European actors report that the implementation of the YG was more comprehensive than 'patchy' and Member States' dedication was high in comparison with other initiatives and Councils' Recommendations (Interview EC: 3; Interview EMCO: 2).

However, we find differences in actors' opinion at the European level concerning the overarching goal and *scope of reform aligned with* the YG. For the EC, the YG is a fundamental structural reform in medium and long-term perspective. Representatives emphasise that the YG is more a policy approach than a programme with fixed money and milestones. The provision of the YG is connected to the improvement of horizontal coordination, e.g. to building-up partnership approaches, reforming VET or encouraging labour demand via e.g. targeted subsidies or supporting entrepreneurship (EC 2015b: 3). Its value is to *"oblige everybody to think globally about youth employment programmes"* (interview EC: 1).

In contrast, employers' organisations at European level deny the characterisation as a structural reform. "*The Commission tries to sell the YG as a structural reform, but it is not.*" (Interview UEAPME: 1). For employers, the YG can provide support for labour market integration of young people as long as "*it is complementary to, and is not used to avoid, necessary structural adaptations of labour markets and education and training systems*" (BusinessEurope 2014). In other words, employers emphasise that the YG can only act as a vehicle to assist national reforms, because it is the national labour market policy that addresses (best) the structural issues in the Member States (BusinessEurope 2014; Interview UEAPME: 1). This is why European employers' organisations also expressed concerns and caution about the idea of guaranteeing work and the possibility of subsidising employment. Regarding the guarantee character, employers noted that employment and job creation is tied much more closely to the economic situation and labour market in the Member Countries and the guarantee overall creates false expectations (Interview BusinessEurope: 1; Interview UEAPME: 1-2).

Hence, the EC officials concede much more power to European forms of vertical coordination - albeit if it is part of soft forms of governance – than employers who emphasise that the YG is an instrument that can only support Member States' approaches. An assessment of strength and weaknesses of the different dimensions of vertical coordination may bring some clarification.

#### 4.1.2 Funding

Although the dedication of particular funding to implement the YG was new, typical problems related to the regulation of financial procedures known from other areas of European policy, remained topical and may be seen as a weakness of vertical coordination. However, reflexive reforms to address the problem may also indicate future improvement.

In 2013, the EU supplied 6.4 billion Euros to support the Member States actively in the implementation of the YG within the framework of the newly created *Youth Employment Initiative* (YEI) for the period of 2014 – 2020 (Council of the European Union and EMCO 2016: 3; Marra 2016a: 4)<sup>7</sup>. Furthermore, the EU recommended using money from the *European Social Fund* (ESF) for the YG implementation (both for 2014-2020 and the previous period). However, in December 2015 the EU Commission publicised the fact that only two thirds of the YEI money had been drawn by the Member States so far (Marra 2016a: 7). Delays in the use of the provided money indicate problems of compliance with particular regulations and are therefore to be studied in more detail.

A problem at EU-level is seen in the bureaucratic approach of the ESF where Commission, Member States and regional authorities work together in partnership and share the management of the funds. Co-financing by the Member States (Council of the European Union 2013: 5) is required and countries have to develop 'operational programmes', which need to be approved by the Commission. Later Member States submit implementation reports (Interview EC: 2; Interview UEAPME: 3; EC 2014: 10). The YEI is part of the ESF framework and control structure. Thus, Member States have to meet many criteria with their projects and are exposed to potential controls. Among them the prin-

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<sup>7</sup> Most recently the EU decided to extend the financing and to provide another 2 billion euros of funding (YEI and ESF) to the Member States between 2018 and 2020 (Marra 2016a: 4).

principle of reimbursement, which means that Member States have to finance projects in advance, may cause problems especially.

Overall, countries with deficit targets like Spain had problems with the reimbursement principle as such, because they are not able to pre-finance projects (Ayllón and Ferreira-Batista 2016: 17). Due to the complexity of application, it is not always certain whether the costs of the presented projects will be refunded by the ESF afterwards. This can lead to so called 'Gold-plating', which means that Member States and public administrations tend to refuse good projects or initiatives, if they are not sure whether these projects will meet the EU criteria (Interview UEAPME: 3). All this may lead to delays, as was the case in Scotland e.g., where the operational programme was approved only in September 2015. This can be, inter alia, attributed to administrative barriers within Member States' administration (Interview UEAPME: 2; Interview EC: 5), e.g. in relation to the proof of the eligibility criteria of young participants that needed to be collected, and overlaying rules from the ESF procurement guidance and public contract regulations (Bussi and O'Reilly 2016: 23). Hence, both bureaucratic rules to claim money and the principles of pre-financing, create problems overall in accessing EU-funds for Member Countries' with financial problems.

In reaction to the indicated delays and problems, the Commission decided to further speed up the whole funding process by increasing the so called 're-financing' to members states by around one billion Euros (EC 2016a: 3). At EU level, action has also been taken to address the problem of overburdening bureaucracy in the long-term. A 'high Level Group monitoring simplification for beneficiaries of ESF Funds' has been installed (Interview UEAPME: 3; EC 2017b). However, EU experts stress that some regulations and control mechanisms are needed with regard to financing (Interview EC: 5; Interview UEAPME: 3). *"At the same time it's about public money and therefore when it's about public money you would like to avoid corruption, misuse etcetera."* (Interview UEAPME: 3). Hence, the dilemma between carrying out necessary controls to reach compliance on the one hand and avoiding obstructive bureaucracy hindering compliance on the other hand, cannot be easily resolved.

Due to the eligibility criteria, there are national as well as regional programmes in the context of the ESF and the YEI (EC 2014: 15); (EC 2017c). For local actors, however, it is often easier when they have to deal only with national programmes as application processes are then less complicated and no pre-financing by local authorities and providers is needed (Assmann *et al.* 2016: 33). Furthermore, regional or local programmes may create monitoring problems at EU level. Also, social Partners report that they have better contact often with the national than the regional level actors (Interview UEAPME: 3-4.). Hence, the distribution of funds to the regional level may include pitfalls of coordination, too.

#### 4.1.3 Country specific goal-setting and monitoring

Country specific goal-setting for the YG can be seen as successful as all countries delivered *Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans (YGIP)*. Also, the embedding of the YG into the framework of the European Semester is thought to work very well as effective procedures of monitoring and multilat-

eral surveillance have been established. Although initiated, however, the harmonization of the collection of data on the YG may still be regarded as a pitfall.

Country specific goal- setting supported by policy assistance of European actors was enacted successfully through the creation of YGIPs. The plans denote the measures and reforms that the countries want to implement in order to comply with the YG. This includes the corresponding timeframe, as well as the foreseen funding and responsibilities (EC 2017f). From the perspective of EU officials, the implementation plans were very important to ensure the translation of the YG into national policies (Interview EC: 3). The delivery of the YGIPs on a voluntary base worked quite well (Interview EC: 3) and this is also to be seen as an indicator of high commitment of the Member States. Opportunely, by May 2014 all the European countries had presented their YGIP (Escuerdo and López Morelo 2015: 17).

The most important control structure concerning YG implementation at national level is the European Semester (Council of the European Union 2013: 5) where Member States receive *country-specific recommendations* once a year in May (EC 2016b: 3). It deals with the YG and is prepared by EMCO, which created an *indicator framework* for monitoring the YG together with the Commission (EC 2016a: 16f.). According to experts, it is *“still in its relative infancy, relatively new, it’s still being revised”* (Interview EMCO: 1). Challenges in monitoring and evaluation in the YG context persist (Interview EC: 3). Overall, the comparability and harmonization of data is a problem, because some issues in the indicators framework were not dealt with at the beginning, e.g. NEETS numbers are equated differently in the countries (Interview EMCO: 4). *“Getting data is always a tricky issue: Member States may have other priorities, and their data collection cycles may not coincide with ours. And our interlocutors in EMCO are themselves dependent on other parts of their administration to deliver the data. So getting comparable data from everyone at the right time is always challenging”* (Interview EMCO: 3). Hence, although the initiation of the process to provide comparable data in this field is seen as a success, the present state of delivery may still be interpreted as a pitfall.

Control mechanisms are complemented by the so-called *multilateral surveillance* reviews - an instrument to support the realisation of the country-specific recommendations in the context of the European Semester (EMCO 2013). An extra review process as part of this multilateral surveillance focuses on the YG implementation and the CSRs concerning the YG especially. It is actually a peer review process: all countries that get a country specific recommendation by EMCO get a peer review some months later assigned by another country. The yearly review of all 28 EU countries has had the YG as a focus topic (Interview EMCO: 1). From EU experts' point of view, the peer reviews as a form of communication at eye-level, are very useful for following up the countries. There are always about 45 minutes of discussion for every country and the country representatives seem to feel quite comfortable during the reviews and as a result questions are answered honestly. In the end, a written conclusion is produced (Interview EMCO: 1; 3). The acceptance of these procedures and the collaboration of country experts again is interpreted as a positive element of vertical coordination overall as it encourages mutual learning as well.

#### 4.1.4 Mutual learning

Positive outcomes of the coordination efforts at European level can also be reported in the area of mutual learning, as continuous dialogue between actors from the different Member States have been initiated or intensified in several institutions and networks with respect to the YG. Overall the ‘benchlearning’-process of the PES Network can be seen as a model of good practice.

In general, the EU promotes networking and exchange between different actors of the Member States and the EU regarding the YG policies by means of working seminars, technical seminars and conferences. Furthermore, there are several networks securing continuous dialogue between the actors at national or even local level concerned with the implementation of the YG, like the *Network of National Youth Guarantee Coordinators* or the *European Employment Strategy’s Mutual Learning Programme* (Council of the European Union 2013: 5). In this context, the EU also assisted the Member States in concrete policy contents. It helped them especially to set up apprenticeship and traineeship schemes with a corresponding advice service and with the support of the *European Alliance of Apprenticeships* (EC 2016a: 16).

A model of good practice in mutual learning closely related to the YG is the exchange in the *European Network of Public Employment Services*. An important element of evaluation and monitoring is the yearly publication of reports on the PES implementation of the YG. It is based on a capacity questionnaire for the PES including questions on the YG implementation. The so called ‘benchlearning’-process (the term ‘benchlearning’ combines the words and ideas of ‘benchmarking’ and of ‘mutual learning’) is a structured process where the national PESs undergo a process of internal and external assessments based on quantitative and qualitative analysis (EC 2017e). The results of these assessments are summarised and discussed between the PES representatives of the different Member States. Furthermore, countries write change-reports one year after the benchlearning visits, a mutual learning programme is shaped based on the assessments and on the, good practices that are systematically identified and e.g. a tool-kit for outreach-work has been developed (Interview PES Network: 2). Starting with the development of a shared vision of what an ‘effective’ PES looks like, these activities of the PES Network may contribute to qualitative improvement of national PES and even to successive convergence in the long-run.

#### 4.2 Vertical coordination of the YG at national level

To make sure that the ideas concerning the YG developed at European level would be translated into national policies, the Council asked in the Recommendation that a single point of contact on national level be established to communicate with the Commission: the *Youth Guarantee Coordinators*. These should be at best representatives of the “relevant public authority in charge of establishing and managing the YG Scheme and of coordinating partnerships across all levels and sectors” in a Member State (Council of the European Union 2013: 3). Other central actors of YG coordination at national level mentioned especially are the PESs that are the first point of contact for the young people when it comes to delivering the YG. The registration of young people with these services is seen as the

starting point for YG implementation (Council of the European Union 2013: 3). Aside from these indications, the Member States are quite free to decide on how to coordinate the implementation of the YG on the different policy levels in their countries.

Some of the problems concerning the compliance with the YG in the Member States<sup>8</sup>, as for example delays in the implementation of the YG or strong regional differences, might be partly due to the different forms and quality of the vertical coordination within the countries. It is therefore worth analysing under which conditions vertical coordination at national level leads to a good implementation of the YG and which factors might be hindering smooth implementation.

Even if in some countries ministries of labour and/or education also play an important role as coordination actors, the PES is the essential institution for the delivery of the YG as described by the European Council (PES Network 2015: 1; 4). That’s why we assume that the quality of the vertical coordination within the PES influences the quality of YG implementation especially.<sup>9</sup> Accordingly, we see institutional centralisation or non-centralisation of the PES as well as administrative capacity (in relation to financial and human resources) as relevant influences on the implementation of the YG. We do not only assess the PES structure of the countries that are implementing the European YG but also of the countries of our reference group (Norway and Switzerland) in order to analyse whether these countries face similar problems when it comes to the realisation of youth policies.

**Table 1: Chances and challenges for the coordination of the public employment services in the Member States**

Centralised PES structure		Non-centralised PES structure
Good or medium administrative capacity	Weak capacity	Mixed capacity
Germany Norway Poland	Greece Bulgaria Czech Republic	Spain Switzerland UK

In line with these criteria, we can identify three groups of countries as set out in Table 1. *Germany, Norway and Poland* have *advantageous preconditions for coordination*, because they have centralised PES in combination with good or medium PES capacities. While the point of contact for the Commission in Germany is the Ministry of Labour, the vertical coordination of the YG is centralised at the PES as the YG service provider (Assmann *et al.* 2016: 14f.); the German PES is governed very hierarchically (Assmann *et al.* 2016: 25). At the same time, the government also pursues a bottom-up approach when it comes to the implementation of the YG at local level. *“It is important that the ap-*

<sup>8</sup> Compliance problems are identified mainly based on the content of the CSRs that the Commission and the Employment Committee gave to the Member States and on the national reports of the Negotiate-project.

<sup>9</sup> Other relevant factors that we don’t assess in detail might be the performance of the YG coordinators in the countries, the coordination of important policy fields like labour market policy and education policy and also the presence of clientelism and corruption in the government institutions responsible for these policy fields (Kyvelou and Marava 2017).

*plication of programmes and measures are decided and implemented locally. There are so many actors involved. We can only steer these processes to a limited extent.*" (Interviewee German Ministry of Labour in Assmann *et al.* 2016: 18). However, the hierarchical structure of the PES in Germany is criticised because in some questions the employment agencies at local level have to wait for the consent of the national PES in Nürnberg, which hinders the fast implementation of some measures at local level (Assmann *et al.* 2016: 25). Norway has a long tradition of YGs and was a role model for European policies. Although as a non-EU-member it did not implement the European YG, national YGs are implemented by a hierarchically governed and a centralized national PES (Lindholm *et al.* 2016: 14). For Norway, it is mentioned that the local offices would need more freedom of decision for an individualized support to the clients and that the quantitative goals set at national level are sometimes not helpful in this context (Lindholm *et al.* 2016: 14). In Poland also, the Ministry of Labour as the central coordination body writes directional guidelines. Centralised PES as such do not exist (Michón and Buttler 2016: 19) as service delivery is a task of the employment offices and the voluntary labour corps at regional and local level (voivodships and poviats). Nevertheless, it may be regarded as a centralised coordination structure for the YG, while some freedom in implementation on the regional level does exist. Beyond the problems discussed, some regional differences in the implementation of individual measures in Germany and Norway are identified, e.g. in the Youth Career Agencies (YCA) (Assmann *et al.* 2016: 30) and the Follow-Up Services (Lindholm *et al.* 2016: 22-23). Some problems in relation to the delivery of comparable data for monitoring are reported in Poland (Council of the European Union and EMCO 2016: 45).

*Greece, Bulgaria and the Czech Republic are facing obstacles to smooth implementation, as centralised structures are combined with weak PES capacity*<sup>10</sup>. While the first points of contact for the Commission in these countries are the Labour Ministries (EC 2017d), the main service deliverers are the national PESs which are hierarchically governed (Hora *et al.* 2016: 56; Kominou and Parsanoglou 2016: 35; Spasova *et al.* 2016: 29). The problems related to the YG coordination in the three countries are attributed to the inefficiency of the employment office (Hora *et al.* 2016: 7; Kominou and Parsanoglou 2016: 15) which is also addressed by EMCO in the Country-specific recommendations (CSRs) (Council of the European Union and EMCO 2016: 4; 6f.). As an indicator, it may be noted that the quality of the implementation plans for Greece and Czech Republic was criticised by the Commission (EC and DG EMPL 2015: 6, 2016: 8)<sup>11</sup>. Moreover, for Czech Republic and Bulgaria problems concerning monitoring and data delivery have been dunned by EMCO (Council of the European Union and EMCO 2016: 4; 7). Furthermore, in Greece there were some delays in the implementation of the YG programmes due to a weak performance of the national coordinator (the Ministry of Labour) (Kominou and Parsanoglou 2016: 8; 17). *"Responsible for the distribution of resources is the national*

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<sup>10</sup> Based on data of finance and human resources of the PES in Czech Republic, we assessed the capacity of the Czech as 'medium' (see Annex). Anyhow, Czech Republic is assigned to the group of countries with PES coordination problems due to PES capacity because (Širovátka and Winkler 2011: 177–78) discover a decentralisation in Czech labour market policy inter alia because of a weak managerial capacity of the PES.

<sup>11</sup> It has to be taken into account that the YGIPs are written generally by the Ministries of Labour in the countries. Therefore, problems with the efficiency of these ministries might be another reason for these quality problems.

*coordinator and we do not know why they did not proceed so that funding could be absorbed. The other stakeholders had few and poor proposals, but the national coordinator should put some pressure on them.*" (Kominou and Parsanoglou 2016: 18). This shows that the YG coordinator can also have a strong influence on vertical coordination in the Member States.

*In Spain, Switzerland and the UK* the coordination of the YG implementation or youth employment policy in general works in a non-centralized way. Although in Spain and the UK the Labour Ministries are stated to be the single points of contact for the Commission, they do not have the centralized power to coordinate the YG (Bussi and O'Reilly 2016: 30). This leads to strong regional differences. In the UK for example Scotland backed the YG, while the central government of the UK did not (Bussi and O'Reilly 2016: 30). And Switzerland, although a non-EU-member, did not implement the YG as such, but has a variation at cantonal and local level with respect to the implementation of policies that are similar to the YG (Kilchmann et al. 2016: 11; 22). In Spain, we see a competition of power between the regional governments of the Autonomous Communities (like e.g. Catalunya) and the national government (Ayllón and Ferreira-Batista 2016: 16-17). As an outcome of this problem we find parallel registration systems at national and local level that lead to complex bureaucratic procedures (Ayllón and Ferreira-Batista 2016: 10-11). This is an obstacle to evaluation and coordination as well as EU monitoring (Ayllón and Ferreira-Batista 2016: 39).

#### *4.3 Assessment of the vertical coordination of the YG at European and national level*

The vertical coordination of the YG is to a great extent embedded in the already existing institutional structures at EU level, especially in financing and monitoring. Therefore, the strengths and weaknesses of these frameworks, namely the ESF framework and the framework of the European Semester, are path-dependently influencing chances and challenges of vertical coordination, with respect to financing procedures overall. In contrast, new structures and instruments created in relation to country specific goal-setting, monitoring and mutual learning have been successful overall, indicating high commitment of the Member States, and facilitating cross country dialogue and mutual learning processes. It may be assumed, however, that high problem pressure facilitated the success of this tool. The new indicators framework and the data collection as part of the EU monitoring of the YG are in contrast still work in progress. Here, success overall will depend on continuous support of the respective processes in the future.

However, the respective processes also depend on vertical coordination in the Member States. The strongest and problematic regional differences relating to vertical coordination are found in countries with non-centralised PES structures, which are often but not necessarily found in federal or quasi-federal states. Problems with the delivery of implementation plans of good quality were found in countries that have problems with the capacity of their PES. Another influential factor may be the performance of the national YG Coordinator. Joint problems in all the countries, regardless of the institutional preconditions in the PESs, are the monitoring and delivery of comparable data. However, the assessment of vertical coordination needs to reflect policy outcomes and to be mirrored in the improvement of horizontal coordination.

## 5. Horizontal coordination of the YG

The following section addresses the horizontal coordination across policy fields and partnership among actors at European and national level. Before we start to assess how different dimensions of horizontal coordination have been implemented at national level, we reflect the understanding of European actors on this issue.

### *5.1 Involvement of interest groups at EU level*

In contrast to the formulated demand in the YG Recommendation for the involvement of social partner and youth organisation at national level, European employers and trade unions organisations as well as the European Youth Forum do not have a formally described role in the YG context as they are not mentioned in the Recommendation as such (Council of the European Union 2013; Interview BusinessEurope: 1). Although cooperation and exchange of European institutions and interest groups concerning the YG take place, it seems that the institutional structures to gain access to the decision-making process are not always clear and European interest groups proceed several ways to have influence, gain information or express their opinions. All in all, we can recognize a welcome overall for the partnership approach in the YG, but also identify the difficulties that European interest groups have to make themselves heard at EU level.

Actors at EU level agree that the *partnership approach* constitutes an important aspect to implement the YG (Interview EMCO: 1; interview EC: 4). The idea of involving employers' and trade union organisations in the Member Countries links policy solutions to the needs of workers and employers and companies (Interview ETUC: 4; Interview BusinessEurope: 2; Interview UEAPME: 2). Additionally, the Youth Forum underlined that the YG empowered young people in a way. *"There aren't many measures where young people are consulted"* (Interview YFJ: 4).

One way to gain access or give input to the policy-making process at European level, is the writing of position papers, statements and reports where opinions and concerns are expressed. Further informal personal contacts with the EC, Parliament officials or persons that are connected to the Council or EMCO are important. In this context, the Youth Forum mentions good contacts with some people from the EC established at the beginning of YG development (Interview YFJ: 2).

Nevertheless, interest groups also struggle to get heard. The trade unions complain about the lack of consultation in the processes of decision-making bodies at EU. ETUC was *"not critical, but disappointed"* that the EC did not consult and take into consideration their evaluation reports, also funded by EC, on YG social partners' involvement at national level when the communication and staff working document (EC 2016c) on the YG and YEI was presented three years after implementation. *"At that time, it was not clear whether the EC would continue to support the YG"* (...) and fortunately they decided for continuation (Interview ETUC: 2).

The Youth Forum reports challenges to get access to institutions that are connected to the Council. Regarding the Council preparatory bodies<sup>12</sup>, it is involved in the Youth Working Party, *“but each time we want to be involved on an issue that is not really connected to education as such [e.g. concerning employment or the budget], then it is complicated and [the YF] has to prove [its] legitimacy to be able to have an opinion from young people on these issues”* (Interview YFJ: 2) In this case, the YFJ needs to activate national members. If something is discussed in e.g. EMCO, *“you need to influence two weeks in advance. So, I tell our national organisation, in two days we need to contact your national minister [...]. It gets very complicated; I mean we have capacities in Brussels. Our members in many other countries are (...) volunteers”* (Interview YFJ: 2). In this context, however, the YFJ also admits that it gets more involved in employment issues due to the YG topics (Interview YFJ: 2).

Hence, European interest groups try and struggle to gain influence at European level. More transparency of the institutional structures to gain access to issues concerning the YG and joint coordination efforts in e.g. combining evaluation reports of interest groups and European bodies could improve horizontal coordination at European level.

## *5.2 Horizontal coordination of the YG at national level*

To identify if and how horizontal policy field coordination takes place in the Member States, we address coordinative bodies and structures that have been established in managing the YG. Subsequently, we analyse policy field coordination efforts and pay attention to its challenges. Lastly, we assess the role of social partners in the design and implementation of the YG.

### 5.2.1 Set-up of YG coordinating bodies

Countries implementing the YG (BG, CZ, DE, EL, ES, PL) complied in building-up partnership-based approaches at national level. However, they follow different approaches including the creation of new institutions, and the use of more or less existing or informal bodies for the YG. So far, information is missing on how these differences affected the YG implementation as such.

Regarding the available information from the YGIPs and national reports, *Greece and Bulgaria* set up new formal institutions with particular emphasis on the YG. In Bulgaria, a multi-partite Coordination Council was established including state institutions, social partners, the National Association of Bulgarian Municipalities, and youth organisations. These institutions also signed a National Framework Agreement to implement the YGIP (EC 2016c: 24; government.bg 2013). At local and regional level, special inter-institutional networks and organs were established to ensure horizontal coordination. These bodies and agreements have been very important for mobilizing actors for the implementation of YG (Spasova *et al.* 2016: 15). In Greece, general secretaries of relevant ministries set up a cross-sectoral steering Committee for strategic design and political coordination (Petkovic and Williamson

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<sup>12</sup> Among the Committee of Permanent Representatives of the Governments of the Member States to the European Union (Coreper), the Council is supported by 150 specialized working parties and committees such as EMCO or the Youth Working Party (EU 2017).

2015: 67). Participation, however, was considered as unequal among stakeholders (Kominou and Parsanoglou 2016: 9,29).

The other countries under investigation made use of rather informal or already existing cooperation structures such as working groups (EL, CZ, BG) (Kominou and Parsanoglou 2016: 8–9; Spasova *et al.* 2016: 15; YGIP-Czech Republic 2014: 1–3; YGIP-Poland 2015: 22–27), monitoring boards (PL) (YGIP-Poland 2015: 22–27) or other multi-stakeholder bodies (ES) involving ministries, educational institutions, youth organisations, social partners, PES and other public administrations (EC 2016c: 24). In Germany, the YGIP points to several already established cooperation forms between schools and vocational guidance services, PES and industry organisations or youth career agencies. (YGIP-Germany 2014: 21–26).<sup>13</sup>

### 5.2.2 Policy field coordination

Traditionally, youth employment and school-to-work transitions of young people fall within the responsibilities of different ministries. Although formal and informal YG coordination structures have been established, horizontal coordination across policy fields remains a challenge. These challenges resemble the general problems of policy coordination in the countries. In Poland, an interviewee from the Ministry of Labour elaborates that *“since the Polish programme is focused on the employment of young people, there is no need for direct coordination with the ministries of education”* (interviewee Polish Ministry of Labour in Michón and Buttler 2016: 20). In other countries, it is stated that the coordination between labour and education is *“not much apparent”* (Hora *et al.* 2016: 20) or reflects *“a common problem in various spheres of Spanish public policies”* (Ayllón and Ferreira-Batista 2016: 16). Bulgarian horizontal integration of youth policies lacks the *“connection between measures against youth unemployment and measures for social integration and family support”* (Spasova *et al.* 2016: 20). Although in Germany educational and employment policies are more linked, ministries may rather align their cooperation structures than engage in joint decision-making (Zimmermann and Fuertes 2014: 43).

Against that background, it may be regarded as a success, however, that some countries for the first time addressed the youth employment policy from a holistic perspective: For example in Greece, the initiation of an establishment of horizontal coordination was denoted by the Ministry of Labour: *“horizontal coordination between different stakeholders and particularly between relevant ministries was quite a challenge, since it was the first time that they had effectively work together”* (Kominou and Parsanoglou 2016: 9). In Bulgaria and the Czech Republic, the YG and YEI led to first initiatives particularly addressing young people away from the labour market (Hora *et al.* 2016: 9; Spasova *et al.* 2016: 24). These efforts are only minor steps, but show an awareness rising and efforts in complying with EU goals. The YG and the design of the YGIP made some countries try to improve the connection between the educational and labour market policies as well as youth welfare policies.

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<sup>13</sup> In Germany, meetings regarding the design of the YG took place and several key stakeholders (ministries, PES, third sector organisations) were involved (Assmann *et al.* 2016).

Beyond these efforts in the investigated countries at national level, it seems that integration of policy fields may function better at local level as actors are working closer together in the same circumstances. Hence, overall the implementation of outreaching measures addressing youth furthest from the labour market or unregistered NEETs requires policy field coordination with youth welfare, social affairs and family policies. Third sector organisations, NGOs or youth social workers are important actors for approaching the young who face multiple barriers (social, educational, health etc.). These kinds of coordination efforts can be found in different forms in many investigated countries (DE, PL; UK (only implementing YEI) and to a limited extent in ES<sup>14</sup> as well as in the reference group: NO, CH) and were further supported by the YG (Assmann *et al.* 2016), although a comprehensive outreaching approach is still lacking.

### 5.2.3 Involvement of social partners

The extent or level of involvement of social partners in the YG is a challenge and difficult to analyse because it varies in degree of cooperation as well as according to regions (Bussi 2014: 19). Information concerning concrete involvement in implementing the YG is drawn from the country reports as well as from ETUC's<sup>15</sup> and Employers' Resource Centre's reports<sup>16</sup> that outline the trade unions' degree of satisfaction<sup>17</sup> regarding their participation and gives further information about the employers' involvement in the YG.

Beyond the fact that social partners in almost all countries under investigation have been informed about the YG, the possibility to have influence on its design may be considered as weak, although strong variations across countries are noted. According to our analysis this may be explained by the general role of the social partners and previous institutional settings in the country. Participation in the design of the YG rather corresponds to the role of the social partners within the implementation of unemployment benefits and labour market programmes as denoted by a typology from (Regalia and Gasparri 2013: 38–45).<sup>18</sup>

In Germany and to a lesser extent in Bulgaria and Greece, social partners are considered to play a fairly important role as they participate in tripartite bodies of PES, whereas in Poland<sup>19</sup>, the Czech

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<sup>14</sup> In Spain, mainly local level initiatives are followed.

<sup>15</sup> We mainly draw on Bussi (2014) that investigates the first YG implementation phase as well as on (Marra (2016b) a follow-up report 3 years after implementation of the YG.

<sup>16</sup> The Employers' Resource Centre's reports (ERC 2014, 2015, 2016) outline actions within the Framework of Actions on Youth Employment and in most countries the setting up of national youth guarantees is included.

<sup>17</sup> The ETUC reports assessed satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 5 from very unsatisfied to very satisfied.

<sup>18</sup> Regalia and Gasparri (2013) distinguish the role of social partners in the development, implementation and monitoring phase of unemployment benefit regimes. The above classification corresponds to the implementation phase. Regarding the design and development of UB regimes, social partners in almost all selective countries participate in tripartite institutions in the policy-making process. The involvement of social partners is not institutionalised in Norway and the UK, but in Norway the relevance of social partners is high compared to their very limited role (especially trade unions) in the UK (Regalia and Gasparri 2013: 32–37; for information on monitoring see p. 46–51).

<sup>19</sup> In Poland, social partners also participate in tripartite institutions, but rather have an advisory function. Social partners are able to comment governmental plans, but the government is not obliged to accept their remarks (Michón and Buttler 2016: 17).

Republic, Spain and the UK their role is considered to be weaker. Accordingly, unions in Bulgaria expressed their satisfaction<sup>20</sup> with rather formalised involvement with regard to the YG (Bussi and Geyer 2013: 24; Spasova *et al.* 2016: 10). In Germany, ‘partly satisfaction’<sup>21</sup> was related to the fact that social partners were invited to provide feedback to a first draft of the YGIP by the Ministry in charge (Assmann *et al.* 2016: 18), but the timing of the hearing gave them little time for preparing remarks. Further, the national trade union confederation proposed an apprenticeship guarantee, but the idea was not adopted by the German YGIP (Bussi 2014: 33). Along the variations in involvement, particular measures in Germany, a high involvement in vocational training, has been identified (YGIP-Germany 2014: 52–81).

In contrast, social partners in Greece are involved in the implementation of unemployment benefits<sup>22</sup>, but are not satisfied with their involvement in the YG, because they are not part of its monitoring body and are critical that stakeholders do not have equal input into design and implementation (Marra 2016b: 7). This observation matches the unequal participation among stakeholders in the Steering Committee outlined above. Deficiencies in the social dialogue, among other things, gave rise to a revision of the YGIP and led to changes in social partners’ participation, improving their information about the actual process; while difficulties seem to remain (Bussi 2014: 40; Kominou and Parsanoglou 2016: 5). Although Greece introduced a Steering Committee, it seems that a partnership agreement is missing that formulates the clear roles and responsibilities of social partners within the YG.

In Spain, the UK, Poland and the Czech Republic, the role of social partners in implementing the YG is weak, although here it corresponds to their weak role in unemployment benefit regimes and labour market programmes in general (Regalia and Gasparri 2013: 45). In Poland and the Czech Republic, social partners complained that involvement happened too late so that their impact on the final shape of the implementation plan was limited (Bussi 2014: 43; Michón and Buttler 2016: 4, 2016: 4,17). The influence of Czech social partners is regarded as being rather limited too, (Hora *et al.* 2016: 6), although they made suggestions on the best use of YG tools. Spanish trade unions and employers noted that participation in the YG at national level has been poor, regardless of their information and involvement requests. Consultation meetings gave information the finalized YGIP, but did not allow for feedback (Ayllón and Ferreira-Batista 2016: 16; Bussi 2014: 47–48). Hence, Spanish social partners expressed their dissatisfaction with the social dialogue in the YG very strongly, but also pointed to good practices involving employers and trade unions at the regional level (ERC 2016: 76; Marra 2016b: 12) (Interview BusinessEurope: 2). Finally, the TUC (Trade Union Confederation) supported the idea of implementing a YG, whereas employers were more reluctant, while also acknowledging

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<sup>20</sup> The ETUC reports assessed satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 5 from very unsatisfied to very satisfied (Bussi 2014; Marra 2016b).

<sup>21</sup> The national trade union confederation was unsatisfied with the design phase (Bussi 2014), but indicated satisfaction in the follow-up report (Marra 2016b).

<sup>22</sup> In Greece, social partners participate in the tripartite Board of Directors of PES and are indirectly involved in decisions about funding and functioning of employment policy and vocational training programmes (Regalia and Gasparri 2013: 41).

the urgency of targeting youth unemployment. A position that did not motivate the government to formally adopt the YG (Bussi and O'Reilly 2016: 4–5).

### *5.3 Assessment of horizontal coordination of the YG at European and national level*

Although we see a stronger awareness of horizontal coordination across policy fields and with respect to the partnership approach, horizontal coordination remains a challenge both at European and national level. Beyond being informed, the possibility of social partners having influence in the design of YG policies is limited. There are variations, however, that follow the general role of social partners in unemployment policies in the particular countries. At European level, the Youth Forum and European Social Partners gave input to particular topics and advocated to set up the YG Recommendation. European interest groups, however, also sometimes struggle to get heard in the decision-making process at EU level.

The surplus value of the YG, overall, lies in the phenomenon that countries are encouraged to address youth employment policy from a holistic perspective. The strength of horizontal coordination is therefore that Member States establish formal and informal coordination bodies. They then start to have a look at how the connection between education, labour market policy, the PES and in some cases youth welfare or social services can be improved. Additionally, Member States' awareness rises in how to outreach to young people who are not registered with PES. All this, however, has to be considered as small steps, because a comprehensive outreaching approach towards these groups is still lacking.

## 6. Best practice at local level

In the following section, we analyse the implementation of two typical measures that promote horizontal coordination at local level. Whereas for one-stop shops the integration of many different services concerning young people is important, work-experience programmes usually require cooperation with employers. Although coordination challenges occur, models of good practice can be identified in the Czech Republic and Germany and will be outlined below.

### *6.1 One-stop shops*

'One-stop-shops' for young people function as a single point of contact especially adapted to the needs and requests of the young unemployed. In some countries, this kind of institution already existed before the YG was implemented. In Poland the 'voluntary labour corps' have an exemplarily strong cooperation with various partners including many youth organizations (Michón and Buttler 2016: 5; 21; OHP). Non-EU-members like Norway and Switzerland also have similar bodies. In Norway the so called 'Follow-Up-Services' have existed since the 1990s, while Switzerland established the 'VET cases management' in the 2000s (Kilchmann *et al.* 2016: 18; Lindholm *et al.* 2016: 21). In the UK, the 'Youth Promise Plus' programme in Birmingham and Solihull and in Germany, the 'youth career agencies', were only created recently (Assmann *et al.* 2016: 24-25; Bussi and O'Reilly 2016: 25-26).

All these institutions have in common that they practice horizontal coordination as they cooperate with different administrations and various actors that are relevant to supporting young people in taking professional qualifications and in making their transition to the labour market. Outreach work to young people plays an important role in the work of these bodies and many of them have a special target to reach young people in the NEET group and particularly unregistered young people. Country specific differences are relevant when it comes to their institutional embedding. Some of them are more linked to the Ministries of Labour and employment offices (e.g. in Germany and Poland) while others are closely related to the Education Ministries and the schools (e.g. in Norway and Switzerland). However, many countries, as for example in Switzerland, face strong differences in implementation of the 'VET cases management' in the different cantons due to a lack of financial support from the national level (Kilchmann *et al.* 2016: 21).

In Germany, the YCA is a nationwide and structural reform that forms part of YG implementation that must be seen as still in development. The initiative for the YCAs came from the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, while the concept was developed by the German PES. The funding of the YCA is realised from the budgets of local actors and may be complemented from ESF funds. The execution of the cooperation in the YCAs varies across the different local communities. In fact, only a few of the bigger cities have initiated a 'one-stop-institution' to provide a single contact point for the young unemployed 'under one roof'. We have chosen the City of Bremen as a local model of good practice of promoting horizontal coordination (Assmann *et al.* 2016: 24f.), where staff members of the local employment agencies, the job centres, the Office of Social Services and the departments of education and work have been working together in one location since 2015. Their tasks range from vocational orientation (VO) and placement in training to outreach counselling and include joint meetings and case discussions as well as communication with other partners like youth and social welfare providers. Important partners of the YCA are also the newly created 'vocational orientation teams' in the schools<sup>23</sup> as well as different employers' associations and the chamber of employees.

Although so far, no in-depth evaluation of the YCA scheme, neither in Bremen nor in Germany, has been performed, the idea of closer horizontal cooperation in this field is seen as very positive by many political actors. In Bremen, political support for the project was strong and funds could be secured both from the local partners and the ESF. Horizontal coordination between the different partners was facilitated and stabilized by legal agreements and mutual learning activities. An 'as-is' analysis before the establishment of the YCA was perceived especially as a helpful instrument, because it demonstrated to everybody involved that the different actors were not cooperating systematically until that moment and that some of the young persons were dropping out of the system because of that. Also working groups were assessed as a very helpful opportunity to promote face-to-face contact and mutual understanding between the actors involved.

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<sup>23</sup> These VO-teams consist of a vocational counsellor of the employment agency, staff members of youth welfare services and the newly introduced vocational orientation staff at the schools. These are teachers who get a reduction of teaching hours for the purpose of taking charge of the vocational orientation at the concerning school and they are the linchpin of the VO-teams.

Challenges occur, however, due to difference in ethos of cooperating institutions. The job centres prioritise labour market integration and follow rather a 'carrot and stick' ethos that includes sanctions on the young unemployed. Quantitative indicators play an important role. In contrast, youth welfare providers pursue a more open and holistic approach. They criticise the sanctions because these sometimes may contribute to 'exclusion' of young people. Another probable pitfall in connection with the increasing demand for information exchange between a growing number of cooperating actors is protection of sensitive data. In Germany, a working group at national level is trying to find a solution to these challenges. Currently, young people have to give permission in the form of a declaration of consent to allow a follow up, which is often denied. Trust in systematic data protection has to be created by competent personnel providing information on the topic and bureaucratic hurdles due to complicated forms should be minimised (Assmann *et al.* 2016: 24–25).

## 6.2 Work-experience programmes

Work experience programmes for young people are measures that are commonly offered in national YGs, for example, the 'youth employment procedure' in Bulgaria, the 'work experience programme' in Greece or the 'internship for youth measure' in the Czech Republic (Hora *et al.* 2016; Kominou and Parsanoglou 2016; Spasova *et al.* 2016). Norway has a 'work-training' measure where young people receive work places for up to one year (Lindholm *et al.* 2016) and the Swiss 'practice firms' measure offers work in hypothetical companies to people with a VET certificate in the field of administration to gain work experience (Kilchmann *et al.* 2016); although the latter countries do not implement the European YG. On the one hand, work-experience programmes provide opportunities for young people to get to know a professional field, gain relevant work-experience and make professional contacts and are crucial for supporting the transition from school to work. On the other hand, pitfalls and difficulties may arise when programmes are not formally regulated and lack quality guidelines.

The Czech 'internship for youth measure' (Hora *et al.* 2016: 40–51) presents as a best practice example of coordination efforts. It became one of the most important and publicly known programmes for young people and was viewed very positively by them and employers. It is aimed at final year students from high schools, higher vocational schools and universities. The measure came as a response to the difficulties in finding employment for secondary education and tertiary graduates in times of economic recession. To improve employability, three activities were interconnected: an e-learning course of soft skills, a professional internship with an employer and vocational counselling and guidance. The programme was developed by the Further Education Fund which is an organisation funded by the Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Employers were partners as well as participants in this measure. Other important actors were schools and educational institutions. The online course was subcontracted to an e-learning institution.

Strengths of the Czech programme were that the Fund mediated the contact between employers and participants and more importantly issued the tripartite contract. Mainly small enterprises up to five employees and self-employed people participated in the project. The employers administrated the tender and were responsible for the selection process. In addition, they had to provide a mentor to

each intern who matched their knowledge and experience. Positive aspects compared with many other work experience measures in other countries were that each mentor was only responsible for one intern and both received remuneration, which was relatively high compared to other traditional labour market measures. The majority of employers would like to continue the measure in the future. Overall, they liked the enthusiasm young people brought into the companies. The young participants were generally assessed positively, acquired practical skills and the opportunity to learn new things. The internship providers offered further employment to a large number of trainees. The majority of job offers, however, did not include regular employment. It mirrors the difficult situation young people face when entering the job market (Hora *et al.* 2016: 40–51).

Coordination challenges concerned regional disparities. The measure was implemented in all 14 regions of the Czech Republic, however, two regions offered about half of all provided internships while in others only a few persons participated. The Moravian regions are more involved in programmes funded by the ESF. There is a high number of tertiary students on the one hand and the higher rate of unemployment on the other in these areas (Hora *et al.* 2016: 45). To overcome the challenge, the Fund financially supported the mobility of interns across regions. The focus on higher educated young people, however, also resembles the indeed increasing, but still little attention of Czech programmes to the most vulnerable target groups such as those who are NEET.

## 7. Discussion - Possibilities and pitfalls in Youth Guarantee implementation

Experts at European level are very well aware of the limited scope of vertical governance within the OMC, applying also to the implementation of the YG. Estimation of success, however, very much depends on what the YG is supposed to be. Those who consider it to be a structural reform to initiate discussions and reform projects that aim at improving horizontal coordination with respect to youth employment policies are rather optimistic. Those who understand the YG as a programme to directly support labour market integration highlight that this is subject to Member States' competences and economic development.

Processes of national goal-setting, monitoring and mutual learning that have been adopted particularly to implement the YG can be regarded as being rather successful, at least with respect to the idea of initiating structural reforms. Member States' commitment to the delivery of YGIPs was rather high and progress has been made with respect to monitoring and evaluation. Furthermore, the exchange of ideas in the various networks also dealing with the implementation of the YG is seen as successful with regards to an envisaged improvement of PES or the creation of comparable data sets as preconditions for effective evaluation. However, if the status-quo of procedures is considered, we still have to admit a big heterogeneity concerning the implementation of the YG in general and with respect to horizontal coordination in particular.

Hence, we may confirm that institutional factors on the domestic level, like the centralisation or decentralisation of the PES and its organizational capacity, are still crucial for the successful implementation of the YG and thus support path dependency: We have learned that the combination of top-

down and bottom-up approaches of coordination within the PES seems to be relevant. Centralised national PES should develop and refine frame-concepts for tackling youth unemployment and support the implementation of programmes financially. This also includes the (joint) development of indicators and the provision of comparable qualitative and quantitative data for evaluation. But some freedom for the delivery on local level is also necessary in order to adapt programmes to regional conditions and needs of an area. Furthermore, horizontal coordination across policy fields or the application of the partnership approach may be easier at local level, even if it is not well functioning at national level. This is underlined both by our models of good practice as well as by practice in non-member countries under research.

If the initiation of structural reform, namely the improvement of horizontal coordination as a major goal of the European YG is understood to be the intended 'outcome', we can confirm an increasing problem awareness and the installation of new processes and measures for the young unemployed, although progress is slow: Cross policy field coordination still seems to be at its beginning. Overall, this includes that outreaching measures to address unregistered NEETs are still hardly implemented and could be improved. It is suggested that young people are included as multipliers. "[Y]oung people know better than us how they are communicating and should, therefore, be included in the implementation of the YG" (Interview YFJ: 4). Barriers to more intense approaches, however, might be that successful 'outreaching' would augment the share of registered unemployment. 'Creaming effects' due to existing evaluation criteria may hinder reaching those most in need who are not easily integrated into the labour market (EC 2016c: 93).

At national level we see compliance with respect to *social partners' involvement* in the YG. However, the involvement is often restricted to 'getting informed' on YG policies, whereas concrete influence on the development of national YG schemes is limited in many countries. The participation may be explained path dependent by the general role of social partners in the country, but also be due to the lack of quality aspects in the YG as experience and knowledge of national social partners are not given consideration. Hence, the Commission, Council and EMCO in collaboration with European social partners could develop stronger guidance about the involvement of national social partners' participation and its evaluation collaboratively.

Regarding coordination pitfalls, we come back to instruments of vertical coordination at European level, namely the accessibility of European funds and the discontinuity of programmes. Although the respective problems often seem to be linked to problems of vertical coordination within the countries respectively, the lack of administrative capacities in the PES or beyond, a reform of co-financing and conditionality procedures could be helpful to smooth the implementation of YG programmes. Furthermore, the *short-term periods of measures* illustrate a joint problem in the coordination of the YG. Many programmes under the YG have been realized on an ad hoc basis and depend on European funding (YEI or ESF), therefore, the next financial programme period. This problem is overwhelming in some Member States where most of the YG measures are financed with EU money. However, also the success of structural reforms that have been initiated to increase the capacity of the PES in general and particularly with respect to youth employment policies may depend on the continuity of EU

policies, namely of goal-setting, monitoring and mutual learning, respective networking to improve youth labour market policies and transitions from school to work.

Hence, success of the YG as a policy to encourage structural reform can only be estimated in the long run. Overall, it depends on ongoing interest in and support of youth employment policies through the Commission and other European actors. This includes – as several experts confirm – the protection of resources to be invested in this field from change in political interests and pressure from other political priorities.

## Annex

**Table A 1: Capacity of the national public employment services**

Country	Assessment of PES capacity	Finances	Human resources
	Based on finances and human resources	Expenditure on PES services, (Category 1) as percentage of BIP, 2015	Overall caseload 2016
Germany	<i>good</i>	0,364	48
United Kingdom	<i>good</i>	0,317 2010	24
Norway	<i>medium</i>	0,129	No data
Czech Republic	<i>medium</i>	0,126	37 only one third working with clients
Poland	<i>medium</i>	0,077	No data
Spain	<i>weak</i>	0,144	596
Bulgaria	<i>weak</i>	0,030	127 not perfectly comparable, because PES not responsible for unemployment benefits
Greece	<i>weak</i>	0,012	245
Switzerland	-	No data	No data
EU average	-	EU 28 average 2011	<b>Average Caseload in PES that are responsible for unemployment benefits</b>
		0,205	140

Sources: "Finances" (Eurostat 2016); "Human Resources" (EC *et al.* 2016)

**Table A 2: Centralisation or non-centralisation of the national public employment**

Country	Assessment of centralisation/non-centralisation of PES		Unitary/ Federal State	General centralisation and decentralisation(trends)
<b>Switzerland</b>	<i>non-centralised</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• light centralization trend in labour market policy (Mosley 2008: 9)</li> <li>• high level of flexibility in delivery on regional/municipal level (Kilchmann <i>et al.</i> 2016: 12; Mosley 2011: 29)</li> </ul>	long federal tradition (Dardanelli 2013: 256)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decentralised (Dardanelli 2013: 256)</li> <li>• strong regions (Watts 2013: 22)</li> </ul>
<b>Spain</b>	<i>non-centralised</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• autonomous communities have their own PES (Mosley 2008: 6)</li> <li>• medium level of flexibility in delivery on regional/municipal level (Mosley 2011: 29)</li> </ul>	formally unitary, but quasi-federal: cooperative federalism (Börzel 2000: 17); (Ruano 2017: 99)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regionalization trend (Mosley 2008: 5f.)</li> <li>• autonomous communities</li> </ul>
<b>United Kingdom</b>	<i>Centralised but regionalisation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• decentralisation due to NPM in a centralized model (Mosley 2008: 4)</li> <li>• but labour market policy still centralised (Wright 2011: 93)</li> </ul>	unitary (Watts 2013: 22)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regionalization trend (Burnham 2017: 153)</li> </ul>
<b>Czech Republic</b>	<i>Generally centralised, but unintended decentralisation due to weak PES capacity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• decentralisation in labour market policy because of weak central governance</li> <li>• weak managerial capacity of the PES (Sirovátka and Winkler 2011: 177f.)</li> </ul>	unitary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unintended decentralization in context of Europeanization (Sirovátka and Winkler 2011: 177; 190)</li> </ul>

<b>Germany</b>	<i>centralised</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• municipalisation trend in labour market policy (Mosley 2011: 30)</li> <li>• decentralisation in the context of NPM (Mosley 2008: 4), but PES remains a highly centralised national agency (Dingeldey 2011b: 71f.; Mosley 2008: 4; Mosley 2011: 30)</li> <li>• low level of flexibility in delivery on regional/municipal level (Mosley 2011: 30)</li> </ul>	federalism (Heinz 2017: 15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• decentralized (Heinz 2017: 15)</li> </ul>
<b>Bulgaria</b>	<i>centralised</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hierarchical and central coordination by the centre (Spasova <i>et al.</i> 2016: 27)</li> </ul>	unitary (Loughlin 2013: 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• centralised (Yanakiev 2010: 56)</li> </ul>
<b>Greece</b>	<i>centralised</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PES and labour market policy centralised (Kominou and Parsanoglou 2016: 27)</li> </ul>	unitary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• traditionally centralised (Kyvelou and Marava 2017: 299)</li> <li>• then long decentralisation process (socialist party, Europeanization) (Kyvelou and Marava 2017: 300f.)</li> <li>• turnover because of the crisis back to recentralisation (Kyvelou and Marava 2017: 321)</li> </ul>
<b>Poland</b>	<i>centralised</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• municipalisation trend in PES</li> <li>• low/medium level of flexibility in delivery on regional/municipal level (Mosley 2011: 29)</li> </ul>	unitary (Sakowicz 2017: 334)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• traditionally centralised</li> <li>• decentralisation after the end of the soviet regime (Sakowicz 2017: 349)</li> </ul>
<b>Norway</b>	<i>centralised</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low level of flexibility in delivery on regional/municipal level (Mosley 2011: 30)</li> </ul>	unitary (Reichborn-Kjennerud and Vabo 2017: 260)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decentralised (Reichborn-Kjennerud and Vabo 2017: 260)</li> <li>• municipalisation trend as well as centralisation (Mosley 2011: 30); (Reichborn-Kjennerud and Vabo 2017: 270)</li> <li>• counties loose power (Reichborn-Kjennerud and Vabo 2017: 270)</li> </ul>

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### Interviews with EU level policy experts

- Representative of the European Trade Union Confederation – Interview ETUC 30.05.2017
- Representative of the European Commission – Interview EC 12.06.17
- Representative of the Employment Committee – Interview EMCO 12.06.17
- Representative of the European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises – Interview UEAPME 13.06.17
- Representative of the European Youth Forum – Interview YFJ 13.06.17
- EC Representative of the European network of Public Employment Services – Interview PES Network 13.06.17
- Representative of BusinessEurope – Interview BusinessEurope 19.07.17

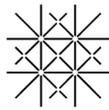
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