



EUROPEAN POLICY BRIEF

NEGOTIATE

Overcoming early job-insecurity in Europe

August 2015

INTRODUCTION

The project's overarching objective is to provide new, gender-sensitive, comparative knowledge about the short- and long-term consequences of early job insecurity, taking into account how the active agency of young people mediates such consequences. This new knowledge will enable the European Union, Member States and European countries developing effective policies against the adverse effects of early job insecurity and youth unemployment.

The NEGOTIATE consortium consists of academic institutions from nine countries – Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Norway, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom – with highly different socio-economic and institutional characteristics and SOLIDAR, a European network of NGOs. The participants have been selected due to their complementary and wide-ranging expertise in analysing early job insecurity and its consequences in a variety of different institutional contexts in Europe. The aim of the project design has been to maximise the project's potential impact in terms of both policy-relevant knowledge and scientific excellence.

NEGOTIATE's core question is how young people's scope for agency interacts with different layers of structural conditions in a multi-level governance system. By actively involving national and European stakeholders – including young people – NEGOTIATE will contribute to policies that promote the employability of young Europeans and to maximise the societal and scientific impact of the project.

We will observe the present, learn from the past and project the future to inform policies that help prevent early labour market exclusion and adverse effects of job insecurity in the short and long term, towards achieving the Europe 2020 goals.

EVIDENCE AND ANALYSIS

To enhance innovative capacity and the integration of new knowledge a strong element of NEGOTIATE intends to break the barrier between scientific disciplines and to combine them in the process of studying the situation of the specific topic in a comparative way.

Conceptually, the project's innovativeness lies in its usage of four key concepts: resilience, capability, active agency and negotiation. These concepts provide a lens to examine individual and societal mechanisms that foster specific circumstances of early job insecurity for young people and its long-term effects over the life course.

Its means of delivering innovativeness rely on a variety of methodological approaches: life-course interviews, vignette experiments and company studies alongside more comprehensive quantitative data analysis.

Its core research question on how young people's scope for agency interacts with different layers of structural conditions in a multi-level governance system coincides with the objective to provide new, comparative knowledge about the short and long-term consequences of early job insecurity.

The project is strong in giving a voice to young people by using life-course interviews and it is gender sensitive in the usage of gender as an analytical category throughout all dimensions of the analysis. It also addresses the needs of particularly vulnerable young people from socially disadvantaged areas of Europe.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The long-term benefits of NEGOTIATE include the societal challenge impact and the scientific excellence impact. The users of the outputs of the project range from decision-makers and public administrators at various levels of governance to other stakeholders such as organisations of and for the young, as well as the academic community.

Collaborative events to include civil society partners and the wider public have been planned to enable these debates in a number of countries. The first of these has been planned for September 22nd 2015, in collaboration with the Department of Social Policy at Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences (UPSPS) to host a public event titled "Overcoming early-job insecurity in Europe". Bjørn Hvinden (HiOA-NOVA and Jacqueline O'Reilly (UoB) will give keynote lectures on the topic of early job-insecurity in Europe. An important element in enhancing innovativeness and impact is related to publishing a free student e-textbook that will encompass the project theoretical framework, methodology and results.

An added value of the project can also be found in identifying the lessons for the development of national and EU monitoring data and to point out the ways in which labour market insecurity affects the everyday lives and aspirations of young people before leaving education, and after entering the labour market.

Policy implications will be communicated with diverse groups of stakeholders, scientific community, general public and young people.

A series of nine policy briefs in jargon-free and technical-free language should contribute to enhanced accessibility and receptiveness by the general public.

Through an active involvement of national and European stakeholders and national youth panels, the insights from the project should contribute to evidence-based and effective policies against the adverse effects of early job insecurity and youth unemployment

Special attention has been paid to managing the data and making them accessible via the publicly available social science data services.

RESEARCH PARAMETERS

NEGOTIATE is a three year EU funded project (EU contribution: € 2,476,609) exploring early job insecurity in Europe. It is organised around nine complementary work packages structured over three stages.

Stage 1 consists of an assessment of early job insecurity and youth unemployment as a theoretical challenge, leading to a refinement of the overarching analytical framework (Work Package 2). The purpose here will be to ensure that the implementation of subsequent research tasks is underpinned by a common analytical framework that is shared by all consortium members, i.e., across disciplinary and country boundaries.

As part of stage 1, we will also review existing empirical work with a view to operationalizing new tools for capturing the drivers and consequences of early job insecurity.

Overall, stage 1 prepares the ground for the implementation of a set of complementary empirical research tasks, which together approach, at both the micro- and macro-level, the causes and consequences of early job insecurity and youth unemployment from different conceptual and theoretical angles.

Stage 2 represents the main stage of the project. This is where data will be collected and interpreted according to thematically linked but analytically separable questions and foci (Work Packages 3-7). The project will rely on a combination of primary and secondary data.

Stage 3, the final project stage, synthesises the findings across the thematic work packages (WP3-8). We revisit the overarching questions posed at the start of the project (Work Package 2) and assess policy with the aim of developing policy recommendations (Work Package 8); this will build on the new comparative insights gained through the data analyses from Stage 2.

The formulation of policy recommendations will take place in close cooperation with stakeholder representatives, who are included in the development of the project from its outset, thereby maximising its intended impact.

By involving stakeholders as well as young people themselves in this process, we ensure that the questions most relevant to the policy community in each country and at an EU level will be addressed.

Research outputs from the project will be presented in a series of Policy Briefs, conference papers, peer-reviewed journal articles and two edited books including a student open access electronic educational resource.

More detailed accounts of this work is available on the project website: www.negotiate-research.eu

PROJECT IDENTITY

PROJECT NAME NEGOTIATE – Negotiating early job-insecurity and labour market exclusion in Europe

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FUNDING SCHEME H2020-YOUNG-SOCIETY-2014, YOUNG-1-2014, Research and Innovation Action (RIA), Grant Agreement Number 649395

DURATION 01 March 2015 – 28 February 2018

BUDGET EU contribution: € 2,476,609. Total budget: € 2,919,233

WEBSITE www.negotiate-research.eu

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