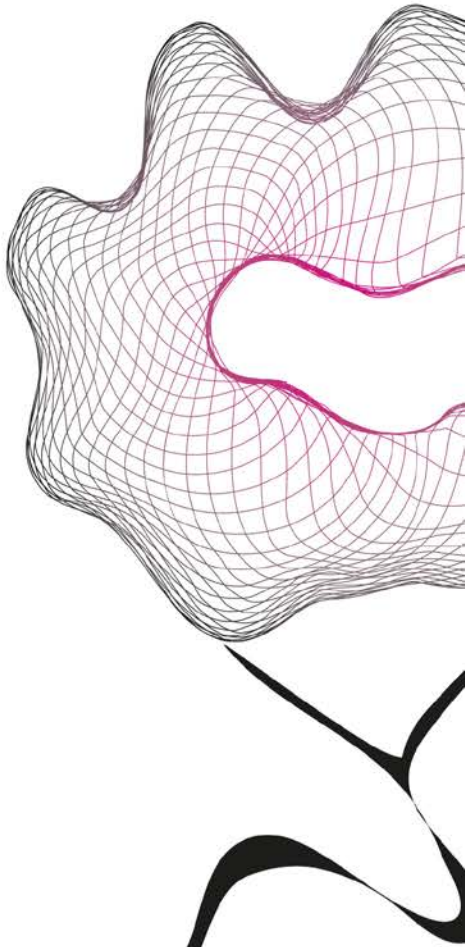


MASTER THESIS



THE POLICY IDEAS OF THE
EUROPEAN EMPLOYMENT
STRATEGY:
OPEN COORDINATION FOR
SOCIAL POLICY RECALIBRATION

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The Policy Ideas of the European Employment Strategy: Open Coordination for Social Policy Recalibration

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ABSTRACT

This study adds a substantive aspect to the body of literature on the open method of coordination. It investigates which policy ideas have been disseminated by the European Employment Strategy (EES) – through its employment guidelines and through the best practices shared in the mutual learning programme for employment. This approach of ‘policy ideas’ is useful to reach more substantive detail than studies which only investigate higher-level policy paradigms. The instruments of the EES are found to focus on activation, flexibility, lifelong learning and active employer-side ideas. Aspects of social security and investment in education or childcare receive little or no attention up to 2010. In 2010, following Europe 2020, social security and investments in education gain some prominence in the guidelines, but the best practices do not follow up on this change. Overall, the EES aims at such a strong pro-employment approach in European social policy arrangements that other values are no longer considered.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Policy ideas play a central role in the policy process. At their most specific level, policy ideas are fully-fledged proposed policy solutions. At a broad level, policy ideas are general outlines for policy action. Whatever their level of specificity is, policy ideas provide an avenue for action in policy making. Policy ideas are socially constructed and always rooted in wider ideological repertoires (Béland, 2009) or traditions (Bevir and Rhodes, 2003), but do not necessarily stem from philosophically consistent policy paradigms (Béland, 2009). Which policy ideas finally triumph over other off course depends on many further factors, ideational or otherwise.

In European governance new governance forms like the open method of coordination do not rely on traditional legislative coercion, but rather on the dissemination of and discussion about policy ideas. These methods can be characterized as voluntarist in the sense that they are not legally enforceable and leave flexibility with regard to the implementation of their policy ideas (Treib, Bähr and Falkner, 2007). They do nonetheless disseminate and promote certain policy ideas, both by providing central guidelines and by discussing specific national policy examples which may be transferred cross-nationally.

This system of coordination has been applied widely to a variety of European social policy topics. According to Hemerijck (2006) open coordination is in potential indeed a very useful method for dealing with contemporary social policies, because of the innovative policy ideas that are necessary to enable the recalibration of welfare states. Welfare state recalibration is a concept that emerged in recent scholarship on welfare state change and refers to a process by which old social policy arrangements are adjusted to current circumstances. The OMC could contribute to this process of recalibration precisely because of its flexibility. It is not concerned with the precise national institutions or arrangements, but with an agreed upon “policy redirection” (Hemerijck, 2006: 16-17). As such the OMC provides an alternative to the Community method of positive integration, whilst still dealing with the consequences negative integration and other social developments.

This normatively ideal of open coordination leaves open two important and closely related empirical issues. Firstly it is important to ask what EU-promoted policy ideas for welfare state recalibration actually look like. Secondly it is important to evaluate those policy ideas, asking whether they, as outlines for national policies, can indeed be expected to help Europe to appropriately adjust its policy arrangements to current circumstances. In this thesis I will be concerned with the first question, empirically investigating which social policy ideas are being disseminated through open coordination in the European Union. For reasons of time and space I cannot investigate all elements of European social policy coordination, but will rather limit myself to the single instance of the open method

of coordination for employment (European Employment Strategy, EES). The EES is the open method of coordination for employment and is the oldest and longest lasting instance of the OMC, having been launched in 1997. Its main instruments are the employment guidelines and the mutual learning programme for employment. These instruments are discussed in more detail later. Given that the EES has existed well over a decade it is important to look at developments over time in the policy ideas of the EES. My main research question is thus phrased as follows:

Which policy ideas have been disseminated through the employment guidelines and the mutual learning programme for employment, and how has this changed since 1998?

The literature on welfare state recalibration in general and the European Employment Strategy in particular, discussed in detail in chapter two, provides me with a number of theoretical expectations with regard to the core and instrumental policy ideas that can be expected in the EES. A structured methodical approach is used to test these expectations and provide an answer to the research question. The discourse of two instruments used exclusively by the EES, the employment guidelines and the mutual learning programme for employment, is analysed using a process of unitizing, coding and dense description. On that basis the implications of the policy ideas of the EES for social policy in European are analysed in the concluding chapter.

2. THEORY

This chapter builds up the conceptual frame shortly introduced in the introduction. Central in this framework is the view of the European Employment Strategy as a method for the dissemination of policy ideas for the recalibration of social policies. Therefore the sections below first theorize how the EES may impact national policy arenas, and then turn to the concept of ‘policy ideas’ to analyse the contents of the EES’s efforts. Then the concept of welfare recalibration as a perspective to explain the need for and use of European dissemination of social policy ideas. Lastly, existing literature on the contents of the EES is surveyed surrounding the three policy ideas of activation, flexicurity and social investment. For each of these ideas the expectations on their role in the EES are set out and their place in the wider academic debate on the need for welfare recalibration is discussed.

2.1. THE DISSEMINATION OF POLICY IDEAS

The European Employment Strategy impacts national policy arenas through a variety of mechanisms. The architecture it uses for doing so are not discussed here, but is summarized in annex A. Of greater interest is the way in which European governance can have an influence on national policies if its uses the open method of coordination, a

method that is flexible and non-coercive (Treib, Bähr and Falkner, 2007). This issues has been widely debated in the literature and various conceptual frameworks have been used in this discussion (Borrás and Radaelli, 2010; Trubek and Trubek, 2005). In a survey of this literature Borrás and Radaelli (2010: 27-28) find that the concept of learning or policy learning has been particularly dominant. Understood in a narrow sense learning refers only to the acquisition of new information by domestic actors (Hartlapp, 2009). Understood in a broader sense learning is also understood to include more subtle forms of influence through socialization (Kröger, 2009: 4; Vanhercke, 2009: 6). Still the conceptualization of learning is limited because it implies a purely cognitive process. Domestic influence of the OMC may however also take more political forms, where pressure for reform follows from ‘naming and shaming’ between peer countries (Papadimitriou and Copeland, 2012: 57-59) or where the OMC is used as a strategic resource by domestic political actors (Vanhercke, 2009: 5-6; Stiller and van Gerven, 2012).

However this process of influence is understood, a theoretical framework of policy ideas is more useful to analyse the contents of this process. Policy ideas are for this purpose understood as defined in the introduction, as more or less specific outlines for policy. This theoretical approach then focusses on which policy ideas are disseminated and promoted through the EES, rather than on the factors that influence their domestic adoption. This approach is applied partly by Büchs (2007; 2009), who concludes that the EES has successfully disseminated certain social policy ideas (Büchs, 2007: 122-123). Looking at the employment guidelines on the one hand and the mutual learning programme for employment on the other hand, I expect the policy ideas that they disseminate to differ in their level of specificity. On the one hand I expect the guidelines to distribute very general policy outlines, setting a general direction for policy. The mutual learning programme is expected to provide more detailed policy alternatives, given that it focusses on national policy examples. In order to account for that diversity I distinguish between *core policy ideas* and *instrumental policy ideas*. Core policy ideas here refer to policy ideas that set out a general approach, whereas instrumental policy ideas refer to proposals on specific policy instruments. Core policy ideas are expected to be observed in the employment guidelines, whereas instrumental policy ideas are expected to be observed in the mutual learning programme.

2.2. THE OPEN COORDINATION OF SOCIAL POLICY RECALIBRATION

Recent scholarship has started to describe changes in social policy arrangement over the last two decades as welfare recalibration. The term serves as a useful heuristic to describe social policy change as an evolutionary process (Hemerijck, 2009: 85-86). Rather than simple expansion or retrenchment, welfare recalibration refers to a process of multi-dimensional adjustment in policy arrangements. The concept was introduced by Ferrera, Hemerijck and Rhodes in 2002, both as a description of and a prescription for reforms

(cf. Hemerijck, 2006). The concept does not itself contain a specific ideational substance, but is rather defined by the search for new social policy arrangements that fit the current context. This context is understood as a context that has changed significantly in comparison to the post-war situation when welfare arrangements first developed, characterized by post-industrial labour markets and international economic liberalization. Indeed the process of welfare recalibration is about answering the question “What sort ‘new welfare architecture’ is compatible with international competitiveness, the transformation of working life, the demise of traditional family structures, demographic ageing and fiscal austerity?” (Hemerijck, 2006: 8).

European integration has however often been criticized for decreasing the room of manoeuvre for domestic policies because of negative integration, whilst not providing a European alternative of positive integration for these policies, as the well-known argument by Scharpf (1999; 2010) goes. According to this view European integration is centrally reducing space of manoeuvre for social policy and will therefore result in social policy retrenchment.

According to Hemerijck (2006) this is not the end of the story, because European integration also provides for a search towards new and innovative policy ideas that can deal with this context. Indeed, European integration is viewed by him as one other aspect of the changing context in which European welfare states find themselves, and one more reasons to recalibrate existing social policy arrangements. As mentioned in the introduction, Hemerijck (2006) argues that the open method of coordination is particularly useful for recalibrating social policy arrangements because of its flexible and non-coercive nature. The open method of coordination becomes a method for the dissemination of policy ideas for welfare recalibration.

Van Gerven and Ossewaarde (2012) have argued that welfare developments have been characterized by a move towards individualization. These adjustments cope with more diverse lifestyles in late-modern societies (van Gerven and Ossewaarde, 2012: 36). Rather than bearing collective responsibility such adjusted policy arrangements adopt a view of individuals as self-reliant and self-responsible and in response make social services more personalized (van Gerven and Ossewaarde, 2012: 39-40). Returning to the policy ideas discussed in the previous sections, activation fits well with enhancing personal responsibility, whilst social investment efforts may or may not support individualized lifestyles.

2.3. ACTIVATION

Turning to previous academic literature on the contents of the European Employment Strategy, a number of main themes emerge. Most clearly the core policy idea of activation

is prominent. Various authors have argued that activation forms a central idea in the EES. Büchs (2009: 123) concluded that activation is one of the policy ideas that the EES has successfully disseminated. Barbier (2005) went as far to describe the EES as a whole as “a channel for activating social protection”.

Activation policies are labour market policies aimed at reaching the labour market participation non-working individuals. In a narrow sense it can refer only to policies for the activation of unemployed people who draw unemployment benefits, but in a broader sense it can also refer to policies that target all non-workers, for example promoting dual earning or active ageing to raise the number of working women and elderly people. Activation forms part of the modernization of social protection, promoting a stronger pro-employment dimension in social policies (Bonoli and Natali, 2012). It fits within wider efforts at social policy recalibration because higher participation levels help to keep social protection systems affordable. In the influential work on the new welfare state edited by Esping-Andersen (2002: 24-25), activation is criticized using the argument that it is more costly than prevention.

As described above activation forms a general outline for policy, a core policy idea which I expect to be disseminated through the employment guidelines of the EES. Aiming to test whether this is indeed the case, I construct the following hypothesis.

H1: Throughout its existence the European Employment Strategy has promoted social policy recalibration through the policy idea of activation.

With regard to more specific instrumental policy ideas, a variety of instruments fit with the activation approach. A central distinction can be made here between workfare and enabling activation. This distinction is worked out by Dingeldey (2007). On the one hand workfare activation policies exert ‘pressure (or even compulsion) for the unemployed, particularly welfare recipients, to (re-)enter the labour market, even with low-income jobs’ (Dingeldey, 2007: 825). Enabling activation, on the other hand, does not use coercion but rather works on “providing a framework of infrastructure and services that offsets unequal opportunity structures” (Dingeldey, 2007: 826). Enabling activation implies a form of normative recalibration from providing redistribution to ensuring “freedom of opportunity across the life course” (Hemerijck, 2006: 12). Workfare activation goes beyond that by taking a compulsive approach.

Bonoli (2010) provides a different typology of activation policies. He distinguishes between incentive reinforcement, employment assistance, occupation, and upskilling (Bonoli, 2010: 44). Incentive reinforcement refers to “measures that aim to strengthen work incentives for benefit recipients”, such as reducing benefits or making them conditional. Employment assistance refers to “measures aimed at removing obstacles to

labor-market participation” (Bonoli, 2010: 440). This includes assistance in job seeking, as well as placements or wage subsidies (Bonoli, 2010: 440). Such measures may also lead to some skill improvements, but are focussed on allowing existing skills to be applied (Bonoli, 2010: 440). As the third type Bonoli (2010: 441) identifies ‘occupation’, which differs from employment assistance in the sense that it is not geared towards labour market participation, but aims “to keep jobless people busy”. Associated instruments are the creation of more jobs in the public or non for profit sectors, and the availability of training courses which are not or weakly related to potential future labour market participation. The last type Bonoli (2010: 441) identifies is ‘upskilling’, or ‘human capital investment’. This refers only to job-related vocational training opportunities. Bonoli (2010: 441) argues that the “idea here is to offer a second chance to people who were not able to profit from the training system or whose skills have become obsolete”.

Combining the insights of these typologies and going beyond them I propose a different typology of instrumental policy ideas for activation. Firstly, the instrumental policy idea of *negative incentives* refers to policies which in some way decrease benefit levels in order to incentivize individuals to work. For example this may take the form of reducing benefits levels at large, making eligibility requirements for benefits more strict or making benefits conditional upon participation in employability measures. This instrumental policy idea is central in Dingeldey’s type of workfare and fits with Bonoli’s type of incentive reinforcement. Secondly, the instrumental policy idea of *positive incentives* refers to the idea of incentivizing individuals to work by making such work more attractive financially, for example by providing tax credits to workers. This distinction between negative and positive incentives is adjusted from Weishaupt (2011: 69).

Turning to enabling measures, three further instrumental policy ideas are best distinguished. *Guidance* as an instrumental policy idea takes an enabling approach. It refers to the provision of individual counselling or forms of job-search assistance by public employment services. The instrumental policy idea of *work-subsidies* then refers to providing public financial support for employment for employment, like creating more jobs in the public sector or providing subsidies for wages. As a further enabling measure, the instrumental policy idea of *training* refers to providing training opportunities to active unemployed individuals. As such it differs from human capital investment in a broader sense. Whereas forms of lifelong learning or education improvement, discussed below in the section on social investment, take a preventive approach to unemployment, the instrumental policy idea of training only refers to upskilling unemployed individuals who require certain skill in order to be activated.

One further instrumental policy idea also fits the rational of activation but takes a more distinct approach. *Protection* as an instrumental policy idea refers to measures that enable the employment of certain vulnerable groups that may otherwise not be able to work.

This includes specific protective measures for youth and disabled persons, like mentioned in a list of activation policies by Armingeon (2007), as well as protective measures for other groups like elderly persons and women.

2.4. FLEXICURITY

A further core policy idea that emerges in the literature on the EES as well as in the general literature on welfare recalibration is flexicurity. Both Barbier (2011) and Weishaupt and Lack (2010), who studied developments in the EES over time, argue that the idea of flexicurity becomes prominent in 2005, just after a mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy (better known as the Kok-report) had been completed.

As a term flexicurity combines ‘flexibility’ and ‘security’, and refers to policies that enhance both (Wilthagen and Tros, 2004: 169). Discussions on flexicurity often refer to the Danish ‘golden triangle’ of liberal employment protection legislation, high social security benefits, and active labour market policy (Madsen, 2008: 74-75). This approach differs somewhat from the Dutch flexicurity approach, another often discussed example of flexicurity, as described by Keune and Jepsen (2007). The Danish approach relies on flexibility in standard employment, whereas the Dutch model favours atypical employment with increased security (Keune and Jepsen, 2007: 5-6). As a concept flexicurity can thus, as Madsen (2008: 74) also argues, refer to different ways of combining flexible working arrangements and security. As such the instrumental policy ideas associated with the core policy idea of flexicurity do not individually promote flexicurity, but rather promote flexibility or security in various ways. Depending on their combination they can together form a strategy that fits the flexicurity approach. For the construction of those instrumental policy ideas I follow an influential typology of flexicurity policies by Wilthagen and Tros (2004).

- *External-numerical flexibility*: This refers to job flexibility, allowing easier dismissal of workers by employers. This could be achieved through the flexibilization of employment protection legislation or through the active promotion of more flexible types of contracts which are already allowed by the legal framework.
- *Internal-numerical flexibility*: Other policies may increase flexibility with regard to the working time of employees, allowing variation in this rather than increasing possibilities for dismissal. Here I refer to flexibility in working time from an employer-perspective, allowing employers to determine the variation in working time.
- *Functional flexibility*: Another set of policies approaching flexibility does not promote flexibility in terms of easier dismissal or change in working time, but rather in terms of the tasks performed by employees.

- *Wage flexibility*: This refers to policies allowing for flexibility in payment based on performance or results.
- *Job security*: This refers to policies ensuring the certainty to retain a specific job, normally through employment protection legislation. This is outright contradictory to the instrumental policy idea of job flexibility, but may result in a different form of flexicurity if it is combined with more working time flexibility or more functional flexibility.
- *Income security*: This refers to the certainty of receiving “adequate and stable levels of income in the event that paid work is interrupted or terminated” (Viebrock and Clasen, 2009: 309).
- *Combination security*: As defined by Viebrock and Clasen (2009), combination security refers to the ability of workers to combine work and private responsibilities. As such it also refers to an idea that is similar to working time flexibility, but now allowing employees to determine the variation in working time.

A last type of security used by Wilthagen and Tros (2004) and Viebrock and Clasen (2009) is employment security. It refers to “the certainty of retaining in paid work”, but not necessarily with the same employer (Viebrock and Clasen, 2009: 309). Unlike the other types discussed above, employment security does not refer to a specific instrumental policy idea, but rather to a type of security that could be achieved by further contextual policies like lifelong learning and activation policies. Outlines of flexicurity by the European institutions also include policies ideas of lifelong learning and activation next to flexibilized contractual arrangement and security (Heyes, 2011: 643-644), which would improve employment security. Here I therefore do not include employment security as an instrumental policy idea for flexicurity, but rather limit my theoretical framework of instrumental policy ideas to external-numerical flexibility, internal-numerical flexibility, functional flexibility, wage flexibility, job security, income security and combination security, as defined above.

There is reason to expect that not all of the EES was characterized by a flexicure combination of flexibility and security. Raveaud (2007: 427) argued that the EES is characterized by promoting flexibilization, but in combination with the reduction of unemployment benefits rather than with continued security. Barbier (2011) and Weishaupt and Lack (2010) also point out how flexibilization was a strong element in the reformed European Employment Strategy after 2005, whilst security was missing. They argue however that security gained a stronger position in 2010 after criticism. Whether this is true will be tested in this thesis, using the following hypothesis.

H2: The EES started disseminating flexibility ideas without security ideas for the first time between 2005 and 2010, and moved to a combination of flexibility and security ideas after 2010.

2.5. SOCIAL INVESTMENT

As a policy perspective social investment has often been promoted in the literature as central in welfare state recalibration. It refers to the view that social policy intervention can contribute to the development of resources and thus benefit productivity and economic development (Taylor-Gooby 2008). From the perspective such interventions should be proper investments, i.e. those promising future returns (Jenson, 2012: 66). The perspective focusses on human capital investment throughout the life course (Morel, Palier and Palme, 2012: 2). The importance of this life course perspective was promoted particularly in the well-known edited work of Esping-Andersen (2002) on the new welfare state. According to De la Porte and Jacobsen (2011) social investment ideas indeed form a component of the EES.

Understood in a broad sense, as a complete paradigm for social policy recalibration, social investment can include various components, including some of the positive efforts at activation discussed earlier. In this thesis social investment as used only in a narrower sense. As a core policy idea I define social investment as the preventive investment in human capital throughout the life course. This preventive character distinguishes social investment from activation, as the latter does not use human capital investment to prevent unemployment, but rather to activate unemployed individuals.

Three instrumental policy ideas applying a social investment approach can be distinguished. Firstly, *childcare improvement* can be used as a social investment in order to improve the long term chances of the children at hand. Secondly *education improvement*, referring to improvements in schooling as well as tertiary education, can also be used as a social investment to improve productivity in the remainder of life. Lastly *lifelong learning* does refer to continued human capital investment throughout life, to improve competencies and productivity levels whilst preventing unemployment. With social investment being an important element of welfare recalibration according to many (Esping-Andersen, 2002; Hemerijck, 2009), I expect it to play part in the EES. This is investigated with the following hypotheses.

H3: Throughout its existence the European Employment Strategy has promoted social policy recalibration through the policy idea of social investment.

2.6. RECALIBRATION OR RETRENCHMENT

The theoretical overview above has provided a consistent picture and expectation of the European Employment Strategy as an instrument for welfare recalibration. The policy ideas shown in that section include elements of retrenchment or liberalization as well as elements of expansion. The table below provides an overview of this. Indeed, the creation

of negative incentives as defined in section 2.3 is achieved by decreasing or benefits, either through their general reduction or through making them more conditional. The forms of numerical and wage flexibility are forms of liberalization, e.g. through easing contractual legislation. The other instrumental policy ideas mentioned in the sections above all use some form of social policy intervention.

	<i>Social policy retrenchment/liberalization</i>	<i>Social policy intervention/expansion</i>
<i>Activation</i>	Negative incentives	Training Work-subsidies Guidance Protection Positive incentives
<i>Flexicurity</i>	External-numerical flexibility Internal-numerical flexibility Wage flexibility	Functional flexibility Income security Job security Combination security
<i>Social investment</i>		Childcare improvement Education improvement Lifelong learning

It may be so, however, that this nuanced picture has changed in 2005. At least a number of authors have pointed to a “neo-liberal turn” (Weishaupt and Lack, 2011: 18) in European governance after the revision of the Lisbon Strategy in 2005. That year marked some changes in the governance of the EES, as the employment guidelines became part of the integrated guidelines for growth and jobs, whilst the national action plans for employment were integrated into the broader general national reform programmes. According to Weishaupt and Lack (2011: 18) these governance changes are “the expression of a new ideology that assumed that economic growth will lead to more jobs, which in turn will benefit all”. Barbier (2011: 15) similarly argues that social objectives were marginalized in comparison to economic objectives after 2005, following the changes in the governance structure of the EES.

Though these changes have been argued to be present in European governance at large, it is unclear whether the content of EES was also changed in a ‘neoliberal’ way in 2005. This would suggest that the EES has focussed more, or even exclusively, on retrenching rather than expanding policy ideas after 2005. Therefore it is useful to give some specific attention to the balance between retrenchment and expansion in the EES. Thus, after describing the contents of the EES in detail, I will also test whether these insights confirm or reject the following hypothesis.

H4: The EES in 2005 increased its attention to the liberalizing policy ideas, whilst decreasing its attention to intervening ones.

2.7. CONCLUSION

This theoretical chapter has constructed a specific theoretical framework for studying the European Employment Strategy. I view the EES as a method of European governance to disseminate policy ideas for the recalibration of social policy arrangements in Europe. On the basis of existing literature on welfare state recalibration in general and the EES in particular, the three core policy ideas of activation, flexicurity and social investment are expected to be central in this process. With each of these core policy ideas a number of instrumental policy ideas has been associated, so as to create a specific hierarchical model of social policy ideas. This model will be used to check the theoretical expectation that activation, flexicurity and social investment are central in the EES and as a basis for answering the research question of this thesis.

3. METHODS

Interested in the policy ideas that are being disseminated through the European Employment Strategy at large, this study looks at two of the EES's specific instruments. Below a number of specific research questions are set out to structure this process. Next this chapter explains how the data will be collected and analysed. As such it sets out this thesis' approach to answering the main research question:

Which policy ideas have been disseminated through the employment guidelines and the mutual learning programme for employment, and how has this changed since 1998?

3.1. SUB-QUESTIONS

As is shown in detail in annex A, the EES uses a variety of policy instruments for the dissemination of policy ideas. Of those instruments, the national reform programmes and the annual progress reports, are (since 2005) shared between the EES and broad economic policy coordination. Only the employment guidelines and the mutual learning programme for employment are the exclusive domain of the European Employment Strategy. It is impossible, for reasons of time and space, to analyse all of these instruments. For that reason I have focussed only on the two instruments that are exclusively used by the European Employment Strategy: the employment guidelines and the mutual learning programme for employment.

I expect the employment guidelines to disseminate more general core policy ideas, whilst I expect the mutual learning programme to disseminate more specific instrumental policy ideas. Investigating these contents I use the following two sub-questions:

1. Which core policy ideas have the EES's employment guidelines disseminated since 1998, and how has this changed?
2. Which instrumental policy ideas have EES's employment best practices disseminated since 1998, and how has this changed?

Having analysed the discourse of both of these governance instruments, I analyse their consistency, investigating whether they rely on the same or different policy mechanisms and assumptions.

3. How consistent are the policy ideas of the EES's employment guidelines and employment best practices?

Following these questions this thesis will provide a dense description of the policy ideas content of the European Employment Strategy. On that basis it will discuss the usability of its conceptual framework for studying welfare recalibration through open coordination and it will analyse the meaning of the policy ideas disseminated through the EES for the future of European social policy arrangements.

3.2. DATA

The EES as a whole can be understood as a form of discourse. In social science, discourse has been understood in various ways. I follow the theoretical framework developed by Hajer (1989, 1995, 2000), who defined discourse as “a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations that are produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities” (Hajer, 1995: 44). Conceptually discourse thus refers to content as well as to action. A discourse contains certain content: ‘ideas, concepts, and categorizations’. Discursive content is however always bound up with the discursive practices that produce it. Understood as such, public governance is made up of discourse (Hajer, 2000).

This study is only concerned with part of this discourse. I am interested in investigating the policy ideas that are disseminated through the EES, and thus I only investigate the discursive content of the EES with regard to policy ideas. In order to do this, I analyse a number of policy documents which I expect to represent the policy ideas that are disseminated through the EES. Given my choice to analyse the employment guidelines and the mutual learning programme for employment, I use the policy documents associated with these instruments as my datasets. To do this the process set out below in section 3.3 is used. I rely upon the assumption that it is indeed possible to discover the intended meaning of those policy documents by relying on the shared mechanism of language (Wagenaar, 2011).

All employment guidelines have been published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* (OJ), named the *Official Journal of the European Communities* before 2003. All guidelines are also accessible through the europa.eu website. Below a list of all analysed sets of guidelines is provided. Throughout the remainder of these are, for reasons of readability, simply referred to as the guidelines of their first year of applications.

<i>Years of applicability</i>	<i>Document title</i>	<i>Document number</i>	<i>Source</i>
1998	Council Resolution of 15 December 1997 on the 1998 Employment Guidelines	98/C 30/01	OJ (1998) C 30, pp. 1-5
1999	Council Resolution of 22 February 1999 on the 1999 Employment Guidelines	1999/C 69/02	OJ (1999) C 69, pp. 2-8
2000	Council Decision of 13 March 2000 on guidelines for Member States' employment policies for the year 2000	2000/228/EC	OJ (2000) L 72, pp. 15-20
2001	Council Decision of 19 January 2001 on Guidelines for Member States' employment policies for the year 2001	2001/63/EC	OJ (2001) L 22, pp. 18-26
2002	Council Decision of 18 February 2002 on guidelines for Member States' employment policies for the year 2002	2002/177/EC	OJ (2002) L 60, pp. 60-69
2003-2005	Council Decision of 22 July 2003 on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States	2003/578/EC	OJ (2003) L 197, pp. 13-21
2005-2008	Council Decision of 12 July 2005 on Guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States	2005/600/EC	OJ (2005) L 205, pp. 21-27
2008-2010	Council Decision of 15 July 2008 on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States	2008/618/EC	OJ (2008) L 198, pp. 47-54
2010-2014	Council Decision of 21 October 2010 on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States	2010/707/EU	OJ (2010) L 308, pp. 46-51

For the mutual learning programme, all individual best practices have been analysed. As an accessible way of understanding and categorizing the policy ideas exchanged at those meetings, I analysed the summaries of each of these meetings as available from <http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net/>.

3.3. DATA ANALYSIS

As an answer to its research questions, this research aims to provide a dense description of the policy ideas of the European Employment Strategy. Inspired by content analysis (Krippendorff, 2004; Elo and Kyngäs, 2008) I have used a structured three-step process of unitizing, coding, and qualitative and quantitative description. Given the differences in the nature of the datasets used, the process is applied somewhat differently to the two

datasets. Nonetheless for both datasets a deductive approach is used. The core and instrumental policy ideas identified in chapter two were used as *a priori* codes, whilst emergent coding was used only where the theory-based codes did not fit.

Employment guidelines

All employment guidelines contain a variety of policy recommendations and goals. In order to analyse those guidelines for the policy ideas they disseminate, it is necessary to distinguish between the varieties of policy elements they contain, so as to create coding units. Such coding units are elements of text which “are distinguished to be separately described or categorized” (Krippendorff, 2004: 99-100). Various methods can be used for this process of distinguishing units (Krippendorff, 2004: 103-109). In line with its chosen frame of policy ideas, I distinguish coding units in the employment guidelines as ‘policy elements’. Every syntactic unit in the guidelines documents that supplies a different policy recommendation is considered as one policy element, i.e. one coding unit.

The coding units have not been created per guideline document, but per time stratum in which the guidelines showed much continuity in terms of structure. All annual guideline documents between 1998 and 2002 used the same four-pillared structure. The 2003 guidelines use a different structure. The guideline documents of 2005 differ from those of 2003 and were exactly the same as those of 2008, except for some changes in the recitals. The 2010 guidelines then again used a different structure. As such I construct four time strata on the basis of these changes: (a) 1998-2002, (b) 2003, (c) 2005 and 2008, and (d) 2010. Elements that were present across different years in a single time stratum are considered as a single coding unit. As the description in chapter four will show, many policy elements persisted across the years of the first time stratum, whereas others were added or removed at a certain stage. This is not the case for the other time strata, as they either only include a single guidelines document (2003 respectively 2010) or represent two guidelines documents which are the same for all substantive purposes (2005 and 2008).

Once these coding units had been created, they were coded using a process described by Hsieh and Shannon (2005) as a directed approach to content analysis. This is a deductive approach relying upon pre-defined categories of policy ideas to analyse the texts at hand. Such a deductive approach is particularly suitable for subjects, like welfare recalibration, about which much theory is already available (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005: 1281). Here the core policy ideas identified in chapter two have been used as codes. All policy elements were coded for their fit with one of these approaches. On the basis of this coding process, all guidelines are qualitatively described in chapter four.

Throughout this process of description, the coded core policy ideas are used to structure the description of the core policy ideas per time stratum. In this process of description, the hypotheses on the presence of the core policy ideas of activation, flexicurity and social

investment are tested. Then the appropriateness of the conceptual framework of core policy ideas is evaluated.

Mutual learning programme

For the mutual learning programme a similar but slightly different procedure has been applied. For the mutual learning programme, individual peer review meetings have been used as coding units. Every peer review meeting represent a specific policy example, a best practice. Again a deductive process was used through a directed process of coding, combined with emergent coding where no prior categories fit.

In the case of the mutual learning programme this coding process necessarily took the form of a process of categorization. The best practices do not present a specific instrumental policy idea, but rather a policy example from a member state. The type of approach is of interest, however, because it is shared with the purpose of transferability. Therefore the best practices are categorized according to the type of instrumental policy idea applied. Here the instrumental policy ideas set out in chapter two of this thesis were used as *a priori* categories. For those policy examples that did not fit these approaches, a emergent coding was used instead.

Benefitting the structure of this process, the best practices were also coded according to the broader categories of core policy ideas. Following this categorization, the instrumental policy ideas used in the best practices across the years are described in detail in section 4.2. Here a combination between qualitative and quantitative description is used. Quantitative description provides a broad overview of the distribution of the different policy ideational categories. The combination with qualitative description allows for more detailed descriptions exemplifying how the instrumental policy ideas identified are used in practice. This combined quantitative and qualitative description provides a basis for making a conceptual contribution, analysing the appropriateness and usefulness of the policy ideational categories used. Thus the section ends with some suggestions for conceptual improvement.

Discussion

After these processes of unitizing, coding, description and conceptual evaluation have been completed, the policy approach of the EES is evaluated at large. The findings on both the employment guidelines and the best practices are used to evaluate their consistency with one another. I analyse which policy priorities are implied by the choices made, i.e. by the policy ideas used, and what this means for the future of social policy arrangements in Europe.

3.4. CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown the importance of distinguishing between different instruments of the EES in order to analyse its policy ideas content. Inspired by content analytical approaches it has set up a structured methodical process to analyse the discourse of two of those instruments. As carried out, this process has consisted of unitizing, coding and description before moving onto further evaluation. The results of the unitizing and coding process now are attached in annexes B and C, whilst the following chapter four and five provide a dense description on that basis.

4. EMPLOYMENT GUIDELINES

Using the process set out in the previous chapter, all employment guidelines have been analysed for the core policy ideas they disseminate. First the different guideline documents have been unitized and coded, the technical results of which are displayed in annex B. On that basis I provide a dense description of the contents of the employment guidelines, categorized by core policy idea. Below this description is structured using the different time strata that were chosen in chapter three, in order to answer the first sub-question: *Which core policy ideas have the EES's employment guidelines disseminated since 1998, and how has this changed?* An answer to this question is provided in section 4.5, where the appropriateness of the used theoretical framework is also evaluated.

4.1. THE 1998-2002 GUIDELINES

The process of unitizing the guidelines elements of the guidelines between 1998 and 2002, as well as a comparison of these guidelines to the 2003 guidelines show a remarkable continuity. Up to 2003 the guidelines only make some minor adjustments. The table below provides a structured overview of all policy elements of the employment guidelines between 1998 and 2002. More detail is available in annex B, which shows all policy elements per set of guidelines.

	I	II	III	IV
Removed in 2000		Other (98-99): - Reduce VAT on services		
All years	Activation: - Obligation to offer employability measures - Measures for long-term unemployed - Reforming benefit, tax, and training systems - Target for training and active measures - Call on social partners for employability - Anti-discrimination	Other: - Reduce overhead and administrative costs - Reduce tax and social security burdens for small enterprises and entrepreneurs - Investigate and facilitate job creation - Reduce (labour) taxation	Flexibility: - Social partners' agreement for more flexible work - Incorporating diverse types of contract Other: - Regulatory burden reduction	Activation: - Tackling gender gaps - Reduce obstacles to return to work

	Social investment: - Various education measures			
From 1999 onwards	Activation: - Modernise PES's - Working arrangements for active ageing	Other: - Promoting entrepreneurship - Framework for services sector development		Activation: - Gender mainstreaming
From 2001 onwards	Activation: - Reviewing tax and benefits for active ageing - Job matching and combating bottlenecks	Other: - Tackling undeclared work	Social investment: - Social partners' agreement for lifelong learning in enterprises Other: - Better application of health and safety legislation	

Activation

Of the categories of core policy ideas identified in chapter two, activation is most strongly present in the 1998-2002 guidelines. As is shown in annex B, all of the instrumental policy ideas identified in chapter two are also present.

Most of these activation measures show a strong focus on assisting individuals in finding work. In these policy elements the instruments of training, guidance, and work-subsidies could all fit, but usually the form that these measures should take remains open. The obligation to offer employability measures within a certain period of time, for example, specifically allows a variety of potential measures, mentioning “training, retraining, work practice, a job, or other employability measure, including, more generally, accompanying individual vocational guidance and counselling” (2002 guidelines, p. 64).

Some further policy elements, added only in 2001 and 2002, focus explicitly on combating labour shortages, to meet currently unfulfilled labour needs of businesses. Here the formulation does not seem primarily concerned with the activation of individuals, but rather with meeting those business needs, considering “emerging labour shortages [which] will harm competitiveness”. Nonetheless both of these sets of policy elements show the same basic rationale that non-workers can be made more employable to then fit certain vacancies. Also quite similar in approach is the call to review benefit and tax system, following the idea that positive and/or negative incentives ensure people seek work and then fit vacancies.

Some further elements show a slightly different approach and follow the instrumental policy idea of protection. These elements set standards to allow the employment of certain groups that would otherwise remain unemployed. All guidelines between 1998 and 2002 promote anti-discrimination and all guidelines between 1999 and 2002 set standards for working arrangements to allow the employment of the elderly. Some further elements remain unclear about how protection is to be reached and only mention the need for protecting disadvantaged groups and reducing gender gaps. The guidelines do not specify

whether such measures for specific groups would lead to higher employment rates at large.

As the above description illustrates, all instrumental policy ideas associated with activation in chapter 2 are also observed in the 1998-2002 guidelines. Almost all of them promote forms of social policy intervention. Only the element that calls for reviewing tax and benefit systems could also be interpreted as a call towards retrenchment, aiming at a decrease in benefit levels to provide more incentive for work.

Flexicurity

Some of the policy elements present in the 1998-2002 guidelines fit part of the core policy idea of flexicurity. These elements are all concerned with more flexibility and could thus form part of a strategy combining flexibility and security. Security was also mentioned, but only in passing. The policy elements that called for increasing flexibility also mentioned that there was a need for continued security. Elements explicitly calling for policy action to retain or increase job or income security are, however, completely lacking in the 1998-2002 guidelines. Some elements calling for combination security were present, with a guideline section calling for the provision of parental leave as well as care services to enable the reconciliation of work and family or private life.

Looking more specifically at the type of flexibility that is mentioned in the guidelines, some variety is visible. Two policy elements in the 1998-2002 guidelines focussed on increasing internal flexibility. Social partners were called upon to provide more flexible working arrangements and, in 2001 and 2002, to provide lifelong learning opportunities in firms. Both aim at increased functional flexibility, so as to prevent unemployment. Next to this the call for more flexible working arrangements includes working time issues, aiming at increased internal-numerical flexibility. Another policy elements call for more adaptable types of contract, a way of increasing external-numerical flexibility. Both these forms of flexibilization are probably aimed at increasing the number of vacancies in firms. The description above clarifies that only a limited number of the instrumental policy ideas associated with flexicurity in chapter 2 are present in the 1998-2002 guidelines. They do include the liberalizing elements of increasing numerical flexibility, but do not combine this with a social security dimension. Though security is mentioned shortly it is not treated with significance. A form of social policy intervention is only included through the promotion of intra-firm training for functional flexibility, a preventative approach against unemployment.

Social investment

Social investment policy elements were also present in the 1998-2002 guidelines. As annex B shows, both forms education improvement and lifelong learning were mentioned in those guidelines, whilst childcare improvement as a social investment lacks.

A variety of policy issues is mentioned in the 1998-2002 guidelines related to education improvement. The guidelines call to “reduce substantially the number of young people who drop out of the school system early” (2002 guidelines, p. 65), without specifying how this is to be achieved. Some specific issues are added to this, but differ across the years. From 1999 onwards this is combined with the aim of enabling lifelong learning. These two issues are treated in combination for “the development of the knowledge-based economy and to the improvement of the level and quality of employment” (2002 guidelines, p. 65). Both these elements all follow the basic rationale of investing in education to improve skills on the long term so as to make individuals more suitable for job vacancies or more productive in jobs, leading to a larger number of jobs.

A third form of social investment identified in the literature, investing in childcare was not present in the 1998-2002 guidelines. The provision of childcare was included in a guideline element (as mentioned above), but only with the aim of allowing work-family reconciliation, not as a social investment. Nonetheless a social investment approach clearly forms part of the 1998-2002 guidelines. These elements provide a form of social policy intervention, not retrenchment or liberalization, even though they clearly have economic aims as well.

Other policy elements

Next to those policy elements discussed above, a number of further policy elements identified in the 1998-2002 guidelines have not been found to fit any of the core policy ideas set out in chapter two. Those elements follow different problem solution rationales than those discussed above. Below I will describe their basic approaches as visible from the guidelines.

This is most obviously the case for pillar two of the 1998-2002 guidelines. Concerned with “developing entrepreneurship and job creation”, it includes a number of elements aimed at the employer-side of the labour market. Elements A15, A16, A21 and A23 aim at reducing overhead, administrative, tax and social security costs to allow for job creation. In their original formulation such policies should make “it easier to start up and run businesses” and make “the taxation system more employment friendly”. As such these elements share the aim of improving the business environment in such a way as to allow for more employment. As such they follow a single core rationale and may be categorized using a further core policy idea:

- *Passive employer-side policy*: Changing legislative or fiscal circumstances in order to promote business development and job creation.

Elements A19 and A20 however take a more active approach. They call for an active role by public institutions to enable job creation, by investigating concrete opportunities for this. In the 1998-2000 guidelines it is argued that member states should “investigate measures to exploit fully the possibilities offered by job creation at local level” in order to reduce obstacles to this. The 2001 and 2002 guidelines are somewhat more stronger, encouraging “local and regional authorities to develop strategies for employment in order to exploit fully the possibilities offered by job creation at local level” as well as calling for an active role of public employment services in “identifying local employment opportunities”. These guideline elements share the aim of creating an active role by public institutions for exploiting specific employment opportunities. As such they also follow a single core rationale and may be categorized using yet a further core policy idea:

- *Active employer-side policy*: Creating an active role by public institutions to exploit specific employment opportunities.

The 1998-2002 guidelines also include some forms of entrepreneurship promotion. As the 2002 guidelines put it, “Member States will encourage the taking up of entrepreneurial activities” both by reducing obstacles and by training, education and support services for entrepreneurship (p. 66). Focussing on entrepreneurs, the border between employer and employee becomes less clear. Nonetheless the first of those two elements follows the same basic approach as the ‘passive employer-side policy’ idea, where the latter follows the ‘active employer-side policy’ idea.

Clearly the above observations show that the 1998-2002 guidelines are not limited to the activation, flexicurity and social investment ideas, but also include an additional employer-side approach. Part of those policies only undertake different forms of liberalization to enable job development (passive), whereas others take a more active role to ensure business development. Lastly, two more elements are present in the 1998-2002 guidelines. One of these is concerned with moving undeclared work into regular employment (A18), whilst the other is concerned with improving health and safety (A27).

The aim of improving health and safety should be viewed as a form of social policy intervention. The aim of moving undeclared work into regular employment as well as the employer-side policies are not directly concerned with human well-being and cannot be considered social policy interventions as such, but may be considered indirect forms of social policy in their aims of increasing employment levels. Nonetheless passive employer-side policies in aiming to reduce fiscal and other burdens may off course lead to a further social policy retrenchment.

4.2. THE 2003 GUIDELINES

As mentioned in the theoretical section, 2003 marks a reorganization of the four guideline pillars into the ten priorities shown in the table below.

<p>1</p> <p>Activation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual support measures - Modernize labour market institutions 	<p>2</p> <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promoting entrepreneurship - Reducing administrative and regulatory burdens - Facilitating access to capital 	<p>3</p> <p>Activation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Occupational and geographic mobility <p>Flexibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legislative reform - Diverse working arrangements - Access to training - Positive management of economic change <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved working conditions and organization 	<p>4</p> <p>Social investment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Target for education completion - Target for lifelong learning participation - Enterprise human capital investment 	<p>5</p> <p>Activation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making jobs more attractive - Raising skills and providing support - Promoting active ageing <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Labour supply from migration
<p>6</p> <p>Activation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reducing gender gaps <p>Activation/security:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reconciling work and private life 	<p>7</p> <p>Activation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Measures for the disadvantaged - Reduction in employment gaps <p>Social investment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Target against early school leaving 	<p>8</p> <p>Activation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reform tax and benefit systems, benefit duration and management - Providing in-work benefits 	<p>9</p> <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Measures against undeclared work 	<p>10</p> <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating favourable conditions for regions lacking behind - Infrastructure support <p>Social investment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human capital support

These ten priorities clearly depart from the 1998-2002 guidelines in structure. Below I describe their contents in more detail, following the categorizations set out in chapter two and also analysing to which extent these contents differ from those of the 1998-2002 guidelines.

Activation

In the 2003 guidelines too, policy elements following the core policy idea of activation are widely present. In priority areas one, three and five measures to assist individuals in finding work are included, again to some extent leaving flexibility regarding the forms these measures take and potentially including training, guidance and work-subsidies. Forms of guidance and training are also mentioned explicitly.

Both positive and negative incentives are also used, just like between 1998 and 2002. More detail is provided with regard to both approaches. Whereas the 1998-2002 guidelines only mentioned the need to review tax and benefit systems, the 2003 guidelines also explicitly call for reviewing benefit duration, providing in-work benefits and raising the retirement age. No new rationale is added in comparison to the review of tax and benefit systems as discussed between 1998 and 2002. Again, some policy elements

following the instrumental policy idea of protection are also present. Anti-discrimination measures and other measures to promote the employment of certain groups are again included.

As such the 2003 guidelines differ from previous year in an increased attention to positive and negative forms of incentives. What has not changed is that an activation rationale is strongly included in the guidelines and that the variety of instrumental policy ideas for activation discussed in chapter two are all included. They include both an element of retrenchment, through reduction in benefits provisions, and elements of social policy intervention through providing forms of assistance, protection, and positive incentives.

Flexicurity

In 2003, again some policy elements resonate only with parts of the flexicurity perspective. Like between 1998 and 2002, increases in both internal-numerical and external-numerical flexibility are discussed, through more flexible working time arrangements and more flexible contracts legislation respectively. Issues of functional flexibility are also still included, though only for low-skill workers. The aim of legislative flexibilization is phrased in a broader sense in 2003 (“*reform overly restrictive elements in employment legislation*”) than before (“*examine the possibility of incorporating in national law more flexible types of contract*”).

Just like between 1998 and 2002, the 2003 guidelines do not show significant concern with security. Again security is mentioned shortly in the policy elements aimed at more flexibility, but policy actions to enhance security are not mentioned. So, overall the flexicurity-related parts of the employment guidelines are limited. Like between 1998 and 2002 liberalizing elements of increasing numerical flexibility are present, but positive social policy is limited to functional flexibility.

Social investment

Some further policy elements of the 2003 guidelines fit the core policy idea of social investment. Again the guidelines they include aims of improving education and lifelong learning. Priority area four exclusively includes such social investment elements. It aims “to equip all individuals with the skills required for a modern workforce”, as well as to promote “productivity, competitiveness and active ageing” (2003 guidelines, p. 19). Like between 1998 and 2002 improving childcare is not included as a social investment. So, like the 1998-2002 guidelines the 2003 guidelines call for some social policy intervention through social investment.

Other policy elements

The 2003 guidelines also include some further policy elements that do not fit one of the core policy ideas set out in chapter two. Of those one set of policy elements follows the

problem identification and policy prescriptions as the category of passive employer-side policies identified in the 1998-2002 guidelines. This is the case for the policy element in priority area two that calls for “simplifying and reducing administrative and regulatory burdens for business start-ups and SMEs and for the hiring of staff” (p. 18). The 2003 guidelines no longer include elements aiming at the reduction of labour taxation levels, though these were present between 1998 and 2002. Other elements of that priority area then take an active employer-side approach, through facilitating access to capital, promoting entrepreneurship, and actively promoting “job creation at the local level” (p. 21). The 2003 also add specific attention to supporting “favourable conditions” and infrastructure investments in “regions lagging behind” (p. 21). Thus, like between 1998 and 2002, the 2003 guidelines include additional employer-side elements.

Two further policy elements of the 2003 guidelines are concerned with improving the quality of employment and promoting “better working conditions, including health and safety” (p. 19). Focussed on job quality these elements too can surely be considered as contributing to a social dimension in European governance. Lastly the 2003 guidelines also aim at using labour supply from migration and tackling undeclared work.

4.3. THE 2005 & 2008 GUIDELINES

This table illustrates the contents of the 2005 and 2008. Overall these guidelines decreased the level of detail in comparison to earlier years.

1	2	3
<p>Activation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - European Youth Pact - Increasing female participation - Reconciling work and family - Active ageing - Modernize social protection - Individual support measures - Anti-discrimination - Modernizing labour market institutions - Geographic mobility - Anticipation of bottlenecks/needs <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managing economic migration 	<p>Activation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Occupational mobility <p>Flexibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legislative reform - Adaptable work organization - Managing economic change <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Combating undeclared work - Employment-friendly labour costs/wage-setting 	<p>Social investment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate access to education - Reduce early school leaving - Lifelong learning - Adaption to new competency requirements

Activation

The 2005 and 2008 guidelines also show a number of elements that fit the core policy idea of activation. Different forms of assisting individuals in finding work are included. Here individual support measures are mentioned, with form of training and guidance being discussed specifically. The same basic rationale discussed for previous years is also applicable here, i.e. assisting individuals to ensure their fit with job vacancies. The

guidelines also refer to the European Youth Pact, which, amongst other things, includes improving such assistance¹.

The variety of positive and negative incentive elements that were introduced in 2003 are no longer present in 2005 and 2008. The 2005 and 2008 guidelines do nonetheless include a policy element calling for “continual review of the incentives and disincentives resulting from the tax and benefit systems”. As such the 2005 and 2008 follow a rationale 1998-2002 and 2003 guidelines in calling for incentivizing work. Lastly policy elements fitting the instrumental policy ideas of protection are also present. An anti-discrimination aim is present; as is an aim to tackle gender gaps and ensure equal pay. Both aims are only mentioned shortly and not specified further. Next to this the improvement of working conditions to allow older workers to work is mentioned.

Overall the 2005-2008 guidelines include a variety of policy elements following the core policy idea of activation. Like previous years measures activating individuals are included, as well positive and negative incentives and measures for the protection of certain groups. As such these elements show a form of liberalization through benefit retrenchment for negative incentives, and a variety of social policy interventions.

Flexicurity

In the 2005 and 2008 guidelines a further set of policy elements partly follows the flexicurity perspective. Like in the other years, attention is given to increased flexibility, but not to increased or retained security. Other than in previous years, functional flexibility is not included. Discussing increased internal-numerical and external-numerical flexibility the 2005 and 2008 guidelines, like those of 2003, include less detail than the 1998-2002 guidelines. They only mention the need to adapt employment legislation and the need for innovative and adaptable forms of work organisation, leaving aside the forms this should take (2005 guidelines, p. 26). Like in previous years it is mentioned that flexibility is to be “combined with employment security” (p. 26), but again no policy recommendations for enhancing or retaining security are made. Once again all policy elements related to flexicurity focus on liberalization to increase flexibility and do not mention security with any significance. Only social policy retrenchment is visible in these elements, not social policy intervention.

Social investment

As the table clearly shows the 2005 and 2008 guidelines include a variety of policy elements following a social investment rationale. Its third pillar discusses improving education as well as the availability of lifelong learning, thus providing calling for a form of social policy intervention.

¹ http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/youth/c11081_en.htm

Other policy elements

Only a limited number of further policy elements is present in the 2005 and 2008 guidelines. One policy element concerns employment-friendly labour cost developments and taxation levels. As such it fits the rationale of passive employer-side policy. Another policy element calls for the development of new sources of jobs in the services sector, showing the core policy idea of active employer-side policy. Neither of these elements marks much innovation in comparison to earlier years. In comparison to earlier years the use of passive or active employer-side policies in the guidelines has been reduced.

Like in previous years, the 2005 and 2008 guidelines also aim at further social policy intervention in calling for “improving quality and productivity at work, including health and safety” (2005 guidelines, p. 26). Undeclared work is also mentioned, but not discussed in any amount of detail. The possibility of labour supply from migration, which was firstly discussed in 2003, is also included shortly (p. 25).

4.4. THE 2010 GUIDELINES

The most recent set of guidelines stems from 2010. Again its contents are shown in detail in appendix A and are summarized in the table below. As show the 2010 employment guidelines consist of four guidelines (numbered 7 till 10 as part of the integrated guidelines), all including a variety of policy elements.

#7	#8	#9	#10
<p>Activation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responsibilities in social security - Individual support services - Making work pay - Reviewing tax and benefits systems - Active ageing - Gender equality - Vulnerable groups - Remove barriers to labour market entry - Promote self-employment <p>Flexibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexible and reliable contractual arrangements <p>Security:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rights in social security <p>Social investment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective lifelong learning 	<p>Activation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Removing barriers to occupational and geographic mobility - Access to training and guidance - Rapid intervention <p>Social investment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality initial education - Incentives for lifelong learning - Joint financing of lifelong learning <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Qualification recognition - Targeted migration and integration policies - Stimulating labour demand 	<p>Social investment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving education, including early childhood - Improve teaching/learning mobility - More flexible and relevant education/training - Improve attractiveness/quality of teaching - Prevent early school leaving, including target 	<p>Activation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expanding employment opportunities - Equal opportunities - Active inclusion policies - Gender equality <p>Security:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate income support - Security during transition <p>Social investment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lifelong learning <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poverty reduction

Activation

A variety of the policy elements of the 2010 guidelines follow the core policy idea of activation. Like in previous years, a first set of policy elements is concerned with assisting the employment of individuals through forms of assistance. Guidance and training are

mentioned specifically. Next to that, some policy elements call for support or active policies without specifying the instruments that should be used for this. This category could potentially also include work-subsidies, though these are explicitly mentioned.

Like in 2005 and 2008 incentives for work are promoted in the policy element calling for reviewing tax and benefits systems. Next to that, the need for a “right framework conditions for wage bargaining and labour cost development” is discussed with the aim of making work pay, thus as a policy for ensuring positive work incentives. The 2010 guidelines also discuss a need for job quality. Increased job quality could then function as a non-financial positive incentive. Another set of policy elements follow the instrumental policy idea of protection. Needs for gender equality, anti-discrimination policies and support for disadvantaged groups are mentioned. Details on the implementation of these aims are left out.

Overall the 2010 guidelines show the same activation approaches that were present in earlier years. They include the support of individuals in finding work, including by first improving their skills, as well as work incentives and protective measures for specific groups. Again some liberalization is present in the aim of reviewing tax and benefits systems to provide more incentives, but more policy elements call for social policy intervention.

Flexicurity

Like in the previous years some policy elements in 2010 show part of the core policy idea of flexicurity. The 2010 guidelines call for increasing external-numerical flexibility. Similar to earlier sets of guidelines they call for the introduction of “flexible and reliable contractual arrangements” (p. 49). Internal-numerical flexibility and functional flexibility are not, however, discussed. Security is given more attention in the 2010 guidelines than in previous years. Like before the guidelines mention that flexibility should be combined with security, but unlike before some forms of specific forms of security are also aimed at. For example, guideline 7 mentions “[a]dequate social security should also be ensured for those on fixed-term contracts and the self-employed” and guideline 9 mentions “income security during transitions”. Thus the 2010 guidelines show a flexicurity approach that calls for both liberalization (through flexible contracts) and continued social policy intervention in social security systems.

Social investment

A further set of policy elements of the 2010 guidelines focuses on forms of social investment. The improvement of education is given a significant amount of attention in the 2010 guidelines. Like in previous years a policy element aiming at a reduction in dropouts is present. An explicit target against dropouts is added to this, as are a number of other measures. Guideline 9 calls for increasing quality, mobility, relevancy and

flexibility in educational systems. Also it aims at making teaching more attractive and improving the professional development of teachers. Furthermore guideline 8 mentions “[q]uality initial education and attractive vocational training” (p. 49). Next to this attention to education, the 2010 guidelines are first ones to mention the use of childcare improvement as a social investment, mentioning “early childhood education” as an element of lifelong learning (p. 50). Next to this a need for lifelong learning at large is also included.

Other policy elements

A last set of policy elements from the 2010 guidelines does not fit with any of the core policy ideas as set out in chapter two. A number of these take the form of employer-side policies, as found in earlier years. Policies liberalizing administrative or regulatory provision to stimulate the creation of jobs are not present. Rather a policy element calling for the revision of tax and benefit systems is the only policy elements using a type of passive employer-side policy. It includes the argument that this should increase labour demand. This implies that a reduction in labour taxes is favourable for increasing job levels, like was argued more explicitly in previous years.

Next to this the 2010 guidelines mention a need to promote job creation in a number of instances. The guidelines do not specify how this should be achieved however. In guideline seven, for example, it is stated that member states should “promote self-employment, entrepreneurship and job creation in all areas including green employment and care and promote social innovation”, without any specification in instruments. It remains ambiguous whether such promotion should take place through burden reduction measures or through forms of active intervention. Guideline 10 adds to this by mentioning that EU funds should be used for extending employment opportunities. Thus some employer-side measures are also visible in the 2010 guidelines, though these lack in specificity in comparison to earlier, which may also be problematic for implementation.

Furthermore the 2010 guidelines contribute to a social dimension by discussing the need for job quality. A recommendation to combat undeclared work is also included under that heading. Furthermore a need for “targeted migration and integration policies” is mentioned, though it is not specified how these should function. Possibly these are meant in the same way as in 2003, 2005 and 2008: using labour supply from third nations to fit business demands. One last policy element provides a completely new addition to the 2010 guidelines in comparison to earlier years. Those guidelines make a new addition to the EES’s contribution to a social dimension for European governance through a specific target for poverty reduction. They aim specifically “to lift at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and exclusion” (2010 guidelines, p. 51).

4.5. CONCLUSION

The employment guidelines provide a much higher level of detail than expected. Rather than promoting activation, flexicurity and social investment as core policy ideas, they promote a number of more specific policy ideas that partly fit those categories. Activation is widely present everywhere through approaches to individual assistance, forms of protection, as well as positive and negative incentives. Already before 2005 flexibilization was widely discussed as well. This is quite contrary to the expectation of Barbier (2011) and Weishaupt and Lack (2010), who pointed out that flexicurity was introduced into the EES in 2005. The introduction of the terminology of ‘flexicurity’ in 2005 turns out to have no meaning beyond the change in terminology. In line with Barbier’s (2011) argument, security concerns were first added to flexibilization concerns in 2010. With regard to social investment, then, lifelong learning and education improvement were present across all guidelines. Nonetheless the attention to education greatly increased in 2010.

The sub-question of concern to this chapter was: *Which core policy ideas have the EES’s employment guidelines disseminated since 1998, and how has this changed?* It turns out the EES’s employment guidelines do not disseminate core policy ideas on the level of generality used in chapter two to describe the core policy ideas of activation, flexicurity and social investment. On a more specific level, the guidelines do disseminate various policy ideas that can be categorized usefully under the heading of core policy ideas. They promote activation through personalized assistance measures, through specific forms of changing incentive structures, and through protective anti-discrimination measures. They also promote different forms of flexibility across all years, whilst starting to promote some security in 2010. Some specific forms of social investment are also promoted all along, and the attention to this was strongly increased in 2010. Apart from those elements, some more elements promoted specific forms of employer-side policies, as well as aims against undeclared work, for third-country labour supply, job quality and poverty reduction. The table provides an overview of the policy ideas disseminated through the employment guidelines elements categorized according to core policy idea.

	<i>Main ideas disseminated</i>
Before 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Activation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Includes personalized assistance, protection and incentives ● Flexibilization ● Social investment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mainly lifelong learning, some education ● Employer-side policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Passive and active
After 2010	<i>Idem, with added:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Security ○ Much attention to education ○ Poverty reduction

This basis already shows which hypotheses on the policy ideas disseminated through the employment guidelines can be confirmed or rejected. Both hypothesis one and three are to be confirmed. Many elements of the employment guidelines fit with the core policy idea of activation. Also many elements of the employment guidelines fit with the core policy idea of social investment. In comparison to the social investment perspective at large the guidelines had a more limited focus, particularly before 2010, but nonetheless elements of social investment were present across the guidelines. Hypothesis two can only be confirmed in part. Indeed, the guidelines moved from only including flexibilization elements to including flexibilization and security elements in 2010. But contrary to the hypothesis, flexibilization had been an issue in the guidelines all along and was not new in 2005.

Hypotheses	
H1	Throughout its existence the European Employment Strategy has promoted social policy recalibration through the policy idea of activation.
H2	The EES started disseminating flexibility ideas without security ideas for the first time between 2005 and 2010, and moved to a combination of flexibility and security ideas after 2010.
H3	Throughout its existence the European Employment Strategy has promoted social policy recalibration through the policy idea of social investment.

Overall the guidelines thus take a more specific level than expected. The policy elements observed are usually closer to the level identified in my theoretical framework as ‘instrumental policy ideas’ than as ‘core policy ideas’. Indeed the guidelines take less of a ‘flexible’ approach than was expected on the basis of the description by Treib, Bähr and Falkner (2007) of the OMC’s as not only non-coercive but also flexible modes of governance. The often mentioned open flexible character of the OMC has particular potential because it may lead to better, more innovative policy solutions. Following the observations in this, that potential does not seem to be realistic. The structure of the employment guidelines is contrary to that flexibility, as it sets out specific policy approaches for implementation rather than broad core policy idea. Indeed in this regard, the EU acts more like a “cosmopolitan sovereign” (Beck and Grande, cf. van Gerven and Ossewaarde, 2012: 38) than as a flexible facilitator of welfare recalibration.

Indeed the guidelines already provide significant specificity on how activation, flexibilization and social investment should take place. One point where they lack this specificity is with regard to security. This leads to an asymmetrical situation, expected to be discouraging for attending to the continuation of security in national social policy recalibration. This is particularly surprising in light of a justification much used for changes like the introduction of recalibration efforts: that they keep social security systems affordable. For example Hemerijck (2006: 5) argued that a central rationale for social policy changes in the last two decades was that they could contribute “towards maintaining the affordability of adequate levels of social protection”. In practice the

welfare recalibration efforts of the EES are not concerned with that goal of maintaining social protection.

5. MUTUAL LEARNING PROGRAMME

Using the process set out in the methods chapter, all peer reviews (or best practices) conducted in the context of the mutual learning programme of the European Employment Strategy have been studied for the instrumental policy ideas they disseminate. Here the peer reviews have individually been used as units for coding. Thus in some cases individual peer reviews have been coded with multiple instrumental policy ideas, as these used a combination of instruments. Based on this coding process a dense description is provided below, answering the second sub-question of this thesis: *Which instrumental policy ideas have EES’s employment best practices disseminated since 1998, and how has this changed?*

Annex B provides an overview of all best practice meetings, coded upon the instrumental policy ideas that they disseminate and categorized for the categories of core policy ideas these fit within. Taking into account the large number of best practices (75 in total) the table provides an overview of all best practices, shown according to the categories of core policy ideas that the instruments they use fit with. As some best practices used a combination of instruments, the categories overlap. Which form the best practices in these categories take is discussed below.

Core policy idea	Times observed
Activation	41
Flexicurity	12
Social investment	14
Other	17
Total	74

Sections 5.1 to 5.3 below consider all best practices that fit in the categories of the core policy ideas of activation, flexicurity and social investment. I discuss the instrumental policy ideas used in those best practices and the extent to which they provide for social policy intervention. Section 5.4 then discusses all best practices that do not fit with any of the expected instrumental policy ideas but take a different approach. For those best practices I have analysed whether their approaches fit with alternative policy ideas also found in the guidelines (active or passive employer-side policies, job quality, third-country labour supply and tackling undeclared work), or whether they show yet other policy prescriptions.

5.1. ACTIVATION

In all of the time strata, more than half of the best practices use the core policy idea of activation. Usually, these best practices do not show the exclusive use of a single one of

the instrumental policy ideas theorized, but rather recommend policy actions combining multiple instruments.

This becomes particularly clear when looking at negative incentives. Every single best practice including negative incentives uses these in combination with other activation measures. Usually this takes the form of benefit conditionality, losing one's benefits when one does not participate in

Negative incentives	13
Training	19
Work-subsidies	7
Guidance	14
Protection	9
Positive incentives	3
<i>Other</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Lacking specification</i>	<i>4</i>

activation measures. Still only a minority of the best practices dealing with activation include an element of negative incentives. This will be explained by a prior existence of benefit conditionality in national systems, giving more priority to the improvement of specific support systems up to the best practices.

Best practices focussing on forms of individual support are most strongly present. The instrumental policy ideas of training (19) and guidance (14) have been observed most often out of all best practices, whereas work-subsidies were observed in more limited numbers (7). Such measures take different forms, but all show the aim of improving the employability of people to get them into work. Danish best practice 99-7, for example, focusses specifically on young people with low skill levels, providing vocational training following the argument that it is necessary “to have completed at least some formal training or education to have any chance of securing a job on the Danish labour market”. Other best practices share similar arguments, but focus on the importance of individual guidance to enable commitment. Slovenian best practice 09-4 for example argues how “mutual trust and respect between mentors and young people is an effective way of ensuring the young person’s engagement”, combining this training in “soft” skills like self control. German best practice 01-6 is an example of more a middle ground between training and guidance, focussing on training opportunities, whilst using a mentoring system to reach youth.

Next to those forms of personal assistance, some best practices also used different approaches to activation. Three best practices applied the instrumental policy idea of positive incentives, whereas eight best practices applied forms of protection. The latter categories includes some best practices focussing on improving working circumstances to enable the employment of older workers, as well as some other protective measures for the specific groups of the disabled, women and youth. A last set of best practices follows an activation approach, but does not provide specification on the specific instruments that are to be used. Dutch best practice 07-3 for example discussed a decentralized approach to activation, leaving the specific instruments up to municipalities.

To sum up, all instrumental policy ideas for activation discussed in chapter two have been observed in some of the best practices. Here a form of social policy retrenchment was only present through forms of benefit conditionality and retirement reform. Always such elements were combined with forms of continued social policy intervention.

5.2. FLEXICURITY

A number of best practices including elements of the core policy idea of flexicurity have also been found in all time strata. In total 12 best practices focussing on improving flexibility and/or security are present across the years.

Only two best practices, however, discussed a combination of enhancing security and enhancing flexibility. Dutch best practice 00-3 focussed on increasing security for flexible contracts, in order to promote the use of more flexible contracts. Spanish best practice 06-5 takes a contrary approach, by

<i>Flexicurity best practices</i>	
External-numerical flexibility & job security	2
Numerical flexibility only	2
Functional flexibility only	1
Job security only	3
Income security only	1
Combination	3

increasing the flexibility in indefinite contracts, in order to promote the use of these contracts over fixed-term contracts. Moving towards more flexible contracts, best practice 00-3 in sum promotes flexibility rather than security. Best practice 06-5, moving towards more secure contracts, in sum promotes security rather than flexibility. In a broad sense both can be seen as flexicurity reforms, including elements of security as well as flexibility, but neither fits the flexicurity ideal of flexible contract combined with income (rather than job) security.

Other best practices focus only on flexibility or security elements, but would by their nature fit in broader flexicurity reforms. It is surprising that only a single one of those best practices focusses on improving income security. This is Norwegian best practice 08-4, which combines activation measures with income security for people with partial work incapacity. This stands in contrast with flexicurity in its original Danish model, focussing on high income security, whilst replacing job security with numerical flexibility.

Overall a number of best practices fit with elements of flexicurity, when flexicurity is understood in a broad sense as some way of combining flexibility and security. When flexicurity is understood in the more narrow sense of the Danish model of high external-numerical flexibility and high social benefits, none of the best practices can be said to promote flexicurity. No single meeting discusses the usefulness of this combination for employment levels. Overall only a few best practices are limited to liberalization (through providing more numerical flexibility), whereas the others promote forms of social policy intervention.

5.3. SOCIAL INVESTMENT

Some best practices following the core policy idea of social investment have also been present throughout the years.

The majority of these best practices were concerned with lifelong learning. Such best practices provided continued human capital investment. These are not specifically aimed at activating unemployed people, but also on active groups. For example Swedish best practice 03-4 targets school-leavers as well as “older active professionals who want to update and supplement their vocational skills”. UK best practice 99-5, as another example, focusses on workers in small and medium sized companies, ensuring guidance and learning facilities are available for them.

<i>Social investment best practices</i>	
Childcare improvement	1
Education improvement	5
Lifelong learning	10

Only a few best practices dealt with other elements of social investment. Swedish best practice 04-2 was the only meeting concerned with childcare improvement as a social investment. That best practice discusses childcare not only for “supporting people in combining work and parenthood”, but also “with a strong emphasis on 'educare' for young children, which is seen as the first rung on the lifelong learning ladder”. Four best practices, all between 2003 and 2009, included education improvement (03-4, 05-4, 08-5 and 09-2). Each of these was concerned with vocational education systems. Spanish best practice 09-2, for example, aimed at making vocational education more attractive as a higher education option. None of these best practices was concerned with improving schooling systems at large.

5.4. OTHER BEST PRACTICES

This study’s analysis of the EES’s guidelines for employment found some further core policy ideas next to those theorized in chapter two. It categorized passive and active employer-side policies. Both of these policy approaches have also been observed in a limited number of best practices.

Forms of passive business support were applied only in three best practices. Dutch best practice 99-1 – the first ever best practice to be presented in the context of the mutual learning programme for employment – provided reductions in tax and social security contributions for low-productivity jobs. Italian best practice 00-4 simplifies

<i>Other best practices</i>	
Passive employer-side policy	3
Active employer-side policy	9
Reducing working time	2
Third country supply	3
Combating undeclared work	1

procedures for entrepreneurship. Belgian best practice 06-4 subsidized the purchasing of certain services in order to increase demand in this sector.

An active approach to the development of business was visible mainly in the first few years of the EES. Best practices 99-6, 01-8 and 01-10 all supported the development of specific sectors, whereas best practices 99-2 and 99-9 provide support for entrepreneurship. Years later Bulgarian best practice 08-1 and Spanish best practice 11-5 support entrepreneurship and best practice 11-2 supported regional economic development in Italy.

5.5. CONCLUSION

Having discussed activation, flexicurity, social investment and employer-side policies, only six more best practices follow even different approaches. Three of those dealt with additional labour supply resulting from migration from third countries. One focussed on combating undeclared work. Two presented a reduction in working time in order to create more jobs.

Following the observations above an answer to the sub question of this chapter can be provided. I asked: *Which instrumental policy ideas have EES's employment best practices disseminated since 1998, and how has this changed?* The EES has disseminated a wide variety of instrumental policy ideas through the best practices, but the most prominent instrumental policy ideas have clearly been a variety of instrumental policy ideas for activation and active employer-side policies, as well as lifelong learning. The table provides an overview of the policy ideas that were disseminated the most through the mutual learning programme.

	<i>Main ideas disseminated</i>
Before 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○Wide use of personalized measures (training, guidance, work-subsidies, benefit conditionality) ○Some positive incentives and retirement reform ○Protective measures for specific groups • Social investment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○Mainly lifelong learning, some tertiary education • Employer-side policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○Mostly active, some passive <p><i>Flexicurity is treated inconsistently</i></p>
After 2010	<i>Idem, all attention to education improvement removed</i>

The largest amount of best practices of the mutual learning programme fit within the category of activation. They use a variety of instrumental policy ideas, includes forms of individualized assistance, protection and negative and positive incentives. Negative incentives usually took the form of conditionalizing benefits upon participation in

assistance schemes. With regard to instrumental policy ideas fitting with flexicurity, the best practices do not show any consistency in disseminating policy ideas. Various best practices use forms of flexibilization or security, but none of the combinations shows a sophisticated flexicurity strategy. The forms of flexibilization or security that were observed, were present both before and after 2005. This is not in line with the argument by Barbier (2011) and Weishaupt and Lack (2010) that flexicurity only appeared in 2005. With regard to social investment, the instrumental policy idea of lifelong learning was included widely, whilst education and childcare got only little attention.

Hypotheses	
H1	Throughout its existence the European Employment Strategy has promoted social policy recalibration through the policy idea of activation.
H2	The EES started disseminating flexibility ideas without security ideas for the first time between 2005 and 2010, and moved to a combination of flexibility and security ideas after 2010.
H3	Throughout its existence the European Employment Strategy has promoted social policy recalibration through the policy idea of social investment.

Regarding the mutual learning programme, the three hypotheses on the policy ideas disseminated have to be rejected for the most part. The first hypothesis can be confirmed for the mutual learning programme. Indeed the best practices have included forms of activation. The second hypothesis has to be rejected. Though lacking a consistent flexicurity approach, the mutual learning programme has a number of times included flexibility or security issues. No changes were observed in this regard in this regard in 2005 and 2010. Contrary to the hypothesis the limited treatment of both flexibility and security was already visible in the time stratum before 2005. The third hypothesis can only be confirmed partly. Indeed, the best practices have included some forms of social investment, as they often discussed lifelong learning and more sporadically discussed vocational education. This is however very limited when compared to the wider policy idea of social investment, where schooling and childcare are considered very important (Morel, Palier and Palme, 2012: 1-2). These issues lacked in the mutual learning programme, except for one single best practice on childcare.

Developments

Turning to the second part of the sub-question, change in the instrumental policy ideas of the mutual learning programme, only very little can be concluded. Although the exact distribution of instrumental policy ideas differs per year, no continuous trends are visible.

<i>Core policy idea</i>	<i>All years</i>	<i>1998-2004</i>	<i>2005-2009</i>	<i>2010-></i>
Activation	41 (55.4%)	20 (55.6%)	13 (50.0%)	8 (66.7%)
Flexicurity	12 (16.2%)	5 (13.9%)	4 (15.4%)	3 (25.0%)
Social investment	14 (18.9%)	6 (16.7%)	7 (26.9%)	1 (8.3%)
Other	17 (23.0%)	9 (25.0%)	5 (19.2%)	3 (25.0%)
<i>Total</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>12</i>

In section 2.5 the claim by some authors that European governance became more neoliberal after 2005, when the Lisbon Strategy was revised, was introduced. Following the results of the coding of the best practices, the following distribution between retrenching and expansive best practices emerges. This distribution is based on the categorization of retrenching and expansive elements as set out in section 2.5. It is clear that the best practices show no increased attention to retrenching elements. Rather the distribution between expansive and retrenching elements remained almost equal.

	1999-2004	2005-2009	2005-2012
Retrenching elements	10 (22.8%)	7 (22.6%)	10 (22.2%)
Expansive elements	34 (77.2%)	24 (77.4%)	35 (77.8%)

Conceptual considerations

Conceptually, coding the best practices according to the instrumental policy ideas introduced in chapter two turned out to be difficult. Exclusive coding was not possible, because real-life policy examples often showed a combination of instrumental policy ideas. Nonetheless it was useful to categorize them according to the instrumental policy ideas identified in chapter two to get an overview of the distribution in priorities and approaches. A particular point for improvement lies in the differentiation I have made in chapter two between different guidance and training. The best practices show that real-life examples do not make such a strong distinction. Often a policy approach shows a combined approach, tailoring the exact instrument to be used depending on the individual. Thus it is recommended to understand individualized assistance measures as a single instrumental policy idea, which can take a variety of forms. This is contrary to Bonoli's (2010) typology of activation policies, where he distinguishes between upskilling and assistance. The best practices suggest that upskilling is used as just one other form of assistance. This is different, still, from the instrumental policy idea of lifelong learning as discussed in chapter two, which takes a preventive rather than activating approach.

6. DISCUSSION: CONSISTENCY BETWEEN GUIDELINES AND BEST PRACTICES

On the basis of the findings of chapters four and five, this chapter turns to the third sub-question: *How consistent are the policy ideas of the EES's employment guidelines and employment best practices?* This chapter answers that question by discussing to what extent the policy ideas of the mutual learning programme for employment are in line with the core policy ideas of the employment guidelines. Now, it was observed in the employment guidelines that the ideas disseminated there use more detail than expected. Rather than promoting activation, flexicurity or social investment approaches in general, particular aspects of these ideas were discussed. Below these aspects are once again discussed one by one, whilst analysing whether the instrumental policy ideas observed in the best practices are in line with them.

Activation

Firstly, to the category of the core policy idea of activation, both the guidelines and the best practices showed gave much attention. In the guidelines individualized support services were widely mentioned. The guidelines usually mentioned training or counselling as examples of such measures, but (as makes sense for their general character) did not specify exactly what kind of form these should take. The instrumental policy ideas of training, guidance and work-subsidies would all fit with this approach and these were all widely observed in the best practices. Here the employment guidelines and the best practices are consistent on first sight. However, amongst these best practices a workfarist approach was often visible. Over the years seven best practices combined personalized assistance measures with making benefits conditional upon participation in such measures. This is an approach that was not discussed in the employment guidelines. Even though the presence of assistance measures in the best practices is in line with the guidelines, the use of benefit conditionality is significant – part of the best practices is on the other side of the workfare-enablement spectrum introduced by Dingeldey (2007).

Beyond this the guidelines and the best practices are consistent in the sense that they both promote protective measures for specific groups as well as positive incentives. Forms of such protection, particularly anti-discrimination and measures for gender equality were mentioned widely in the employment guidelines. The attention to this in the best practices is relatively small in comparison to the guidelines. Both the guidelines and the best practices combine a form of protection and a form of negative incentives to promote active ageing. On the one hand they promote higher retirement ages and on the other hand they favour working conditions that are more suitable for older individuals.

Flexicurity

With regard to flexibility and security, the guidelines and the best practices are highly discrepant. The guidelines call consistently for easing contractual and working arrangements to reach more numerical flexibility. Up to 2010 employment or job security issues are not present. The best practices, however, include a few pre-2010 best practices that are about increasing job or income security as well as a few pre-2010 best practices enhancing flexibility. Neither the guidelines nor the best practices show a flexicurity strategy. After 2010 the guidelines mention the need for contractual flexibility as well as income security. One further best practice dealing with security is however again concerned with job security. The first mention of income security in the 2010 guidelines after the launch of the Europe 2020 is thus not applied in the best practices.

Social investment

With regard to social investment, all guidelines mentioned the need for improving education as well as for providing lifelong learning. In 2010 the attention to education was

widely increased. The reality of the best practices is far detached from this development. Already before 2010, only a few best practices gave attention to education improvements. After 2010 the guidelines lead me to expect more attention to education, but reality show that the best practices no longer deal with education at all after 2010. In line with the guidelines, the best practices after 2010 are the first to include childcare as a social investment. Over the years lifelong learning is also continuously mentioned in the best practices.

Overall, the consistency between the guidelines and the best practices is limited. In a number of instances, the implementation examples of the mutual learning programme are not in line with the guidelines. The inclusion of benefits conditionally as present in the best practices is not found in the guidelines. Flexibility and security issues as mentioned in the best practices do not follow the approach of the guidelines. Attention to education is surprisingly little in the best practices and even disappears when it is given more attention in the guidelines. This is a particularly important observation, as the efforts at change that were introduced in Europe 2020 not being implemented through the mutual learning programme.

Observed discrepancies between guidelines and best practices:

- Benefit conditionality in best practices
- Inconsistent flexicurity treatment in best practices
- Education and childcare attention mostly lacks in best practices

7. CONCLUSION

This chapter uses the findings from the previous chapter to answer the main research question of this thesis. This leads to further insights for the wider context of the European coordination of social policies. This chapter also discusses some limitations to this study and makes suggestions for further research.

The policy ideas of the European Employment Strategy

The main research question of this thesis was: *Which policy ideas have been disseminated through the employment guidelines and the mutual learning programme for employment, and how has this changed since 1998?* Significant changes were only found to occur in 2010. Therefore I provide the answer to the main research question in two steps. Firstly I answer which policy ideas have been distributed through the employment guidelines and the mutual learning programme for employment throughout their existence from 1998 onwards. Secondly I describe which additions were made to this in 2010.

The employment guidelines have not disseminated core policy ideas, but rather disseminated individual more specific instrumental policy ideas. With only a few exceptions, these instrumental policy ideas fit the categories of activation, flexibilization,

social investment, and passive as well as active employer-side policy. Thus in answer to the research question, the EES has disseminated a wide variety of policy ideas for activation, flexibilization, social investment, and employer-side policy. Activation was most widely present in both the guidelines and the mutual learning programme, through individualized assistance measures, protection and changing incentive structures. Flexibilization was widely present in the employment guidelines, but only sporadically in the mutual learning programme. Then the social investment ideas of lifelong learning and improving education were disseminated through both the employment guidelines and the mutual learning programme. In 2010, with the adoption of the Europe 2020 strategy, the policy ideas disseminated through the employment guidelines changed. These also started to distribute security ideas and the aim of poverty reduction. This change was not made in the mutual learning programme. Also the guidelines started to focus much more on education in 2010, but again this change was not made in the mutual learning programme. The table below provides an overview of this.

	<i>Employment guidelines</i>	<i>Mutual learning programme</i>
Before 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Includes personalized assistance, protection and incentives • Flexibilization • Social investment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mainly lifelong learning, some education • Employer-side policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Passive and active 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wide use of personalized measures (training, guidance, work-subsidies, benefit conditionality) ○ Some positive incentives and retirement reform ○ Protective measures for specific groups • Social investment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mainly lifelong learning, some tertiary education • Employer-side policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mostly active, some passive <p><i>Flexicurity is treated inconsistently</i></p>
After 2010	<p><i>Idem, with added:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Security ○ Much attention to education ○ Poverty reduction 	<p><i>Idem, all attention to education improvement removed</i></p>

The employment guidelines and the mutual learning programme as such are somewhat discrepant. The strong focus on activation in both instruments is present across all years, as is some attention to social investment and employer-side policies. The aim of flexibilization, widely present in the employment guidelines, was missing almost

completely in the mutual learning programme. Furthermore the mutual learning programme did discuss security a couple of times before it was included in the guidelines in 2010. Moreover the changed aims of Europe 2020 were completely invisible in the mutual learning programme.

Directions for European social policy coordination

The combination of policy ideas that I have observed in the EES also shows a more subtle form of ideational diffusion, through ‘normative recalibration’. Normative recalibration refers to the notion that contemporary changes to social policy regimes include normative changes in the normative underpinnings of social policy (Hemerijck, 2009). In the EES this is visible in a move towards ensuring employment as an exclusive almost omnipotent value.

As a strategy the EES aims at increasing employment levels the EES hopes to enhance both economic productivity and social cohesion (see the recitals of the employment guidelines). It does so through setting up policies with a strong pro-employment dimension. In practice this takes the form of flexibilization, activation, human capital investment and employer-side policies. These changes include both retrenching elements and expansive elements. As such they cannot be described as simply ‘neoliberal’ when neoliberal refers to an opposition to any kind of governmental intervention. What these policies do share is that work to increase the pro-employment dimension in social policies at large (Bonoli and Natali, 2010: 293). They are ‘neoliberal’ when neoliberalism is understood as an exclusive focus on “individual integration to the market” (Dagnino, cf. Jenson, 2010: 62). Employment is viewed as the cure for social and economic problems other values get lost out of sight. In the ideal of welfare recalibration, an increased pro-employment focus would be used to keep social protection systems affordable. In the practice of policy coordination through the EES, values beyond employment are not considered. It is advisable for the European Union to also look beyond employment to further values. The recent changes following Europe 2020 show just a minor step in that direction, now considering income security and poverty reduction.

Except for this change in 2010, the EES fails to consider social citizenship rights beyond employment. The EES shows much concern making social policy arrangements more effective, but does not show concern with keeping up social rights, losing the aim of continued social protection. This is quite contrary to most of the prescriptive literature on welfare recalibration. It does not fit the ambition of Esping-Andersen (2002) that the ‘new welfare state’ should “aim at both high levels of employment *and* social protection” (Esping-Andersen, 2002: xi, emphasis in original). It does not fit the wider literature on flexicurity, which emphasizes the combination of flexibility with security (Madsen, 2008). Indeed, one advisable approach to include values beyond employment would be to

develop a stronger vision on the element of security in the aim of flexicure labour markets.

Conceptual considerations

Many scholars have attributed policy changes to the diffusion of ideas (Dobbin, Simmons and Garrett, 2007: 463). This thesis has provided an empirical example of studying specific policy ideas. This approach has been useful to grasp the substantive content of the EES on a more detailed level than describing whether or not the EES fits a certain paradigm. Indeed, other studies had specifically looked at whether the EES had a specific activating (Barbier, 2005) or neoliberal (Raveaud, 2007) character. This study has contributed by taking a lower-level approach, looking into more specific policy ideas than only to the level of policy paradigms.

That framework did also result in a number of difficulties. The expected fit of the levels of core and instrumental policy ideas with the employment guidelines and best practices respectively was not observed. Rather the employment guidelines showed more specificity, as was concluded in chapter four. Using core policy ideas to describe the contents of the guidelines was therefore only possible through using these core policy ideas as general categories and proceeding with more specific descriptions. On the level of instrumental policy ideas the combination of *a priori* codes for instrumental policy ideas and emerging codes was useful. Here the use of different codes for different types of personalized assistance measures (training, guidance and work-subsidies) was problematic. Real-life policy examples often used combinations of such measures, resisting the rigid differentiation. An improved theoretical framework should account for this.

Limitations and suggestions

A limitation inherent to this study is its limited empirical base. This base is already larger than the empirical base of other studies on the EES, not only taking into account the employment guidelines, but also the best practices. In its approach to analyse the study however only relied on written sources about the employment guidelines and the mutual learning programme. As such it did not take wider strategy documents or spoken discourse into account. This means that only a partial picture of the EES has been provided. Also the focus on the EES alone is a limitation. Investigating how other instruments of European macro-economic and social policy coordination relate to the policy ideas promoted through EES would be particularly interesting.

Also this study did not provide knowledge on the extent to which the dissemination of the policy ideas discussed is successful. That has been a wide debate in the literature, as discussed in section 2.1. Not having contributed to this debate directly, this study does however provide further input for studies that do study the successfulness of policy dissemination. This study's focus on policy ideas on a lower level than policy paradigms

provides opportunities for specific path-tracing studies on whether certain specific instrumental policy ideas are successfully disseminated and implemented across Europe. A focus on whether employment is becoming the sole goal of national social policies would be particularly worthwhile.

On the basis of the policy ideas observed in the discourse of the employment guidelines and the best practices, this thesis has observed an effort to recalibrate social policy arrangements exclusively employment enhancing arrangements, leaving aside other values. This leads to the pressing question whether other values and social rights are indeed being disregarded in other aspects of European socio-economic governance – a question that would benefit from further research in European and domestic public arenas.

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ANNEX A: OVERVIEW OF THE EUROPEAN EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

HISTORY

The European Employment Strategy (EES) is an application of a mode of European Union governance that has become known as the ‘open method of coordination’ or OMC. For employment this approach was first included in the constituting Treaties through some provisions of the Treaty of Amsterdam.

Even though the Treaty of Amsterdam would only enter into force 1999, the EES was already launched in 1997. For that purpose the European Council agreed at its 1997 summit in Luxembourg on the early application of the treaty provisions relating to the EES¹. Following this agreement the first employment guidelines, designed for the year 1998, were drawn up in 1997 and the ‘Luxembourg process’ was born.

Rather than being completely new, the agreements of Luxembourg and the Treaty of Amsterdam followed upon a number of initiatives taken a few years earlier. As Goetschy (1999: 120-121) points out, the European Commission succeeded in putting employment policies on the agenda in 1993 by publishing an ambitious White Paper on the issue. This led to the adoption of a procedure for monitoring employment policies, as well as a number of recommendations for the employment policies of member states at the 1994 Essen European Council (Goetschy, 1999: 121-122)².

A few years later, when the EES was launched in 1997, it was not yet characterized using the terminology of the ‘open method of coordination’. Rather the terminology of the OMC was only introduced some further years later, at the 2000 Lisbon European Council. The OMC took over its methods from the EES (Goetschy, 2001: 405) and the broad economic policy guidelines (Vanhercke, 2009: 2-3) and came to be used as a method in a wider set of policy fields (Radelli, 2008: 241-242; Goetschy, 2001: 405-407). Together these OMC’s were meant to contribute to the attainment of the goals set out by the Lisbon Strategy at that same European Council summit: to become, by 2010, “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge economy in the world, capable of durable economic growth, of higher employment levels and jobs of a better quality and of improved social cohesion” (cited from Goetschy, 2001: 405).

¹ Paragraph 13, Presidency conclusions of the extraordinary European Council meeting on Employment (Luxembourg, 20 and 21 November 1997).

² Presidency conclusions of the European Council meeting on 9 and 10 December 1994 in Essen.

PROCEDURES

The EES relies on a set of employment guidelines proposed by the European Commission and adopted by the Council. Before the first reforms in 2003 these guidelines were adopted annually, afterwards they were adopted for periods of three or four years³. These guidelines are accompanied by country-specific recommendations. Following these guidelines and recommendations National Action Plans (NAP's) were drawn up by member states up unto 2005. From 2005 the employment guidelines (together with the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines; BEPG's) were integrated into the broader 'Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs' (European Commission, 2005: 6-8). Likewise the NAP's for employment were integrated into National Reform Programmes (NRP's), serving not only the EES but the Lisbon Strategy (and later Europe 2020) at large (European Commission, 2005: 6-8). Given their separate legal bases, the BEPG's and the employment guidelines (now known together as integrated guidelines) continue to be issued in separate decisions.

In an Annual Progress Report (up to 2005 Joint Employment Report) the NRP's and national performance are assessed, including 'faming' well performing member states and 'shaming' badly performing ones (Hartlapp, 2009: 7-8). In addition a Mutual Learning Programme (MLP; prior to 2005 Peer Review Programme) is carried out. The MLP includes peer review activities where a member state presents a policy example, which is then assessed by a number of visiting member states in order to enable mutual learning and "the transferability of the most effective policies"⁴.

³ As is indicated by the overview in chapter three of this thesis.

⁴ Cited from the internet site of the mutual learning programme, <http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net>.

ANNEX B: EMPLOYMENT GUIDELINES POLICY ELEMENTS

All ID's below have been added by the researcher for referencing purposes.
The sign ~ refers to those elements where no predefined code fit.

POLICY ELEMENTS 1998-2002

ID	Description	Present in	Core policy idea	Instrumental policy idea
<i>Pillar I: Improving employability</i>				
A1	Obligation to offer employability measures within six (youth) or twelve (adults) months	1998-2002	Activation	Training, Guidance
A2	Measures to promote the re-employment of long-term unemployed	1998-2002	Activation	~
A3	Modernize public employment services	1999-2002	Activation	~
A4	Reforming benefit and tax systems	1998-2002	Activation	Positive incentives, Negative incentives,
A5	Target ($\leq 20\%$) for participation in training or similar measures	1998-2002	Activation	Training
A6	Call upon social partners for employability measures	1998-2000	Activation	Training
A7	General increasing and improving employability measures	2001-2002	Activation	~
A8	Working arrangements, training for active ageing	1999-2002	Activation	Protection, Training
A9	Reviewing tax and benefits systems for active ageing	2001-2002	Activation	Negative incentives
A10	Various education measures	1998-2002	Social investment	Education improvement
A10a	Improving school systems to reduce dropouts	1998-2002	Social investment	Education improvement
A10b	Skills for technological, economic change, labour market relevant	1998-2000	Social investment	Education improvement
A10c	Skills for lifelong learning, labour market relevant	2001-2002	Social investment	Education improvement
A10d	Digital literacy	2000-2002	Social investment	Education improvement

A10e	Improve recognition of qualification, knowledge and skill	2001-2002	Social investment	Education improvement
A11	Facilitate lifelong learning	1999-2002	Social investment	Lifelong learning
A12	E-learning for all citizens	2001-2002	Social investment	Lifelong learning
A13	Job matching and bottlenecks	2001-2002	Activation	Guidance
A13a	Job matching through services	2001-2002	Activation	Guidance
A13b	Prevent skills shortages	2001-2002	Activation	~
A13c	Occupational and geographic mobility	2001-2002	Activation	~
A13d	Job/learning database	2001-2002	Activation	Guidance
A14	Anti-discrimination	1998-2002		
A14a	Measures for the disabled (PILLAR IV)	1998 only	Activation	Protection
A14b	Anti-discrimination	1999-2002	Activation	Protection
A14c	Measures for the disadvantaged	1999-2002	Activation	Protection
A14d	Measures for minorities	1999-2002	Activation	Protection
<i>Pillar II: Developing entrepreneurship and job creation</i>				
A15	Reduce overhead and administrative costs	1998-2002	~	~
A16	Reducing tax and social security obstacles to self-employment and small business	1998-2002	~	~
A17	Promoting entrepreneurship	1999-2002	~	~
A18	Tackling undeclared work	2001-2002	~	~
A19	Investigate and facilitate job creation opportunities at local level	1998-2002	~	~
A20	Framework for services sector, including information, environmental	1999-2002	~	~
A21	Reducing (labour) tax burden; investigate energy and pollutants tax	1998-2002	~	~
A22	Incentives and removing tax for human resources investments	1998-2000 (PILLAR III), 2001-2002 (PILLAR II)	Activation	Training
A23	Reducing VAT on certain services	1998-1999	~	~
<i>Pillar III: Encouraging adaptability</i>				
A24	Social partner agreements for more flexible work: (working time, flex.-sec.-balance, training)	1998-2002 (+annual report in 2001-2002)	Flexibility	Internal-numerical flexibility, Functional flexibility

A25	Incorporating adaptable kinds of contracts	1998-2002	Flexibility	External-numerical flexibility
A26	Regulatory burden reduction	1998-2002	~	~
A26a	Examine new legislation on employment burdens	1998-2000		
A26b	Revise regulatory framework for burden reduction and modernized working organisation	2001-2002	~	~
A27	Better application of health and safety legislation	2001-2002	~	~
(See A20)	Re-examine tax obstacles to training, consider incentives			
A29	Social partners agreements for lifelong learning in enterprises, including digital literacy	2001-2002	Flexibility	Functional flexibility
<i>Pillar IV: Strengthening equal opportunities</i>				
A30	Gender mainstreaming	1999-2002	Activation	Protection
A31	Tackling gender gaps	1998-2002	Activation	Protection
A31a	Supporting the employment of women	1998-2002	Activation	~
A31b	Promote equal pay	1999-2002	Activation	Protection
A32	Reconciliation of work and family/private life	1998-2002	Security	Combination security
A32a	Providing care services	1998-2002	Security	Combination security
A32b	Providing parental leave	1999-2002	Security	Combination security
A33	Reduce obstacles to return to work	1998-2002	Activation	~
(See A14)	Measures for the disabled	1998		

POLICY ELEMENTS 2003

ID	Description	Elements taken over	Core policy idea	Instrumental policy idea
<i>Priority 1: Active and preventative measures for the unemployed</i>				
B1	Individual support measures	A1-A7	Activation	Training, Guidance
B1a	Early identification of individual needs		Activation	~
B1b	Obligation to offer employability measures within six (youth) or twelve (adults) months	A1	Activation	Training, Guidance
B1c	Target ($\leq 25\%$) for participation of long-term unemployed in employability measures	A5	Activation	Training, ~
B2	Modernize labour market institutions, including PES's	A3	Activation	~

<i>Priority 2: Job creation and entrepreneurship</i>				
B3	Promoting education and training for entrepreneurship		~	~
B4	Reducing administrative/regulatory burdens for start-ups, SME's, and hiring		~	~
B5	Facilitating access to capital		~	~
<i>Priority 3: Address change and promote adaptability and mobility in the labour market</i>				
B6	Reform overly restrictive employment legislation		Flexibility	External-numerical flexibility
B7	Diverse working arrangements		Flexibility, Security	Internal-numerical flexibility, Combination security
B8	Access to training for low-skill workers		Flexibility	Functional flexibility
B9	Improved working conditions, including health and safety		~	~
B10	Sustainable forms of work organization		~	~
B11	Positive management of economic change and restructuring		Flexibility	~
B12	Promote occupational mobility		Activation	~
B13	Reduce burdens to geographic mobility		Activation	~
B14	Transparency of training and labour opportunities throughout EU		Activation	Guidance
<i>Priority 4: Promote development of human capital and lifelong learning</i>				
B15	Target for education completion		Social investment	Education improvement
B16	Target for lifelong-learning participation		Social investment	Lifelong learning
B17	Promoting human capital investment by enterprises		Social investment	Lifelong learning
<i>Priority 5: Increase labour supply and promote active ageing</i>				
B18	Increasing labour market participation			
B18a	Availability of jobs		~	~
B18b	Attractiveness of jobs, making work pay		Activation	Positive incentives
B18c	Raising skills and providing adequate support measures		Activation	Training, Guidance

B19	Measures for active ageing			
B19a	Promoting active ageing through access to training		Activation	Training
B19b	Promoting active ageing through working conditions		Activation	~
B19c	Promoting active ageing through incentives		Activation	Negative incentives
B19d	Encouraging employers to employ older workers		Activation	Protection
B19e	Target for increased exit age		Activation	Negative incentives
B20	Consider labour supply from migration		~	~
<i>Priority 6: Gender equality</i>				
B21	Reduce gender gaps			
B21a	... in employment		Activation	Protection
B21b	... in pay		Activation	Protection
B22	Reconciling work and private life			
B22a	Facilitating return to work		Activation	~
B22b	Encouraging sharing responsibilities		Security	Combination security
B22c	Providing childcare		Activation	Positive incentives
<i>Priority 7: Promote the integration of and combat the discrimination against people at a disadvantage in the labour market</i>				
B23	Measures for the disadvantaged		Activation	Protection
B23a	Employability measures		Activation	~
B23b	Job opportunities		Activation	~
B23c	Combating discrimination		Activation	Protection
B24	Target against early school leavers		Social investment	Education improvement
B25	Reduction in employment gaps			
B25a	... for the disadvantaged		Activation	Protection
B25b	... for non-EU nationals		Activation	Protection
<i>Priority 8: Make work pay through incentives to enhance work attractiveness</i>				
B27	Reform tax and benefit systems		Activation	Negative incentives
B28	Review benefit duration		Activation	Negative incentives
B29	Effective benefit management, including support measures		Activation	Guidance
B30	Consider providing in-work benefits		Activation	Positive incentives
<i>Priority 9: Transform undeclared work into regular employment</i>				
B31	Measures against undeclared work		~	~
B31a	Simplified business environment		~	~
B31b	Reforming incentives in tax and benefit system		~	~
B31c	Improved law enforcement		~	~

<i>Priority 10: Address regional employment disparities</i>				
B32	Create favourable conditions in regions lagging behind		~	~
B33	Human capital support		Social investment	~
B34	Infrastructure support		~	~

POLICY ELEMENTS 2005 & 2008

ID	Description	Elements taken over	Core policy idea	Instrumental policy idea
<i>I. Attract and retain more people in employment, increase labour supply and modernise social protection systems</i>				
C1	Reducing youth unemployment following the European Youth Pact		Activation	~
C2	Increasing female participation		Activation	Protection
C3	Reconciliation of work and family life, providing childcare		Security	Combination security
C4	Supporting active ageing			
C4a	Improved working conditions and improved occupational health		Activation	Protection
C4b	Incentives and discouraging early retirement		Activation	Positive incentives, Negative incentives
C5	Modern social protection systems		Activation	~
C5	Combating discrimination		Activation	Protection
C6	Various support measures			
C6a	Early identification of individual needs		Activation	~
C6b	Job search assistance, guidance and training		Activation	Guidance, Training
C6c	Services for those furthest from the labour market		Activation	~
C7	Reviewing incentives and disincentives in tax and benefit systems		Activation	Positive incentives, Negative incentives
C8	Developing jobs in services, local level		~	~
C9	Considering labour supply from migration		~	~
C10	Modernizing labour market institutions, including PES's, for transparency of employment and training opportunities	Combines B2 and B17	Activation	Guidance

C9	Removing obstacles to mobility		Activation	~
C10	Anticipation of needed skills/bottlenecks		Activation	~
C11	Appropriate management of economic migration		Activation	~
<i>2. Improve adaptability of workers and enterprises</i>				
C12	Adapting employment legislation for different contractual and working time arrangements		Flexibility	External-numerical flexibility, Internal-numerical flexibility
C13	Addressing undeclared work		~	~
C14	Positive management of economic change		Flexibility	~
C15	Innovative and adaptable work organisation, for flexibility and health/safety		Flexibility, ~	~
C16	Support for transitions in occupational status		Activation	~
C17	Employment-friendly labour costs and wage-setting		~	~
C17a	Encouraging wage bargaining reflecting productivity		~	~
C17b	Review/adjust tax levels and structure		~	~
<i>3. Increase investment in human capital through better education and skills</i>				
C18	Facilitate access to education		Social investment	Education improvement
C19	Reduce number of early school leavers		Social investment	Education improvement
C20	Lifelong learning strategies		Social investment	Lifelong learning
C21	Adapting education and training to new competency requirements			
C21a	Improving and broadening education and training; ensuring flexible and mobile learning		Social investment	Lifelong learning
			Activation	Training
C21b	Working time organization, support and cost sharing for education and training		Social investment	Lifelong learning
			Activation	Training
C21c	Improving qualification recognition		Social investment	Education improvement

POLICY ELEMENTS 2010

ID	Description	Elements taken over	Core policy idea	Instrumental policy idea
<i>Guideline 7: Increasing labour market participation of women and men, reducing structural unemployment and promoting job quality</i>				
D1	Flexible and reliable contractual arrangements		Flexibility	External-numerical flexibility
D2	Active labour market policies		Activation	~
D3	Effective lifelong learning		Social investment	Lifelong learning
D4	Promote labour mobility		Activation	~
D5	Social security with rights and responsibilities		Security	~
			Activation	Negative incentives
D6	Job quality		~	~
D6a	Combat precarious employment, underemployment and undeclared work			
D6b	Combat in-work poverty			
D6c	Promote occupational health and safety			
D6d	Social security for fixed-term workers and self-employed			
D7	Personalized, active and preventative support services		Activation	Guidance, ~
D8	Making work pay: right framework for labour cost development		Activation, ~	Positive incentives, ~
D9	Review tax and benefit systems		Activation	~
D10	Review public service capacity for support		Activation	~
D11	Promote active ageing		Activation	~
D12	Promote gender equality, including equal pay		Activation	Protection
D13	Promote integration of vulnerable groups		Activation	Protection
D14	Work-life balance, including care provision		Security	Combination security
D15	Remove barriers to labour market entry		Activation	~
D16	Promote self-employment, entrepreneurship		Activation	Entrepreneurship
D17	Promote job creation		~	~
D18	Promote social innovation		~	~

<i>Guideline 8: Developing a skilled workforce responding to labour market needs and promoting lifelong learning</i>				
D19	Quality initial education and attractive vocational training		Social investment	Education improvement
D20	Incentives for lifelong learning		Social investment	Lifelong learning
D21	Targeted migration and integration policies		~	~
D22	Recognize acquired competencies		Activation	~
D23	Remove barriers to occupational mobility		Activation	~
D24	Remove barriers to geographical mobility		Activation	~
D25	Promote competencies for creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship		~	~
D26	Improve access to training		Activation	Training
D27	Strengthen career guidance		Activation	Guidance
D28	Joint investment in human resource development		Social investment	Lifelong learning
D29	Rapid intervention/support for unemployed		Activation	Guidance, Training
D30	Monitoring to improve responsiveness to labour market needs		~	~
D31	Policies stimulating labour demand		~	~
<i>Guideline 9: Improving the quality and performance of education and training systems at all levels and increasing participation in tertiary or equivalent education</i>				
D32	Improving education and training systems, including early childhood education		Social investment	Education improvement, Childcare improvement
D33	Increase mobility of learners and teachers		Social investment	Education improvement
D34	More flexible and relevant education and training systems		Social investment	Education improvement, Lifelong learning
D35	Improving attractiveness/quality of teaching		Social investment	Education improvement
D36	Prevent early school leaving		Social investment	Education improvement
D37	Target for education completion, against dropouts		Social investment	Education improvement

<i>Guideline 10: Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty</i>				
D38	Extending employment opportunities		~	~
D39	Ensuring equal opportunities			
D39a	Support services		Activation	Guidance
D39b	Anti-discrimination		Activation	Protection
D40	Social protection systems providing adequate income support and services		Security, ~	Income security, ~
D41	Lifelong learning		Social investment	Lifelong learning
D42	Active inclusion policies		Activation	~
D43	Benefit systems focussed on income security during transition and combating poverty		Security	Income security
D44	Promote the social economy and social innovation		~	~
D45	Promote gender equality		Activation	Protection
D46	Target for poverty reduction		~	~

ANNEX C: BEST PRACTICES

1998 TO 2002

ID	Host Country	Title	Special target group	Policy idea		Note
				Instrumental	Core	
99-1	Netherlands	<u>Reduction of non-wage labour costs, particularly for low-paid labour</u>	Low-paid workers		Passive employer-side	<i>Reduction in tax and social security contributions for low-productivity jobs</i>
99-2	Sweden	<u>Women entrepreneurship - business advisors for women</u>	Women	~	Active employer-side	
99-3	Portugal	<u>Promoting continuing training in micro - and small enterprises</u>	SME's	Lifelong learning	Social investment	<i>In-work training</i>
99-4	Finland	<u>Activation and individual employment service</u>		Guidance, Work-subsidies, Negative incentives	Activation	
99-5	United Kingdom	<u>Lifelong learning: University for Industry and individual learning accounts</u>		Lifelong learning	Social investment	
99-6	France	<u>The 'New Services, New Jobs' programme</u>	Specific services sectors	Work-subsidies	Activation, Active employer-side	<i>The work-subsidies instrument is applied for sector development and combating youth unemployment</i>
99-7	Denmark	<u>Youth unemployment policies in Denmark and the New Deal for Young people in the UK</u>	Youth	Training, Negative incentives	Activation	
	United Kingdom			Guidance, Training, Negative incentives		
99-8	Spain	<u>The Social Partners agreement on employment stability</u>		Job security	Flexicurity	<i>Legislation against fixed-term contracts</i>

99-9	Germany; Italy	<u>Bridging benefits for promoting self-employment in Germany and measures to promote self-employment of unemployed persons in Italy</u>		~	Active employer-side	<i>Promotes entrepreneurship through guidance, training and benefits</i>
00-1	France	<u>Reorganisation and Reduction of Working Time</u>		~	~	<i>Reduces working time, quality improvement</i>
00-2	Finland	<u>The National Programme for Ageing Workers</u>	45+ workers	Negative incentives, Protection	Activation	<i>Includes working conditions improvement and retirement reform</i>
00-3	Netherlands	<u>The Flexibility and Security Act</u>		Income security, External-numerical flexibility	Flexicurity	<i>Increases rights in flexible contracts, whilst promoting sub contracts</i>
00-4	Italy	<u>Reduction of Administrative Burdens for Enterprises: One stop shop</u>		~	Passive employer-side	<i>Simplifying procedures for entrepreneurship</i>
00-5	United Kingdom	<u>Making Work Pay: Tax and Benefit Reform</u>		Positive incentives	Activation	
00-6	Germany	<u>Reducing the Gender Digital Divide in Skills and Employment</u>	Women, technology sector	~	Activation	
01-1	Portugal	<u>'Insertivoen' and 'Reage' Initiatives: a preventive action</u>		Guidance, Training, Negative incentives	Activation	
01-2	Austria	<u>Arbeitsassistenzen - Support for the Integration of Disabled People into the Labour Market</u>	Disabled people	Protection, Work-subsidies	Activation	
01-3	Denmark	<u>Effects of the Danish Employability Enhancement Programmes</u>		Training, Negative incentives	Activation	
01-4	Austria	<u>Territorial Employment Pacts in Austria - Joint Use of Opportunities</u>	<i>Organisational</i>			
01-5	Belgium	<u>The 'Rosetta Plan': A springboard for young people into employment</u>	Youth	Protection, Work-subsidies	Activation	<i>Requires and subsidizes businesses to hire youth</i>

01-6	Germany	The German Immediate Action Programme for Training, Qualification and Employment of Young People (IUMP)	Youth	Training, Guidance	Activation	
01-7	Denmark	Social Responsibility of Enterprises		Protection Work-subsidies	Security	Promoting employer responsibility
01-8	Finland	The Finnish National Workplace Development Programme		~	Active employer-side	
01-9	France	Access routes to employment for young people in danger of exclusion	Disadvantaged youth	Guidance	Activation	Comprehensive personal support
01-10	Ireland	Building Sustainable Competitive Advantage in Irish Industry		~	Active employer-side	

2003 TO 2005

ID	Host Country	Title	Special target group	Policy idea		Note
				Instrumental	Core	
03-1	Finland	The National Programme for Ageing Workers (follow up)	45+ workers	Negative incentives, Protection	Activation	Like 00-2, working conditions improvement, broader than lifelong learning
03-2	Belgium	Skills Centres - Wallonia		Lifelong learning	Social investment	
03-3	United Kingdom	The UK Rapid Response Service	<i>Organisational</i>			
03-4	Sweden	Advanced Vocational Education in Sweden		Education improvement, Lifelong learning	Social investment	Improving non-academic tertiary education, for school-leavers and the active
03-5	Belgium	Equal Pay	Women	Protection	Activation	Influencing social partners' agreements
03-6	Germany	Women Promote Technology: Reducing the Gender Digital Divide in Skills and Employment	Women, technology sector	~	Activation	Non-personalized campaigning for technology training and work

03-7	Spain	<u>The use of new technology in the employment of people with disabilities</u>		Training, Protection	Activation	
03-8	Netherlands	<u>Disability Management</u>	Disabled	Protection	Activation	
04-1	Belgium	<u>The Career Break Scheme in Belgium and the Incentive Premiums by the Flemish Government</u>		Combination security Lifelong learning	Flexicurity Social investment	<i>Reduces working time to enable training and work-life balance</i>
04-2	Sweden	<u>Parental Insurance and Childcare</u>	Parents	Combination security, Childcare improvement	Flexicurity, Social investment	<i>Battles unemployment when the place is filled up with an unemployed person</i>
04-3	Finland	<u>The Active Labour Market Policy Reform - The Second Wave</u>		Guidance	Activation	
04-4	Austria	<u>Data Warehouse (DWH) Monitoring in the Public Employment Service (PES)</u>	<i>On policy evaluation</i>			
04-5	France	<u>The Personalised Action Programme for a New Start</u>		Guidance, Negative incentives	Activation	<i>Various worker support services, financed out of benefit conditionality</i>
04-6	Denmark	<u>Gender Mainstreaming in the Public Employment Service</u>	Women	Guidance	Activation	<i>Improves PES services, following individual needs</i>

2005 TO 2009

ID	Host Country	Title	Special group	target	Policy idea		Note
					Instrumental	Core	
05-1	Netherlands	<u>Youth Unemployment Task Force</u>	Youth	~	Activation	<i>Active task force</i>	
05-2	Norway	<u>Increasing the employment of women through flexible work arrangements</u>	Women	Combination security, Positive incentives	Flexicurity, Activation	<i>Enabling parental is used as a positive incentive</i>	

05-3	Ireland	<u>Increasing Labour Supply through Economic Migration</u>		~	~	<i>Uses visa and work authorization systems to meet labour needs</i>
05-4	Portugal	<u>Short report: Enterprises and vocational training</u>		Lifelong learning, Education improvement	Social investment	<i>Includes intra-firm training as well as apprenticeships combining employment and education</i>
05-5	Latvia	<u>Supporting lifelong learning</u>		Training, Lifelong learning	Activation, Social investment	<i>Uses guidance to enable training</i>
05-6	United Kingdom	<u>Short Report: The Employer Training Pilots</u>		Lifelong learning	Social investment	<i>In-work training</i>
06-1	Sweden	<u>How to govern and evaluate labour market policies</u>	<i>On policy evaluation</i>			
06-2	Portugal	<u>Good Governance of the European Social Fund</u>	<i>Organisational</i>			
06-3	Finland	<u>Forecasting Skills and Labour Market Needs</u>	<i>Forecasting labour market needs, potentially for the application of activation policies</i>			
06-4	Belgium	<u>The Service Voucher</u>		~	Active employer-side	<i>Subsidizes the purchase of services to increase demand</i>
06-5	Spain	<u>Incentives for indefinite employment</u>		Job security, External-numerical flexibility	Flexicurity	<i>Incentivizes the use of indefinite rather than fixed-term contracts</i>
06-6	Austria	<u>Reform of severance pay law</u>		External-numerical flexibility	Flexicurity	<i>Reforms benefits paid after dismissal, to increase flexibility</i>
07-1	Malta	<u>Assisting the Disadvantaged Groups</u>	Disadvantaged groups	Training, Guidance, Work-subsides	Activation	
07-2	Germany	<u>Implementing the new basic allowance for job seekers</u>		Training, Negative incentives	Activation	<i>Significant reform of benefit systems</i>
07-3	Netherlands	<u>The new Work and Social Assistance Act (WWB)</u>		Negative incentives, ~	Activation	<i>Decentralized approach: instruments to be decided by municipalities</i>

07-4	United Kingdom	<u>Matching Skills Supply and Demand: The Welsh Approach</u>		Training	Activation	<i>Follows business demand in offering training</i>
07-5	France	<u>Validation of non formal and informal learning</u>		~	~	<i>Certifies</i>
07-6	Iceland	<u>Increasing Employment of Older Workers through Lifelong Learning</u>	Elderly	Lifelong learning	Social investment	
08-1	Bulgaria	<u>Entrepreneurship Promotion as an Approach for the Inclusion of Youth and Vulnerable Groups in the Labour Market</u>		~	Active employer-side investment	
08-2	Ireland	<u>Vocational training for people at the margin of the labour market</u>		Training	Activation	
08-3	Czech Republic	<u>The assistance system for employment of Ukrainians</u>		~	~	<i>Provides information on legal requirements for employment</i>
08-4	Norway	<u>Vocational rehabilitation and income security for people with work incapacities within the framework of integrated flexibility approaches</u>	People with (partial) work incapacity	Income security, Guidance, Training, Work-subsidies	Security, Activation	
08-5	Italy	<u>Higher Apprenticeships - a part of effective lifelong learning and a flexibility strategy</u>	Youth	Training, Education improvement	Activation, Social investment	<i>Subsidizes apprenticeships as a combination of employment and training</i>
08-6	Belgium	<u>Flexicurity approach: The new system to follow up the unemployed</u>		Guidance, Negative incentives	Activation	<i>Improves guidance by PES towards training or other activation</i>
09-1	Luxembourg	<u>Tailor-made Training Programmes</u>		Training	Activation	
09-2	Spain	<u>Towards a new vocational training system more adjusted to the new competencies and skills requirements of the labour market</u>		Education improvement	Social investment	
09-3	Estonia	<u>Renewed procedures for employing migrant workers with the emphasis on favouring highly-qualified labour</u>		~	~	<i>Promotes immigration of highly-skilled workers</i>

09-4	Slovenia	<u>Project Learning for Young Adults: A social integration programme helping young people back into work and education</u>	Youth, school drop-outs	Training, Negative incentives	Activation	<i>A need for a compulsory element is mentioned, but not specified</i>
09-5	Portugal	<u>Professional Traineeships for Young Adults</u>	Highly qualified youth	Training	Activation	<i>Combines training and employment</i>

2010 AND LATER (EUROPE 2020)

ID	Host Country	Title	Special target group	Policy idea		Note
				Instrumental	Core	
10-1	United Kingdom	<u>Pathways to Work for Lone Parents</u>	Lone parents	Guidance, Training, Positive incentives	Activation	<i>Tax credits and childcare aim at incentivizing return to work</i>
10-2	Netherlands	<u>Activation of the elderly: increasing participation, enforcing employability and working age until the age of 67</u>	Elderly	Negative incentives, Training	Activation	
10-3	Finland	<u>The Ageing Population and Educational Choices</u>	<i>On labour market modelling</i>			
10-4	France	<u>Employment measures to tackle the economic downturn: Short time working arrangements/partial activity schemes</u>		Internal-numerical flexibility, External-numerical flexibility	Flexicurity	<i>Changes legislation to allow for partial work schemes/temporary lay offs</i>
10-5	Germany	<u>Systematic preventive integration approach (support) for jobseekers and the unemployed</u>		Functional flexibility Guidance	Flexicurity Activation	<i>Discusses intra-firm functional flexibility and various PES support activities</i>
10-6	Czech Republic	<u>Supporting the labour market integration of the Roma community in the Czech Republic</u>	Roma	~	Activation	<i>Discusses various targeted support measures</i>

11-1	United Kingdom	Good Practice Makes Perfect: Considering the Purpose and Value of the Employability Learning Network	Organisational				
11-2	Italy	Interventions for employment and economic development	Underperforming regions			Active employer-side	
11-3	United Kingdom	Evaluation of Labour Market Policies and Programmes: methodology and practice	<i>On policy evaluation</i>				
11-4	Cyprus	Scheme for the Job Placement and Training of Tertiary-Education Graduates	Young graduates	Training, Work-subsidies	Activation		<i>Combines employment and training</i>
11-5	Spain	Pathways to support young people into self-employment	Young, Long-term unemployed	~	Active employer-side		<i>Allowing benefit usage for entrepreneurship; Reducing social security contributions;</i>
				Job security	Flexicurity		<i>Incentivizing indefinite contracts</i>
12-1	Latvia	Activation measures in times of crisis: the role of public works		~	Activation		<i>Focussed on retaining skills</i>
12-2	Norway	Extending Working Life: The tripartite cooperation and the role of the Centre for Senior Policy	Elderly	Positive incentives, Negative incentives, Protection, Lifelong learning,	Activation, Social investment		
12-3	Germany	The dual training system: Integration of young people into the labour market	Youth; some measures specifically for disadvantaged youth	Training, Guidance	Activation		<i>Combines employment and training in (subsidized) apprenticeships</i>

12-4	Czech Republic	<u>Tackling undeclared work: developing an effective system for inspection and prevention</u>			~	<i>Combating undeclared work</i>
12-5	Belgium	<u>Evaluation of Labour Market Policies and Programmes: the use of data-driven analysis</u>	<i>On policy evaluation</i>			