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## **The European discourse on Youth Unemployment - Social inclusion; a step towards sustainability?**

The consideration of social inclusion measures within EU youth policy-making

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Abstract:

By means of this Bachelor thesis it shall be evaluated how social inclusion measures are integrated within the EU discourse of youth unemployment, as represented by the European Council and the European Youth Forum. The thesis is intended to lay on recent research concerning the benefits of social inclusion measures when implemented into youth policies and extend the research towards the actual use and scope of attention paid to those measures.

In detail the thesis is analysing *what differences can be identified between the European Youth Forum and the Council of the European Union in the level of attention paid to social inclusion measures within the EU policy discourse on youth unemployment since the ratification of the Lisbon treaty?*

The analysis shall be conducted on the grounds of a qualitative content analysis, carried out by means of official publications of the two chosen institutions.

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## I. Introduction

Youth unemployment within the EU has reached an alarming severity by today. Alarming, with regard to the percentage share in total EU unemployment and also when considering media attention. But most importantly, alarming with respect to its rise to a high-priority position on the EU agenda. Altogether, it generated the need to introduce a specified discourse on youth unemployment within the EU that would evaluate the current situation of the most disadvantages youth; independently from what formally was constructed as an overall EU discourse on unemployment. Besides economic and political effects of youth unemployment, also social barriers (social exclusion) were addressed that helped to explain the occurrence of the issue. Considerable little attention has been given to the effectiveness and efficiency of the discourse towards sustainable policy initiatives. Therefore, this thesis takes the European Council and the European Youth Forum as representatives for the discourse to evaluate the approaches taken, that are meant to improve the situation of youth unemployment within the European Union.

Sparked by the effects of the economic and financial crisis, the media has become an influential character within the discourse and simultaneously mediator to the public. Airing news about youth unemployment rates within inflicted EU countries, the media is scandalizing the issue, raising public awareness and on that account forcing afflicted actors to counteract. What emerged is the image of youth unemployment as a social problem in today's society, where the youths' inability to get a job is highlighted and by some even termed as 'the lost generation' (Coy, Conlin, & Thornton, 2009).

Contrary to political believe that youth unemployment rates would stabilize or even decrease in line with the recovering economy after the economic crisis in 2008, the situation worsened. As an effect, piling interest and pressure to take measures in the public as well as private sector, directed the discourse on youth unemployment today towards unusual actors as among others the World Bank or the World Economic Forum. Such a development is evidenced by a representative of the European Youth Forum, stating that: "youth unemployment has been recognized by fairly high decision makers and policy makers as an important policy topic" (Lahusen, Schulz, & Graziano, 2013, p. 303), hence justifying its appearance on EU agendas.

Despite the variety of participating institutions, actors and accompanied divergences in opinion, the EU discourse on youth unemployment is most basically focusing on young people between 15 and 24 years which belong to what the Commission defined as the 'NEET' group (not in education, employment or training). The main concern in that respect is to lower the rates of youth unemployment by taking the danger of

social exclusion into account, since the latter is believed to be a common consequence of losing or not getting any employment (Bynner & Parsons, 2002). Whereas, combating social exclusion as a means to increase employment rates among young people long seemed the rightful way, it was recently replaced by the idea to prevent social exclusion in the first place, by introducing social inclusion measures. Research revealed that social inclusion measures can constitute to the (re-) employment and (re-) socialization of unemployed people within a given society (Daly, 2008). Furthermore, the measures allow for a recording and analysis of the labour market and can potentially foster alignments for future employees, especially from the youth sector. The proposed approaches are reaching towards different angles of the social inclusion issue and suggest a segmentation and framing into labour market inclusion (Johansson, 2007, pp. 67-83), activation measures and aligned social benefits (Pascual & Suárez, 2007, pp. 376-387; van Berkel & Valkenburg, 2007). The base and incentive of the approaches is immediate corrective action that may bring relief to the pressing economic and social issue (Bell & Blanchflower, 2010). Moreover, along past due structural reforms, they provide possible short-term measures to fill the gaps and cushion the effects of missing policies on that matter (Scarpetta, Sonnet, & Manfredi, 2010). The vision to create an inclusive labour market and equal opportunities for all generations becomes even stronger, in the light of the unpleasant situation of the EU's youth.

As a political approach social inclusion can be applied to a variety of policy fields, therefore it is crucial to point at those features of the concept which are relevant for combating youth unemployment. Social- or "Active inclusion" as defined by the European Commission "means enabling every citizen, notably the most disadvantaged, to fully participate in society, including having a job." (Commission, 2014a). This distinct framing of the issue incorporates three main goals: adequate income support, inclusive labour markets and access to quality services, and is intended to tackle the challenges of today's society (meaning all features of social exclusion with regard to unemployment). Crucial in that respect are the expectations of social inclusion measures on the individual, which include the responsibility for own employment as well as the willingness to improve one's own position (Commission, 2014a). With social (active) inclusion becoming an integral part of the youth unemployment discourse, its introduction into policy documents is expected to have a great impact on how the situation of socially excluded groups is discussed within policy interventions.

One of the key challenges of social inclusion measures is its appropriate implementation into the policy fields of youth unemployment. Preferences were made among political key actors, leading to attempts for the provision of best practice. As a result,

relevant research focused on the outcomes implemented policies generated, which allegedly included measures based on the concept of social inclusion, and from those drew conclusions about future perspectives of unemployed youth (O'Higgins, 2001; Walther, 2006). As a matter of fact, a vast number of scholars direct their research to the transition process of young adults from school to work (Biggart & Walther, 2012; Bradley & Devadason, 2008; Müller & Gangl, 2003; Ryan, 2001; Walther, Stauber, & Biggart, 2002), which is due to common believe that this is the point where youth tends to struggle and fail in the light of the Unions economy and labour market. Hence, it is questioned if policy initiatives have an impact on this particular issue by illustrating their efficiency in the light of what is termed as a “new economic era market” driven by flexibility and insecurity (Bradley & Devadason, 2008, pp. 2-3). In the field of preferences regarding strategic combat against youth unemployment by means of social inclusion, a differentiation between (active) labour market policies and welfare benefits as the two main targets (Colley, 2007, p. 35) has been used as a useful tool to foster the greater understanding of policy actors' preferences. Therewith, the communication of best practice can be narrowed down not only by common and national preferences but also as regards subject matters.

Taking the developments into account - particularly the benefits the youth employment sector could gain from an incorporation of social inclusion measures – it is crucial to evaluate to what extent the newly published youth (un-) employment resolutions, recommendations and reports are efficient, future oriented and are taking the latest scholarly findings into account. Thus, it is questioned if social inclusion is a matter of interest within the youth unemployment discourse as well as policy-making and if yes, to what extend it has been included over time.

On those grounds, this paper shall focus on the attention drawn to social inclusion measures between the Council of the European Union and the European Youth Forum (EYF). The cases were selected since the European Council, representing all member states' heads, is the most representative institution for the Union, regarding to decision powers. Further, the European Youth Forum constituted a suitable organization for comparison. First, it unites several national and international youth organizations and second, it stands in close cooperation with the European Council, holding a supporting and advisory position.

The thesis lays its emphasis on the share of used social inclusion features, as a means to combat youth unemployment, within the chosen documents under observation. Moreover, a special focus is drawn to the methods and verbal varieties in which those

features are communicated by the policy actors. The corresponding research question in that respect is framed as followed:

*What differences can be identified between the European Youth Forum and the Council of the European Union in the level of attention paid to social inclusion measures within the EU policy discourse on youth unemployment since the ratification of the Lisbon treaty?*

The question is expected to allow for an evaluation of the attention towards social inclusion measures at the political level with regard to youth unemployment, also giving insight to respective positive or negative developments. Hence, it is providing insights to the efficiency and effectiveness of today's approach to combat youth unemployment in the light of the latest scientific findings on social inclusion.

In order to answer the research question in an appropriate way, the following sub-questions will be used:

- Which key-features are most relevant for social inclusion measures taken by the European Council?
- Which key features obtain the most attention with regard to social inclusion measures taken by the European Youth Forum?
- Does the attention paid to specific key-features give some indication on priorities set by the institutions?
- Does the phrasing of the publications give insight about how social inclusion measures are weighted within the institutions?

The chosen sub-questions are supposed to function as a means to explain the use of social inclusion within the discourse and help to differentiate between different angles in which social inclusion measures can be approached within policy-making. Thus, the outcome is expected to provide a more transparent and detailed view of used social inclusion measures, allowing for a specified evaluation of the issue as whole and providing grounds for comparison with already conducted research on behalf of youth unemployment, which will be outlined in the following chapter. It is expected that the findings will point at explicit differences between the institutions, by introducing different angles and viewpoints taken by those. The obtained insights are further intended to be used as a stepwise answer to the main research question which unites all particular differences towards a general explanation of the findings.

In order to study the given issue, the theoretical framework will provide a scientific view on social inclusion, seeking to give insight and a general understanding of the concept. In addition the relation between social inclusion and youth unemployment will be pointed out. The third section reveals the construct of the research and indicates the

studied features. The fourth part will present analytical findings by means of official publications and seek to answer the posed sub-questions. The concluding sixth part will illustrate the findings and evaluate those with regard to their political consequences.

## II. The concept of social inclusion

In order to create an appropriate base of comparison, the concept of social inclusion has to be outlined. Accordingly, features of the concept indicating its use have to be put into context. Recent findings on youth unemployment and youth related research create an assessment of disputed viewpoints from a scientific perspective. Primarily the chapter introduces the roots of social inclusion by means of a short introduction into social exclusion, as social inclusion aroused as a necessity out of the latter. Ensuing, the chapter provides an overview of the most relevant findings on emerging debates of social inclusion within the discourse on youth unemployment.

### 2.1 The origins of social inclusion

Social inclusion presupposes the existence of social exclusion and hence expresses a contemporary attempt to tackle problems which found their roots in the late nineteenth century with the establishment of the welfare state. It is argued that the concept of social exclusion can be retraced to Max Weber who believed that exclusion is the attempt of one group to monopolize political, social or economic opportunities at the expense of a less well-off group (Weber, 1968, p.342 cited in Parkin, 1974, p. 3). The term ‘socially excluded’ first emerged in France where, by virtue of their lack of opportunities and their exclusion from the social insurance system as well as social and economic participation, challenged people were termed “les exclus” (Lenoir, 1974). Where first only disabled, lone parents and uninsured/unemployed were denominated as excluded, soon the group was extended also to disaffected youth and isolated individuals (Paugam, 1996, p. 16), creating an officially recognized umbrella of welfare state losers. Noteworthy hereby is Paugam’s specific emphasize on the importance of unemployment in that respect.

Up to that point in time, there was no particular reference to social inclusion whatsoever, attributable to the lack of pressing necessity as well as interest on parts of the political and economic sector. In the 1980s a general interest in social exclusion spread throughout Europe and was progressively adopted in official policy frameworks as for example by the Community Research and Development Information Service (CORDIS) (Commission, 2014b). The aim was to foster economic and social integration of the least privileged groups, which was a pioneering project considering that former projects aimed at defining and categorizing the issue of social exclusion instead of providing approaches towards improvement and inclusion.



The early 1990s brought further development towards the concept of social inclusion by means of the European Observatory on Policies, initiated so as to combat exclusion. The project was a reaction on “longstanding interest in compensatory interventions for those who are at significant disadvantage, including members of minority groups” (Hayes, Gray, & Edwards, 2008, p. 2).

At the present day the issue of social exclusion or active inclusion, as termed in the scientific jargon, is omnipresent in social policies of the European Union. Connected with inclusion initiatives they constitute an extensive policy framework segmented on the basis of different target groups.

## 2.2 Social inclusion at the present day

Ferrera and Hemerick claim that “global and European market places” and “the emergence of a knowledge-based economy” (Maurizio Ferrera, Hemerijck, & Rhodes, 2000, p. 53) are equally fostering social inclusion and creating social exclusion, whereas Atkinson sees the social inclusion process as “an achieved model” which has to be “endorsed as an ambition” (T. Atkinson, 2002, p. 4) by all member states no matter the circumstances. Albeit, what all scholars have in common, is seeing social inclusion as an integral part of the OMC instead of being an individual pioneering process. Consequently, the OMC is said to be “bridging the gap between negative and positive integration” (Sharpf 2002 as cited in Matsaganis & Sacchi, 2002, p. 7), with the Commission being authorized by law to “encourage cooperation” and “facilitate coordination” (Art.140 TFEU) in order to reach the goal of ‘Building an inclusive Europe’ (CEC, 2000). What stays open is the question of the right approach towards the social inclusion process within youth unemployment.

Atkinson, Cantillon, Marlier and Nolan (2005) elaborate in their book social indicators as a means of explaining social inclusion. Their focus lies especially on labour market issues, corresponding to the chosen feature of inclusive labour markets. Hereby, education conduces as the main indicator having “wider significance” on individuals for it is providing the “capacity to participate in society and to take part in the democratic process” (A. B. Atkinson, et al., 2005, p. 128). It is noteworthy that education is not only related to skills that enable an individual to be employed but also to those that help transmitting societal norms and values. The main argument on labour market issues is pointing at the lack of a rightful definition of “comparable standards” and “equivalence of qualifications” (A. B. Atkinson, et al., 2005, p. 133) in the light of the European labour market. It is pointed out that the Commission is introducing social indicators to

measure the necessary and possible scope of social inclusion, while missing out on general guidelines that would allow adjusting the concept across all member states. Thus, the spreading of best practice and equality by means of involved actors within the youth unemployment discourse may be impaired. The difficulty of this accuracy gap reveals its flaws in practical application. It is stressed that the ability to compete on the labour market is the main trigger to inclusion in a given society (A. B. Atkinson, et al., 2005, p. 135), whereas competitiveness is equivalent to competences, which are only beneficial when relative to the qualifications of others. Hence, social inclusion's initial aim is to combat unemployment.

In the light of the first conclusion, the study includes the drawback of rising employability, namely poverty. Hereby, activation as a feature of social inclusion is addressed, by pointing at the importance of income support and supporting measures. The argument states that there is no clear linearity between work and poverty (A. B. Atkinson, et al., 2005, p. 136), meaning that not only unemployment but also bad working conditions and other circumstances can lead to financial poverty. Thus it is concluded that due to the outlined facts, social protection and quality service is crucial for social integration, creating the additional pillar of welfare benefits.

Another study, conducted by Lahusen, Schulz and Graziano (2013), elaborating on the progress towards a specific policy model of youth unemployment, characterizes the process of social inclusion in terms of employability and activation. Resembling to the previous study yet more precisely framed in its focus towards economic benefits, employability (as in having the skills to become employed) is a wide ranging concept which alongside technical skills also includes common skills. The latter are pointed out as being of great importance in daily work-performance of individuals and in case of unemployment, to escape the process leading towards long-term unemployment. Further, the study considers external factors when characterizing employability, dividing the concept into individual and competitive employability. From a social inclusion perspective, such a subdivision is crucial, since individual employability only evaluates the individual competences, whereas competitive employability includes external (economic/social) circumstances which have to be considered on the labour market. Hence, the individual approach demands for inclusive labour markets, while the latter also demands for quality service in order to reach employment.

A final remark by the study on how social inclusion is to be conducted gives reason to believe that the crucial characteristic for social inclusion to work is individual initiative and responsibility for one's own action (triggered through specific activation measures), as opposed to the approach of Atkinson et al where youth is not considered

as an active body with a considerable degree of influence. As indicated by Lahusen et al, the same approach is introduced by Sebastian Künzel (2012), framing it as ‘active inclusion’ which “implies a reinterpretation of the relationship between welfare state and its citizens”. The underlying idea turns away from “uniform social citizenship” and “collective rights” and points towards “greater individual responsibility” (Künzel, 2012, p. 4), creating individualized strategies for employment and social inclusion in general. Those strategies are once more distinguishable within three concepts: market-oriented, bureaucratic and participatory concept, all of which imply a change in welfare-state intervention with regard to the inclusion process.

An extension of the claim by Künzel is pointed out by Kieselbach stating that “unemployment threatens the overall integration of young people into society” (2003, p. 6) which is determined by low qualifications, lacking social support as well as a passive attitude towards labour markets. An expedient can be found in the concept of sustainable employability in order to combat the risk of social exclusion and “enhance controllability” (Kieselbach, 2003); in particular since social exclusion is a direct implication of (especially) long-term youth-unemployment. Therefore, the research argues in support of a social guarantee, reflecting the basic principles of social inclusion. It highlights the need to foster individual life situations and emotional evolution and thus argues in favour of a personalized approach.

Both, the concept of sustainable employability as well as social guarantee are to be conducted on the EU level (p. 7) by means of inclusionary decision making. The purpose is to secure that reason prevails and to prevent, what Foucault terms, the exclusionary nature of discourses characterized by “classification and segregation” (Allen 1996, as cited in Fischler, 2000, p. 8).

Atkinson et al, Lahusen et al, Künzel and Kieselbach provide elements of social inclusion which differ in their priority, but in terms of the bigger picture of the social inclusion concept correlate to a certain degree. Through the setting of priorities the approaches allow for a clear segmentation of elements that can be attributed to social inclusion and which correspond respectively to domains of the concept.

### 2.3 Social Inclusion and youth unemployment

The provided theories outline different viewpoints on the effects of social inclusion in everyday life. When specified on the issue of youth unemployment their efforts are directed towards the same goal, yet approached through different ways. Atkinson’s argumentation gives reason to believe that in terms of social inclusion effects on youth un-

employment targeted education is crucial for (re-) employment and needs clear guidance, also from a financial perspective, to succeed (by means of the lifelong learning project for instance). The main argument relies on the idea of activation measures instead of exclusive provision of best practice. The same approach is reflected by the research of Cinalli and Giugni (2013) who point at the importance to “[...]intensify EU strategy for fostering inclusion of the unemployed [...]” (Cinalli & Giugni, 2013, p. 5). Disagreement is put forward by Lahusen et al. stating that it is not only a political duty to combat youth unemployment. It is argued that individual responsibility and willingness to act is decisive to foster employability. Hence, the degree to which employability is present, (individual or competitive) is greatly dependent on individual incentives, shifting social inclusion towards a supporting position (also supported by Künzel’s research). Kieselbachs approach to a certain degree unites all mentioned theories, by introducing the concept of enhanced controllability, pointing on both the political scope of action as well as the one of affected youths. The central idea is a personalized approach which brings both sides closer and fosters effective and efficient collaboration in order to reach the joint aim of increasing youth employment within the European Union. The variety of approaches gives insight about the range of possible preferences taken with regard to social inclusion measures, pointing towards advantages and possible extensions.

## 2.4 Conclusion

The provided theoretical approaches towards social inclusion by Atkinson et.al, Lahusen et.al, Künzel and Kieselbach revealed different angles of the concept by simultaneously pointing at corresponding ways to improve the efficiency of it. Primarily the scientific evaluation of Atkinson et al as well as Lahusen et.al reveals that education is crucial and serves different functions, not only with regard to technical skills but also to overall employability of young people, when reflected upon social inclusion. Subsequently, the researchers state that for the most part employability is dependent on the inclusiveness of labour markets, in connection to external factors influencing the economic and social situation. Hence, employability as well as inclusive labour markets are subject to influences that exceed the reach of policies but can be addressed by a stronger focus on education as well as welfare measures. To go beyond, an extended approach gives reason to believe that the extent of employability is not only determined by social inclusion measures but also dependent on the individual initiative taken by the citizens, as pointed out by Künzel. It is clarified, that everyone has the responsibility to take part

in active inclusion in order to be entitled to activation measures as well as adequate income support and access to quality services. Youth, in that sense, is encouraged to take action on behalf of their future perspectives. On the contrary, Kieselbach introduces the notion of personalized social support, being the key to future employment. Thus, welfare benefits are seen as a stepping stone for future ambitions and when introduced properly they can provide opportunities for the most disadvantaged among today's youth. All four concepts, although diverse in their grounds, indicate the possibly beneficial outcomes for the issue of youth unemployment, when considering the implementation of social inclusion measures within common policy-making on that matter.

The displayed findings will be used as indicators for the use of social inclusion measures, to evaluate and contrast the levels of attention of the European Council and the European Youth Forum on social inclusion measures taken within the discourse on youth unemployment.

### III. Methodology

In order to establish an adequate form of discourse analysis, first it has to be determined how such an analysis can be approached and which will be the criteria to conduct the research. Therefore, the first part of this chapter will introduce the research design, including all relevant key points and most importantly point out the main variable to be analysed. Further, the units of observation will be outlined by explaining the data collection method adopted for this thesis.

The focus hereby lies on the units of analysis (sentences) chosen for this research, rather than the units of observation which are the publications of the two selected institutions that are to be compared at last. In a final step, the main tool of analysis, namely the coding scheme will be introduced and the process of application will be explained. It is intended to create a conclusive method of analysis that reflects upon the main idea of the research question to be answered.

#### 3.1 Research Design

The research question will be answered by conducting a qualitative research. Hereby the research design can be framed as a comparative case study for there are two cases (chosen institutions) which will be compared due to their attention paid to social inclusion measures within official publications. The method was chosen for it is most suitable for analyzing case studies as well as verbal or written varieties within the chosen data set. The analytical part of the thesis is based on a coding scheme (see Appendix 1.2). A qualitative content analysis is implemented in order to answer the posed research question. Thus, the research is going to be descriptive.

For the measurement 28 official publications of both chosen institutions will be used, which concurs with a content analysis. In order to create a manageable timeframe, the ratification of the Lisbon treaty till the present day is chosen. The starting point seems to be most suitable, for it also marks about the time when youth unemployment became an issue of significance within EU policy making. Further, the publications are considered to be reflections of the public opinion of the chosen institutions and therefore create the most suitable base to obtain insight about used social inclusion measures and the extent to which those are actively implicated within policy initiatives. Hence, the analysis is aimed to illustrate the transformation of scientific findings regarding the usefulness of social inclusion measures into practical use by means of publications released by European institutions.

The analysis of the publications will be conducted by a coding scheme (see Appendix 1.2). Hereby, 6 categories (determined through the introduced literature; see Appendix 1.1) and corresponding indicators for those (determined through a pre-evaluation of the publications; see Appendix 3.3-30) will create the frame of the scheme. By means of the coding scheme the publications will be analyzed both for how they deliberately include social inclusion measures as proposed by the previous chapter, and for what they indicate about the institutions' commitment towards those in that respect. The results will be coded as frequencies, resulting from a division of sentences by coded counts. Hence, the qualitative data will be evaluated by means of quantitative data, which derives from coding of the former. The frequencies of the different categories will also enable a more precise evaluation, for they point out which keywords have the greatest weight regarding the use of social inclusion measures. In order to rule out reliability threats, since one category can be just as much important as another but less mentioned or the used social inclusion features can express varying intentions although coded in the same category and even under the same indicators, also the phrasing and verbal varieties will be analyzed.

Therefore, the relevance of the study is accounted for by the pressing importance of social inclusion procedures among young people belonging to the NEET (not in education, employment or training) group in terms of their implementation in policies addressing youth unemployment, rather than comparable studies which took the policies as given and focused on outcomes related to those. It is questioned to what extent the two institutions concord in their changing attitudes towards social inclusion for it is believed that efficient social inclusion is the main tool to combat youth unemployment, as was pointed out by the theoretical framework.

### 3.2 Data collection

The concept of analysing the varying views on social inclusion within the Council and the EYF can be approached through the use of different sources. The opinion of the European Council on the given topic is mainly reflected through the EPSCO Committee, responsible for employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs. Therefore, the analysis will be conducted based on press releases by the Committee which are concerned with unemployment and youth unemployment in particular (see Appendix 3.3-3.18). The documents were chosen, for they are reflecting the Councils opinion-framing on a regular basis (quarterly meetings of the European Council) and are public record, hence can be retrieved from the official EPSCO homepage.

The 16 chosen documents are dated from February 2005 till May 2014 (chosen accordingly to their relevance for the topic of youth unemployment) and are between 3 to 26 pages long. They can be divided into 9 council conclusions/ recommendations (see Appendix 3,5,9,12,13,15-18), 2 lunch items (see Appendix 7,10), 2 policy debates (see Appendix 11,14) as well as 3 (draft) joint reports (see Appendix 4,6,8). The conclusions and recommendations can be characterized as communications to all member states, reflecting best practice although from a legal perspective not binding with regard to implementation-obligation. The policy debates as well as the lunch items display written notes from EPSCO delegations and are concerned with contemporary discussion points on the agenda. Lastly, the chosen joint employment report from March 2011 is an official document stating the EU's current opinion on labour markets, especially with regard to employment issues, by simultaneously reflecting upon possible proposals for improvement.

In order to point out the view of the European Youth Forum, it is crucial to consider the composition of the organization, as being a platform for national and international non-governmental youth organizations. Moreover, it is necessary to distinguish between different publications of the EYF, for they are publishing their opinion in various ways. First of all they provide 'claims' also identifiable as official statements towards youth related issues which will be used as initial references of opinion stating. Those claims are to be used as reasonable documents since the EYF is an important NGO and thus considered to have an influential position among lobby groups that work in cooperation with EU institutions. Apart from this, the organization is releasing 'reaction-documents' on e.g. Council resolutions that create a direct response to EU policies. Those are underpinned by the approval of a wide audience due to the scope of member organizations represented by the EYF. For that reason, reaction-documents published by the NGO will be used alongside the claims so as to obtain a sufficient range of documents representing the frame of opinion.

Representing the European Youth Forums' opinion 12 documents were chosen, which are dated from November 2005 till May 2014 and are between 1 and 12 pages long. A differentiation is made between 2 policy papers (see Appendix 19,21), 1 report(see Appendix 20), 2 reaction papers (see Appendix 24,26), 2 position papers (see Appendix 22,23), 2 claims (see Appendix 29,30) and 3 press releases (see Appendix 25,27,28). All publications can be found in the section 'youth-policy-watch', except for the two press releases which were published in the 'news-archive' section of the official EYF homepage and which serve as additional opinion framing by the institution. The selected publications from both institutions are to be handled as the units of observation



The data collected from both cases is most suitable for the discourse analysis, for it reflects the official opinions of the institutions, which are communicated to the public. Their suitability can be summarized in three main points: First, the documents are comparable in their nature; all being official statements, public record and subject to critique. Second, the content serves the same aim, namely to combat and improve the situation of youth unemployment as addressed by the discourse. Thus, they are expected to involve to a certain degree the implementation of social inclusion measures, for those have been officially communicated as an effective tool to reach the aim of lowered youth unemployment rates (as stated in the theory/concepts part above). Third, all documents published by the institutions serve as recommendations and advice for best practice and are as such not legally binding for the member states they address.

### 3.3 Discourse Analysis

The discourse analysis will be conducted by means of a qualitative content analysis and seeks to evaluate the degree to which social inclusion measures are a matter of interest and to what extent they are implemented in the current discourse on youth unemployment. The recording units in that respect are the 28 publications chosen for the research approach and the unit of analysis is ‘sentences’.

With reference to each document, all sentences will be counted in order to create the first base of comparison, since all documents vary in length and structure. Further the worked out analysis scheme, consisting of 6 categories (see Appendix 1.1) with respectively one keyword and belonging features with similar meanings or connotations (Stemler, 2001), will be applied to each of the documents (as demonstrated below). Hereby, only pre-set codes are used which were derived from the used literature (categories) in the previous chapter and which were deduced from a pre-evaluation of the publications (indicators). Post-set codes, which occur during the coding process, will be taken into account after the analysis (Schiffrin, Tannen, & Hamilton, 2008, p. 331).

The coding scheme records the total count of sentences correlated with the chosen categories (Appendix 2.1) and simultaneously makes specified counts for each individual keyword (Appendix 2.2). Hereby, each sentence is evaluated according to its intended meaning, so that it can either be assigned to one “mutually exclusive and exhaustive” category (no unit falls between two data points)(Stemler, 2001) or not be counted to any of the categories within the scheme. Such an application of the scheme first allows for a comparison of all documents with regard to the tested measure (for each institution) and second facilitates a more specified evaluation of the documents

with regard to the influence of each keyword, since the counts reflect the true value of used social inclusion measures within the publications. The comparison is enabled by a frequency calculation of occurred social inclusion features, where the sentences in the context of each document are divided by the total amount of determined categories as well as by each category individually. The comparison of the publications' frequencies regarding used social inclusion measures (by category) allows for a closer evaluation, e.g. identifying an observable pattern, correlations, particularities or a chronological increase or decrease. Supplementary to the coding, an evaluation of phrasing will be conducted. This serves the purpose that not only the frequencies of attention towards social inclusion measures are worked out, but also the way in which those categories and indicators are communicated. The observed phrasing occurrences will not be pointed out for each category in detail but are meant to clarify the point of view and the way of thinking of both institutions in general. Thus, it is intended to not only point out the attention towards social inclusion measures by the institutions but also their purpose with regard to their implementation or sustainability for instance. The chosen method is expected to be most convenient for the thesis for it does not rely on shallow indicators as e.g. the mentioning of the terms 'social inclusion', but gives a precise overview of the attention paid to what is mediated as indicators for active social inclusion by definition of recent research.

The analytical part of this thesis will reflect upon the conducted coding of the publications as well as occurring issues and phrasing varieties and as a final step, provide answers to the posed sub-questions as well as the main research question.

### 3.4 Concluding remarks

The presented scheme covers a wide scope of features commonly used within policy documents and political debates (according to the carried out pre-evaluation), as in the given discourse on youth unemployment and therefore gives reason to believe that there will be only a small amount of post-set codes identified within the documents that would be of relevance for the thesis. Further, the explicit distinction between the categories makes the coding scheme reliable, for there is little space for units (sentences) to fall between data points (categories) (Stemler, 2001). The coding is expected to reveal the real numbers of social inclusion features (as coded in sentences) identifiable by explicitly using the coding scheme.

Ensuing from common information on both institutions and on grounds of the provided scientific findings, it is assumed that the opinion on social inclusion measures will be pro-active. However, one can expect visible differences in opinion framing between the Council and the EYF.

#### IV. European discourse on youth unemployment

Lahusen et al (2013) points at the EU's acknowledgement of difficulties faced by young people with regard to the labour market while simultaneously stating that such an action is no means for it is the policy initiatives that lack perspective and are operating on "pre-established policy priorities and pathways" (Lahusen, et al., 2013, p. 8). In other words, it is assumed that a lack of commitment towards new policy initiatives is hindering a more efficient way of combating the underlying problem within the discourse on youth unemployment.

The following chapter will examine the attention paid to social inclusion measures within the EU discourse on youth unemployment and interpret the corresponding importance for sustainable policy initiatives. Thus, the analytical part of this thesis will draw conclusions on the findings provided by the coding scheme, as used on the publications of the two chosen representatives for the discourse, namely the European Council and the European Youth Forum. Moreover, it will be revealed how those measures are communicated so as to provide a clear picture on the relevance of social inclusion measures within policy initiatives on unemployed youth. Social inclusion measures, in that respect, represent the sustainable pathway for policies within the field in question and the extent to which those are implemented will either confirm or confute the assumption put forward by Lahusen et al.

Therefore, at first two categories addressing EU aid are analysed according to their use within the publications of the EC and EYF. In the second section, it will be evaluated to what extent education and responsibility are considered as suitable for sustainable policy initiatives regarding youth unemployment. Labour markets inclusiveness and future-oriented employability constitute the last pair of categories that are analysed within the context of the publications. At the end of the chapter the institutions' preferences concerning social inclusion measures will be evaluated by answering the posed sub-questions. Further in the light of the analytical findings the research question will be discussed by including the previously consulted literature.

## 4.1 Activation and Social Support

The first two features under study are activation and social inclusion measures. Both are correlated to the extent that they address social aid for the most disadvantaged youth (NEET group), although with different focus points.

With regard to activation, Appendix 2.2 shows that the feature plays a major role within the discourse on youth unemployment from both chosen perspectives. According to the outcomes of the coding procedure activation measures contribute in average about 25% and 26% within the publications of the European Council and European Youth Forum respectively, to the total amount of introduced social inclusion measures. Salient in that respect is the missing de- or increasing pattern when observing the EC over time. On the one hand, the coding scheme revealed a relatively constant use of social inclusion measures with occasional positive or negative outliers, as e.g. the draft joint employment report in 2006 (50%) (see Appendix 3.4 ), the policy debate from June 2013 (40%) (see Appendix 3.14), or the absent activation measures in the draft joint report (2007, see Appendix 3.6) as well as the lunch item (2010, see Appendix 3.7). Those outliers are most likely accounted for by the content of each individual publication and in that respect have no greater meaning. On the other hand, the EYF reveals an overall increasing tendency towards activation. However, the development also shows that the positive tendency mitigates by the latest publications and comes to a constant of about 25% in relation to all categories under research, nonetheless constituting a vital change. Thus, the institutions differ in their overall attention with regard to the measure, but seem to attribute comparable relevance to it by the present day and hereby underlining its importance for combating the present youth unemployment issue (Kieselbach, 2003; Lahusen, et al., 2013)

The differences in attention towards activation can most likely be explained by the nature of the category (see Appendix 1.2). Activation measures are embodied through EU projects that in turn are based on funds. Therefore, the EC (as a founding institution) has a steady relation to those measures that are provided by the Union. In contrast the EYF has given more attention and relevance to the measures over time explained by the increasing need for support towards unemployed youth in today's society. It can be assumed that the reason for the extent of attention paid is most likely found in the position of the institution under observation, whereas the EC's constant attention has to be weighted as more or at least equally relevant as the recently pro-active position of the EYF. Both institutions

Regarding social support measures, which include any kind of (financial, physical or psychological) aid apart from the one provided by activation measures, both institutions show constant attention. Hereby, the EC (average 18%) fosters the implementation in a comparable manner since the entry of the Lisbon Treaty in 2005, whereas the EYF (average 37%) significantly increases its attention towards the measure during the present year, as can be seen in Appendix 2.2. The raised awareness towards the importance of social support and the demand to foster it on the part of the EYF can be accounted for by the same reasoning as indicated regarding activation. Moreover, the institution has a clear focus on youth matters, which legitimizes its intentions towards increasing support for disadvantaged youth within the EU, as also proposed by the ‘personalized approach’ of Kieselbach (2003). In contrast, the EC is certainly concerned and aware of the issue of youth unemployment but as indicated by the employment reports under observation, youth constitutes one among many need-groups in the Union. Hence, social support is distributed equally and legitimately among EU citizens in need (A. B. Atkinson, et al., 2005), including youth, so as to give the same opportunities to everyone. Once again the vantage point is crucial for the line of action taken by the institutions.

As a last remark, the different approaches towards both measures have to be looked closer at in order to understand the opposed characters of both institutions under observation. The EC has completely separated the discourse on youth unemployment from the EU unemployment discourse (see Appendix 3.4), hence treating youth as a specific issue and fostering the image of a lost generation. As a consequence, the institution communicates the named measures as to “promote young people’s transitions and to avoid the risk of long-term exclusion and poverty” (see Appendix 3.9) rather than seeing those as a way of preventing youth unemployment in the first place, as proposed by Kieselbach (2003). Accordingly, also the phrasing of the EC’s publications is more purposeful than persuasive. In contrast, the EYF is calling for a reversal of youth separation (Appendix 3.23) and in favour of investment in the whole education/ employment sector (A. B. Atkinson, et al., 2005), since “education should stop being considered a cost and become an investment again” (see Appendix 3.23 p.5). Thus, the EYF wants youth to be seen as part of the sustainable growth and development project and not as a single marginal group which requires special attention and aid. More specified claims of the EYF are put forward in the following sections.

## 4.2 Education and Responsibility

The acquiring of adequate skills and the responsibility to act are two features which ever more came into relation during the past years (Lahusen, et al., 2013) and whose relation is reflected in three findings. First, the coded frequencies reveal that both measures have modest but comparable frequencies of attention within the publications, as shown in Appendix 2.2. Second, the correlation can be found in the analyzed publications of both institutions in the way those two measures are communicated. The EC acknowledges the alliance by stating that the European Council “[...] must also introduce a combination of measures to combat education failure [...]” (see Appendix 3.7 p.3) and “[...] prevent(ing) youth unemployment by equipping young people with relevant skills” (see Appendix 3.11 p.4). Therewith, taking a position which reflects latest demands for a consideration of responsibility to act in terms of education (A. B. Atkinson, et al., 2005) . The European Youth Forum holds a comparable though more radical position by “advocating for the breakdown of barriers between different educational providers” in order to “ensure that education contributes to the personal and social development of young people” (see Appendix 3.29). Thus and as a final point, education measures become a responsibility so as to improve the situation of unemployed youth.

Although recognized as important, both isolated and in relation, the education and responsibility measures are rather underrepresented according to the coding scheme (both measures combined in average: EC: 11%; EYF 11%). Such marginal attention is accounted for by two reasons. First, there has been a shift from public authorities towards individual persons regarding the responsibility to act during the past years. The EC and the EYF communicate this shift by means of approaches to “encourage”, “motivate” or “stimulate” young people to be the forges of their own destiny and to actively participate in provided activation measures. Hence, the awareness of the importance of education for future employment is presumed and solely visualized (as a reminder to the responsibility to act) rather than advanced in efforts. An exception is made for the efforts to lower the number of school-dropouts, for this is an indicator for poor employability (Lahusen, et al., 2013), as indicated by the EC position mentioned above. Second, education policies within the EU are a matter of national politics and the communicated policy initiatives in that regard serve as best practice for addressed member states of the Union. This means that in the case of education and responsibility to act, both the EC as well as the EYF (as representative of national youth organizations) have a rather passive

position towards effective education policies, nor can they direct them in the context of education measures as a means of social inclusion. Ensuing from the analytical findings as well as the political and legal basis, it can be assumed that the measures in question receive comparably little attention due to the limited scope of impacts they may have on actual policy implementations. The research further indicates that the effectiveness and efficiency of education and the responsibility to act with regard to the respective range of influence of the EC and EYF is better represented by intensified efforts towards activation and social support as was indicated in the previous section.

#### 4.3 Labour Markets inclusiveness and future-oriented employability

Sustainable employment within the labour market has proven to be one of the main goals of both institutions according to their publications, which is also reflected by scholars as Atkinson et al (2005) and Lahusen et al (2013) and requires the “development of new and existing active policies of employment” (see Appendix 3.30).

Regarding employability, policy initiatives that are fostering traineeships, apprenticeships or quality jobs with respect to the promoted youth guarantee, show (see Appendix 2.2) to gain an average attention of 18% and 14% within the publications of the EC and EYF respectively. As opposed to the EYF, which shows a significant increase in attention towards the measure in the year 2014, the EC is not featuring a certain pattern, which would indicate an in- or decrease or a specific timeframe of raised attention. Nonetheless, employability seems to have a constant place among considered inclusion measures of both institutions. The coded frequencies are validated by both institutions, stating that with regard to employability an “instrument on which there is broad consensus are traineeships” (see Appendix 3.15, p.4) and in the case of the Youth Forum, employability is best acquired by ‘non-formal education’ (see Appendix 3.19) and entrepreneurship (see Appendix 3.19, p 2-3)

Whereas the EC on the one hand communicates that the measure should be improved through appropriate and targeted training so as to provide an education level which matches available job opportunities on the labour market (see Appendix 3.10, p.2), the EYF on the other hand highlights that the chance to increase employability should be accessible to everyone. Hereby, in contrast to the EC, the core intention is to give young unemployed individuals the opportunity to enhance their skills and qualifications in their field of interest through non-formal education or entrepreneurship. Consequently, they are acquiring abilities that make them more flexible with regard to fu-



ture employment, which is becoming ever more important considering the constantly increasing youth unemployment rates (see Appendix 3.20 and 3.22). At this point it must be mentioned, that the EYF introduces its publications so as to foster equal chances for young people in today's society, by reaching out towards the EC to include them in current policy initiatives (the outcomes can be found in Appendix 3.24). Such a correlation seems rather odd when considering the varying intensity with which both actors strive for change, yet illustrates the good intentions in order to reach the evidently equal goal of improving the youth's position in society, especially the labour market.

The importance of the topic is emphasized by specific expressions, especially communicated by the EYF, as e.g. "required", "at the core of attention", "vital" and so forth. Those not only direct the attention to employability as an important category but also question the effectiveness of already implemented measures by highlighting its value. The effects are developments in or adjustments to already implemented policies (see Appendix 3.24 and 3.26).

In terms of the attention paid to the inclusiveness of the labour market the units of observation differ significantly according to the findings (see Appendix 2.2). Most striking in that regard is the comparably low consideration of the measure by the European Youth Forum (in average 8%), while simultaneously strengthening its focus on the aspect of employability as key indicator in this set-up. The European Council is giving comparable attention (on average 16%) to inclusive labour markets as to the former measure. Thus, the findings give reason to believe that the institution is conforming to its former approach, namely convergence to the significant other so as to match employment requirements with available skills; in other words create "tailor-made pathways to ease the transition from education to work" (see Appendix 3.9). As opposed to the EC, the EYF is building on education and employability to enhance flexibility towards employment. Although stating that "sustainable quality jobs should be key part of a European strategy for inclusive growth" (see Appendix 3.30, p.1), especially accessible for young (unemployed) people, the EYF is obviously focusing their efforts on youth in particular, for they discovered a lack of attention towards sustainable solutions on the part of the EC (see Appendix 3.30, p1). In general, the approaches of both institutions are striving for the same goal but seem to be divergent in their core approaches.

#### 4.5 Towards an explanation of outcomes

The previous sections reflected upon the findings of the analysis and created a link between those and the essential ideas of the concepts that were chosen for this thesis. The

institutions' differing positions towards the use of social inclusion measures within the discourse on youth unemployment thus can be pointed out, by connecting the findings of the analysis with the arguments provided by the literature. On those grounds, the following section will seek to elaborate on the posed sub-questions as well as the main research question.

According to the analytical findings and with regard to the first two sub-questions, the most significant categories for both institutions within the chosen timeframe and as they were paired by analogy, are activation and social support (related to the average frequency). Evident in that respect, is the bilateral acknowledgement of the urgency to act by means of financial, physical or psychological support. The European Council fosters measures of activation and support, as it represents the image of social Europe and strives towards equality among European citizens. In contrast, the European Youth Forum promotes those measures not only as aid but also as a stepping-stone with increasing importance for the discourse on youth unemployment as well as sustainable growth in general. The institution is eager to focus on sustainable, effective and efficient changes by expanding its approaches, especially reflected within the frame of increasing efforts towards sustainable employability that were found by means of the coding process for the year 2014. Although different in terms of framing the possible benefits obtained by the measures, both institutions share equal core ideas and positions when it comes to the importance of activation and social support for unemployed youth. This observation reflects the same findings that were provided by Künzel who states that "social policies are now increasingly based on a targeted, individualized approach" (Künzel, 2012, p. 4). However, it remains unresolved and questionable which timeframe for change is foreseen by the EC, whereas the EYF's intentions are clearly stated beginning with the present day.

In Addition, the research revealed that both measures taken by the EC and EYF are intended to combat social exclusion to the greatest possible extent, for there is evidence that low social support as well as activation "appeared to increase the risk of social exclusion" (Kieselbach, 2003, p. 4). In this regard, the majority of publications foster an extension of aid provided by the EU, hence meets the demands of the unemployed youth as pointed out by the literature.

Critical however, is the lack of attention towards education measures, for those have been pointed out as crucial in particular by consulted scholars, besides the two measures stated above, and therefore constitutes a gap in efficiency from the researchers' perspectives.

The so far given reasoning also provides a partial answer to the third sub-question which refers to set priorities on behalf of the European Council and Youth Forum. Apart from the obvious advocacy of the activation and social support categories, the EYF is giving priority to sustainable developments, which gives reason to believe that from the institutions perspective their intentions are best represented by fostering employability. In fact the EYF recently appoints the same priority to employability as Lahusen et al, which study claims that “increasing employability” and “boosting labour market mobility” are a duty of EU institutions (2013, p. 6). As indicated previously, the latter has been identified as a priority of the European Council, whose position can be characterized as rather pragmatic for it is building its development and growth initiatives by including the labour market, considering its feasibility to increase inclusiveness.

The setting of priorities by the chosen institutions as representatives of the discourse on youth unemployment has direct implications on how those priorities are communicated. As pointed out by the previous sections of this chapter, the Youth Forum has a very pro-active way of phrasing their intentions and demands towards social inclusion measures regarding youth unemployment. Hereby, only those measures ranked as most relevant are addressed, making the publications more topic-related and simultaneously accounting for the fragmented coding results, especially in terms of the categories: inclusive labour markets, education and responsibility in contrast to activation, social support and sustainable employability. The European Council’s phrasing of the publications comprises a wider scope of categories (in the majority, all categories are addressed at least once), but therefore lacks persuasiveness. As opposed to the EYF, the EC preserves its pragmatic approach and communicates its social inclusion initiatives with less decisiveness, by using notations as: “may/could help to[...]”, “is expected to[...]”, “can play a role[...]” (see Appendix 3.3-3.18). Thus, for the last sub-question it can be concluded that phrasing is an essential tool for the power of persuasion and strongly affects the way in which intentions of the publishing institution are discerned by the public.

After answering all four sub-question, clear indications about the varying attention paid to social inclusion measures in terms of the European Council and European Youth Forum aroused. The consulted literature for this thesis pointed out that the most important measure for social inclusion is probably education, for it is a steppingstone for integration, flexibility and adaptability and provides the concerned individual with sustainable opportunities (T. Atkinson, 2002, p. 146; Lahusen, et al., 2013, p. 5). In or-

der to reach a high standard of education for young people belonging to the NEET group, hence in the light of EU policy being classified as unemployed, the theory conveys that further approaches towards social inclusion measures have to be implemented. Hereby, above all activation and social support are crucial factors that ease the way towards sustainable employability as well as the labour market, all through shared responsibility among afflicted actors. The EC and the EYF show efforts within their publications to meet this pattern of priorities for it is the most reasonable and promising one. However, in contrast to the theory the institutions seem to face political and legal barriers (as pointed out in section 4.2) which cause a shift within the line of priorities concerning education as well as responsibility. Education measures are fostered and their importance underpinned, but limited to the extent of the EU's range of influence, as are the assignments of responsibilities. Both institutions try to transform their efforts into guidelines for best practice. Visible differences between the EC and the EYF are therefore diminished for those two measures, but stand out even more for the approaches and attention paid to all other categories.

The European Council's position towards social inclusion measures since the ratification of the Lisbon treaty is best described as consistent. With foresight and experience, the institution introduces a continual flow of policy initiatives including social inclusion measures that serve as recommendations for member states and their national approaches to combat youth unemployment. The main focus lies on providing proposals for measures that facilitate equal opportunities for disadvantaged youth and thus raising awareness towards the core principles of the European Union. Moreover, with regard to sustainable change, activation and social support measures within the publications are prioritised above all, strengthening the image of 'social Europe' as driving force and justification for necessary transformation among members. The strong link to economic matters within the Union allows for targeted claims on labour markets and their ability to increase inclusiveness and flexibility. This creates a connection to what is intended from a social perspective and builds up to what seems to be a concept for sustainable growth, once again being a reflection of the EC's image.

As opposed, the EYF is composed of different national youth organizations which accordingly face a variety of pressing issues concerning youth unemployment. This accounts for, what is reflected by the publications as pro-active towards social inclusion measures, with a rising tendency (see Appendix 1 and 2). Whereas publications till the year 2011 are rather constant, at times also have fluctuating tendencies, especially the measures on activation, social support and sustainable employability have received growing attention (see Appendix 2). Moreover, the way in which the EYF is

communicating its claims and phrasing the need to act on behalf of all nations represented in the organization supports the pro-active image they transmit. In general, the EYF's direct approach transfers the notion of an institution that intends to act in the best interest of the Unions youth, regardless of political barriers. This is underlined by the critical view of the institution on recent actions of the Council (see Appendix 3.30) where more action and long-sightedness from the EC is demanded. The European Youth Forum thus tries to relocate its efforts from recommendations and proposed policy initiatives towards targeted solutions, so as to foster efficiency and significant change.

All in all, the EC and EYF direct their attention to social inclusion measures in a manner which seems to be appropriate for the type of institution and position they represent. In the light of the discourse on youth unemployment the viewpoints appear to be opposing yet directed towards comparable aims, which is why on the EU level the EYF holds an advisory position towards the EC and whose opinion is valued and taken under consideration. Additionally, not only the Council but also the Youth Forum acknowledges the decisions taken by the prior at times and gets engaged in debates about implementation matters based on those publications (see Appendix 26-28). Thus, from both viewpoint the well-being of the Unions youth has priority and despite all differences contributes to a collaboration for sustainable development and improvement.

## V. Conclusion

The thesis elaborated on the differences in attention paid to social inclusion measures within the discourse on youth unemployment, as represented by the European Council and the European Youth Forum. The outcomes revealed that social inclusion measures as they are implemented by both institutions constitute a relevant part of recommended initiatives to combat and prevent youth unemployment within the analysed publications, yet entail relevant differences in the amount of and proposals for realization approaches. The European Council in that respect stands for step-wise sustainable, innovative and open-minded change of policy initiatives on behalf of Europe's youth and therefore reflects the image of constant development in line with the Europeanization process and its associated issues, needs and demands. As opposed to that, the European Youth Forum takes a pro-active position towards social inclusion measures that radiates persuasion and determination with regard to the set goal of support for unemployed youth within the EU. The, as it appears, sudden increase in interest towards social inclusion measures during the past few years can be interpreted as a sign of constant concern which is peaking due to the extraordinary severity of unemployment among young EU citizens nowadays. Both institutions seem to act in the best of their belief and towards the respective best solution for the issue at stake.

Striking in the light of the differing positions taken, is the existing vivid collaboration that despite all contradictions suggests a shared vision for Europe's youth and its future perspectives concerning its place in society. In this way the EC and the EYF contribute to a more precise approach when it comes to combating youth unemployment by means of social inclusion. However, as criticized by Lecardi & Ruspini,(2006) most policies and programmes introduced by the Union are still based on the idea of a 'standard biography', being a concept that aims at full employment and a linear transition from education to work. "In terms of standard biography the completion of education equals labour market integration, which in turn equals social integration" (Lecardi & Ruspini, 2006, p. 64) According to concerned scholars (Trickey, 2001; Van Berkel & Moeller, 2002) such a viewpoint creates a mismatch between the targets of the EU, as outlined by the analytical part of the thesis, and today's youth. With regard to the intentions put forward by the social inclusion measures within the youth unemployment discourse, the pathway of an individual biography is indeed left behind. Thus, the policy

initiatives within this field of policy-making seem to miss out to acknowledge the evident changes in the transition from youth to adulthood today.

A clearer explanation of the issue finds its grounds by explaining the ‘modern’ process of transition, which above all takes longer, is more discontinuous than the common one and is termed as de-standardized within research (Lecardi & Ruspini, 2006). Contrary to the initial transition phases of: leaving parents’ home, entering the labour market and forming one’s own family (Cavalli & Galland, 1995) the increasing ‘yo-yo’ nature of transitions is characterized as less-linear, more complex and reversible (Lecardi & Ruspini, 2006, p. 63). In terms of the introduced social inclusion measures as identified within the discourse, this would mean extensive changes in the principal approach. Especially from sides of the European Council, for it is rigid, due to pre-set guidelines of the Union. In addition, what was earlier said to be a mismatch between current policy initiatives and their target group, was termed more strictly by Walther and Stauber et al. (2002) as the “unintended risk of social exclusion arising from policies aimed at the integration of young adults” in consequence. This implies that a false approach of social inclusion measures may have a reverse effect and be fatal for the initially well placed intentions by both institutions. Hereby, it has to be pointed out that the EC gives far more attention to the classical way of transition, highlighting the importance of a labour society where employment is a crucial gateway to a wider scope of social integration, hence reflecting the mismatch as existent and continuing on behalf of the policy-making body. On the contrary the EYF strives towards increasing adaptability of policies for unemployed youth to smooth the way for more individual transition, as reflected by the outcomes of the conducted research. The aim is to step away from the idea of scheme-careers and towards flexible and individualized careers which fit the needs of today’s youth. Yet, also this approach is not fully mature and therefore seems to have, in the light of the EYF being an advisory body for the EC, for now not a sustainable and considerable position within the discourse.

In order for such a change to happen and to actively include the youth’s position and shifting transition phases into innovative policy initiatives, not an insignificant amount of re-thinking and de-standardization on the part of the Union and all participating organizations of the discourse has to happen. When considering the research outcomes together with the suggestions for improvement by the provided scholars it becomes clear that despite all effort to provide best practice on behalf of the European Union, organizations like the EYF are a necessary addition to common practice and need to be awarded with more attention for they reflect the unemployed youth’s needs at first hand.

Concluding it can be said that although subject to obvious differences in priority as well as phrasing of those, the publications reflect the pressing importance of change. Despite the current mismatch and lacking foresight when it comes to the needs of today's youth, they contribute to the growing attention paid to the youth unemployment discourse by all actors involved and therefore provide a first step into the 'right' direction. Especially in times, where youth is suffering the most from the remaining effects of the economic crises, the discourse does not characterize today's youth as a 'lost generation' as was frequently communicated by the media (Coy, et al., 2009). To the contrary, youth is treated respectfully as the future working force that is worth investment for sustainable development, yet it requires some adjustment. Despite all differences in attention paid to the introduced categories of social inclusion measures, the concept itself is mediated as meaningful to the extent that present investments may counteract the need for future support or at least decrease its demand.



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## VII. Appendix

### Appendix 1.1: categories as derived from literature

Activation – (T. Atkinson, 2002; Kieselbach, 2003; Künzel, 2012)

Inclusive labour markets - (M. Ferrera, Matsaganis, & Sacchi, 2002; Kieselbach, 2003)

Education - (T. Atkinson, 2002; M. Ferrera, et al., 2002; Lahusen, et al., 2013)

Responsibility - (Künzel, 2012; Lahusen, et al., 2013)

Social support - (T. Atkinson, 2002; Hayes, et al., 2008; Künzel, 2012)

Sustainable employability - (Kieselbach, 2003; Lahusen, et al., 2013)

### Appendix 1.2: Coding Scheme

<b>Activation</b>	<b>Inclusive labour markets</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Social support</b>	<b>Sustainable employability</b>
Youth on the move	(European) Youth Pact	abilities	Sustainable development	Social guarantee	(vocational) training
European Social Fund / Model	Labour market segmentation	skills	(Career) guidance	Social agenda	Traineeship/ apprenticeship
Lifelong Learning	Employment guidelines	qualifications	Entrepreneurship	Social support	Quality jobs
EURES	Labour-market transition(s)	competences	Efficiency / effectiveness	Social (youth/ employment ) Policies/reforms	Quality assurance
Activation policies		Common cultural heritage		Social cohesion	

## Appendix 2.1: Coded Frequencies in publications

Institution	Date	Name	Sentences	Counting	Frequency
European Council	February 2005	Council Conclusion	51	4	0,08
European Council	February 2006	Draft Joint Employment Report	233	31	0,13
European Council	May 2006	Council Conclusion	74	3	0,04
European Council	February 2007	Draft Joint Report on Social Protection and Inclusion	157	9	0,06
European Council	February 2010	Lunch Item	13	5	0,38
European Council	March 2011	Joint Employment Report	238	52	0,22
European Council	June 2011	Council conclusion	61	18	0,3
European Council	Nov 11	Lunch Item	25	10	0,4
European Council	January 2012	Policy Debate	31	7	0,23
European Council	October 2012	Council Conclusion	109	20	0,18
European Council	March 2013	Council Recommendation	101	28	0,28
European Council	June 2013	Policy Debate	39	5	0,13
European Council	October 2013	Council Conclusion	31	3	0,1
	Nov 13	Adoption	66	9	0,14
	Apr 14	Adoption	61	19	0,31
European Council	May 2014	Council Conclusion	58	21	0,36
EuropeanYouthForum	Nov 05	Policy Paper	118	36	0,3
EuropeanYouthForum	Sep 06	Report p.1-8	52	16	0,31
EuropeanYouthForum	May 2008	Policy Paper	145	38	0,26
EuropeanYouthForum	Nov 11	Position Paper on Youth Entrepreneurship	183	46	0,25
EuropeanYouthForum	Nov 12	Position Paper: Love Youth Future	98	42	0,43
EuropeanYouthForum	May 2014	Reaction on Council Resolution	29	3	0,1
EuropeanYouthForum	May 2014	Press Relies	9	2	0,22
EuropeanYouthForum	May 2014	Reaction on Council Resolution	41	15	0,37
	May 2014	Press Relies	13	4	0,31
EuropeanYouthForum	June 2014	Press Relies	14	5	0,36
EuropeanYouthForum		Claim Quality Education	10	4	0,4
EuropeanYouthForum		Claim Quality Jobs	8	4	0,5

## Appendix 2.2: Frequencies according to categories

Document	Activation	Inclusive labour markets	Education	Responsibility	Social support	Sustainable employability	Total
1 EC	2 (50)	-	1 (25)	1 (25)	-	-	4
2 EC	8 (25,8)	4 (12,9)	3 (9,7)	3 (9,7)	7 (22,6)	6 (19,4)	31
3 EC	1 (33,3)	1 (33,3)	-	-	1 (33,3)	-	3
4 EC	-	-	1 (11,1)	1 (11,1)	4 (44,4)	3 (33,3)	9
5 EC	-	-	2 (40)	1 (20)	-	2 (40)	5
6 EC	10 (19,2)	11 (21,2)	7 (13,5)	5 (9,61)	7 (13,5)	12 (23,1)	52
7 EC	4 (22,2)	3 (16,6)	1 (5,6)	2 (11,1)	3 (16,6)	5 (27,8)	18
8 EC	3 (30)	3 (30)	1 (10)	1 (10)	1 (10)	1 (10)	10
9 EC	2 (28,6)	1 (14,3)	1 (14,3)	-	1 (14,3)	2 (28,6)	7
10 EC	7 (35)	3 (15)	2 (10)	2 (10)	3 (15)	3 (15)	20
11 EC	8 (28,6)	9 (32,1)	3 (10,7)	1 (5,6)	3 (10,7)	4 (22,2)	28
12 EC	2 (40)	1 (20)	-	-	1 (20)	1 (20)	5
13 EC	1 (33,3)	1 (33,3)	-	-	1 (33,3)	-	3
14 EC	2 (22,2)	1 (11,1)	2 (22,2)	1 (11,1)	2 (22,2)	1 (11,1)	9
15 EC	2 (10,5)	3 (15,8)	3 (15,8)	5 (26,3)	3 (15,8)	3 (15,8)	19
16 EC	5 (23,8)	1 (4,8)	4 (19,1)	2 (9,5)	4 (19,1)	5 (23,8)	21
1 EYF	6 (16,6)	3 (8,3)	6 (16,6)	6 (16,6)	8 (22,2)	7 (19,4)	36
2 EYF	3 (18,8)	2 (12,5)	4 (25)	2 (12,5)	3 (18,8)	2 (12,5)	16
3 EYF	8 (21,1)	3 (7,9)	6 (15,8)	5 (13,2)	10 (26,3)	6 (15,8)	38
4 EYF	10 (21,7)	4 (8,7)	9 (19,6)	10 (21,7)	7 (15,2)	6 (13)	46
5 EYF	11 (26,1)	5 (11,9)	4 (9,52)	5 (11,9)	10 (23,8)	7 (16,6)	42
6 EYF	1 (33,3)	-	-	1 (33,3)	1 (33,3)	-	3
7 EYF	1 (50)	-	-	-	1 (50)	-	2
8 EYF	4 (26,6)	1 (6,7)	-	1 (6,7)	6 (40)	3 (20)	15
9 EYF	1 (25)	-	1 (25)	1 (25)	1 (25)	-	4
10 EYF	1 (20)	1 (20)	-	-	2 (40)	1 (20)	5
11 EYF	1 (25)	-	-	-	2 (50)	1 (25)	4
12 EYF	1 (25)	1 (25)	-	-	1 (25)	1 (25)	4

### Appendix 3: Publications

Appendix Nr.	Institution	Type	Date	URL
Appendix 3.3	EC	Council Conclusion	02.2005	<a href="https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/NewsWord/en/misc/84269.doc">https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/NewsWord/en/misc/84269.doc</a>
Appendix 3.4	EC	Draft Joint Employment Report	02.2006	<a href="http://aei.pitt.edu/40088/">http://aei.pitt.edu/40088/</a>
Appendix 3.5	EC	Council Conclusion	05.2006	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=3932&amp;langId=en">ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=3932&amp;langId=en</a>
Appendix 3.6	EC	Draft Joint Report on Social Protection and Inclusion	02.2007	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=2014&amp;langId=en">ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=2014&amp;langId=en</a>
Appendix 3.7	EC	Lunch Item	02.2010	<a href="http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&amp;f=ST%206842%202010%20INIT">http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&amp;f=ST%206842%202010%20INIT</a>
Appendix 3.8	EC	Joint Employment Report	03.2011	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/articles/eu_economic_situation/pdf/2011/com2011_11_annex3_en.pdf">http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/articles/eu_economic_situation/pdf/2011/com2011_11_annex3_en.pdf</a>
Appendix 3.9	EC	Council conclusion	06.2011	<a href="http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&amp;f=ST%2011838%202011%20INIT">http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&amp;f=ST%2011838%202011%20INIT</a>
Appendix 3.10	EC	Lunch Item	11.2011	<a href="http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&amp;f=ST%2017590%202011%20INIT">http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&amp;f=ST%2017590%202011%20INIT</a>
Appendix 3.11	EC	Policy Debate	01.2012	<a href="http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&amp;f=ST%205444%202012%20INIT">http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&amp;f=ST%205444%202012%20INIT</a>
Appendix 3.12	EC	Council Conclusion	10.2012	<a href="http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&amp;f=ST%2013907%202012%20INIT">http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&amp;f=ST%2013907%202012%20INIT</a>
Appendix 3.13	EC	Council Recommendation	03.2013	<a href="http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&amp;f=ST%206944%202013%20INIT">http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&amp;f=ST%206944%202013%20INIT</a>
Appendix 3.14	EC	Policy Debate	06.2013	<a href="http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/137549.pdf">http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/137549.pdf</a>
Appendix 3.15	EC	Council Conclusion	10.2013	<a href="http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/139022.pdf">http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/139022.pdf</a>
Appendix 3.16	EC	Adoption	11.2013	<a href="http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&amp;f=ST%2016178%202013%20INIT">http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&amp;f=ST%2016178%202013%20INIT</a>
Appendix 3.17	EC	Adoption	04.2014	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1089&amp;langId=en">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1089&amp;langId=en</a>
Appendix 3.18	EC	Council Conclusion	05.2014	<a href="http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/142694.pdf">http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/142694.pdf</a>
Appendix 3.19	EYF	Policy Paper	11.2005	<a href="http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2013/12/0716-05_Policy_Paper_NFE.pdf">http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2013/12/0716-05_Policy_Paper_NFE.pdf</a>
Appendix 3.20	EYF	Report p.1-8	09.2006	<a href="http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2013/12/0699-06Report_Inaugural_DialogueNFE-FINAL.pdf">http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2013/12/0699-06Report_Inaugural_DialogueNFE-FINAL.pdf</a>
Appendix 3.21	EYF	Policy Paper	05.2008	<a href="http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2013/11/0098-08_PP_ESM-FINAL.pdf">http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2013/11/0098-08_PP_ESM-FINAL.pdf</a>
Appendix 3.22	EYF	Position Paper on Youth Entrepreneurship	11.2011	<a href="http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2013/10/0451-11_YFJ_PP_Youth_Entrepreneurship-FINAL.pdf">http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2013/10/0451-11_YFJ_PP_Youth_Entrepreneurship-FINAL.pdf</a>
Appendix 3.23	EYF	Position Paper: Love Youth Future	11.2012	<a href="http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2013/10/0570-12_LYF_FINAL1.pdf">http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2013/10/0570-12_LYF_FINAL1.pdf</a>

Appendix 3.24	EYF	Reaction on Council Resolution	05.2014	<a href="http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2014/05/0192-14_Reaction-to-the-Resolution-for-EU-Work-Plan-for-Youth-Policy-2014-2015.pdf">http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2014/05/0192-14_Reaction-to-the-Resolution-for-EU-Work-Plan-for-Youth-Policy-2014-2015.pdf</a>
Appendix 3.25	EYF	Press Relies	05.2014	<a href="http://intranet.youthforum.org/newsletters/node/79429">http://intranet.youthforum.org/newsletters/node/79429</a>
Appendix 3.26	EYF	Reaction on Council Resolution	05.2014	<a href="http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2014/05/0191-14_Reaction-to-the-Council-Resolution-on-SD.pdf">http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2014/05/0191-14_Reaction-to-the-Council-Resolution-on-SD.pdf</a>
Appendix 3.27	EYF	Press Relies	05.2014	<a href="http://www.youthforum.org/latest-news/the-european-youth-forum-meets-high-level-decision-makers-on-the-margins-of-the-eu-council-for-youth/">http://www.youthforum.org/latest-news/the-european-youth-forum-meets-high-level-decision-makers-on-the-margins-of-the-eu-council-for-youth/</a>
Appendix 3.28	EYF	Press Relies	06.2014	<a href="http://www.youthforum.org/pressreleases/european-council-priorities-weak-and-show-lack-of-commitment-to-europes-youth/">http://www.youthforum.org/pressreleases/european-council-priorities-weak-and-show-lack-of-commitment-to-europes-youth/</a>
Appendix 3.29	EYF	Claim Quality Education	2014	<a href="http://www.youthforum.org/claims/quality-education/">http://www.youthforum.org/claims/quality-education/</a>
Appendix 3.30	EYF	Claim Quality Jobs	2014	<a href="http://www.youthforum.org/claims/quality-jobs/">http://www.youthforum.org/claims/quality-jobs/</a>