

Precarious Lives: Job Insecurity and Well-Being in Rich Democracies



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Precarious Lives

Job Insecurity
and
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in Rich
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Overview

- **The Recent Rise of Precarious Work in the Rich Democracies** (and everywhere else)
- **Explaining Precarious Work: Patterns and Consequences of Precarious Work**
- **Confronting Precarious Work: Politics and Policies**

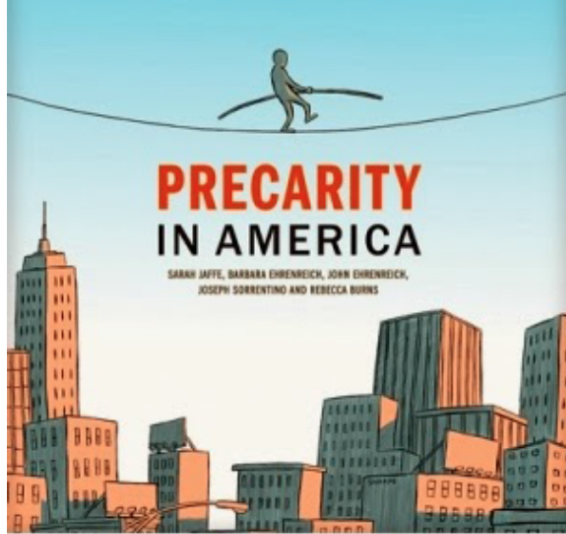
Precarious Work

➤ Work that is:

- **Risks borne by workers** (vs. employers or the state)
- **Insecure and Uncertain**
- **Limited income and benefits**
- **Little potential for better jobs**

➤ *Examples:*

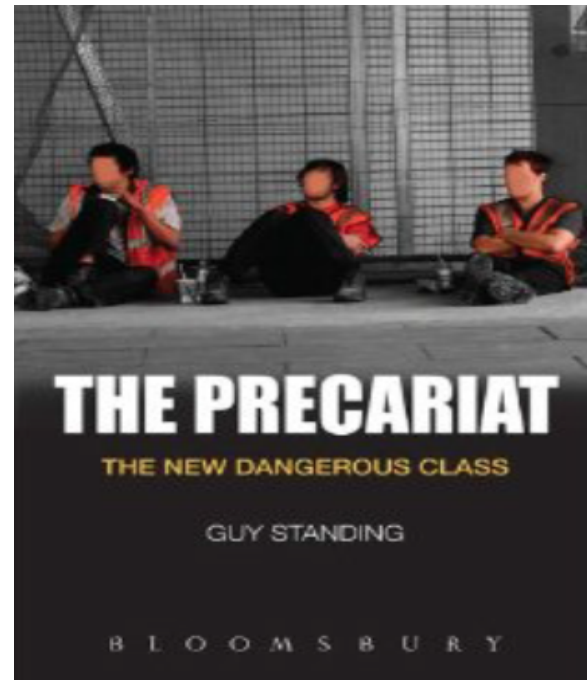
- **Informal economy work**
- **Temporary work**
- **Some “gig economy” jobs**
- **> Insecurity in “regular” jobs in the formal economy**



In These Times, January 2014

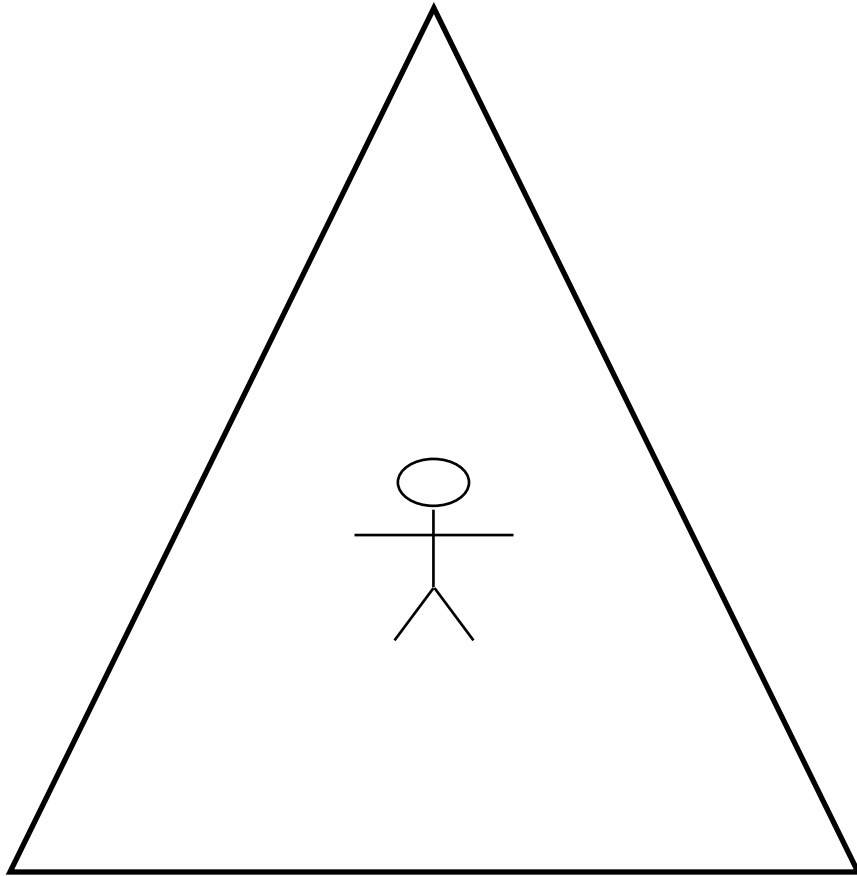


"America the Anxious",
Newsweek August 2012



I. The Recent Rise of Precarious Work in Rich Democracies

Standard Employment Relationship



- Pillars:
 - Bilateral Employment Relation
 - Standardized Hours
 - Continuous Employment
- Access to
 - Regulatory protections
 - Training
 - Careers
- Adult Male Citizens (Male breadwinner model)
- Fordist Manufacturing

1975-Present

COUNTRY DIFFERENCES in Liberalization
Policies and their Consequences

Changing Economic Structures

Globalization

Technology

Deregulation of
Markets

↓ Unions



Standard
Employment
Relationship



Precarious
Work

Changing Workers

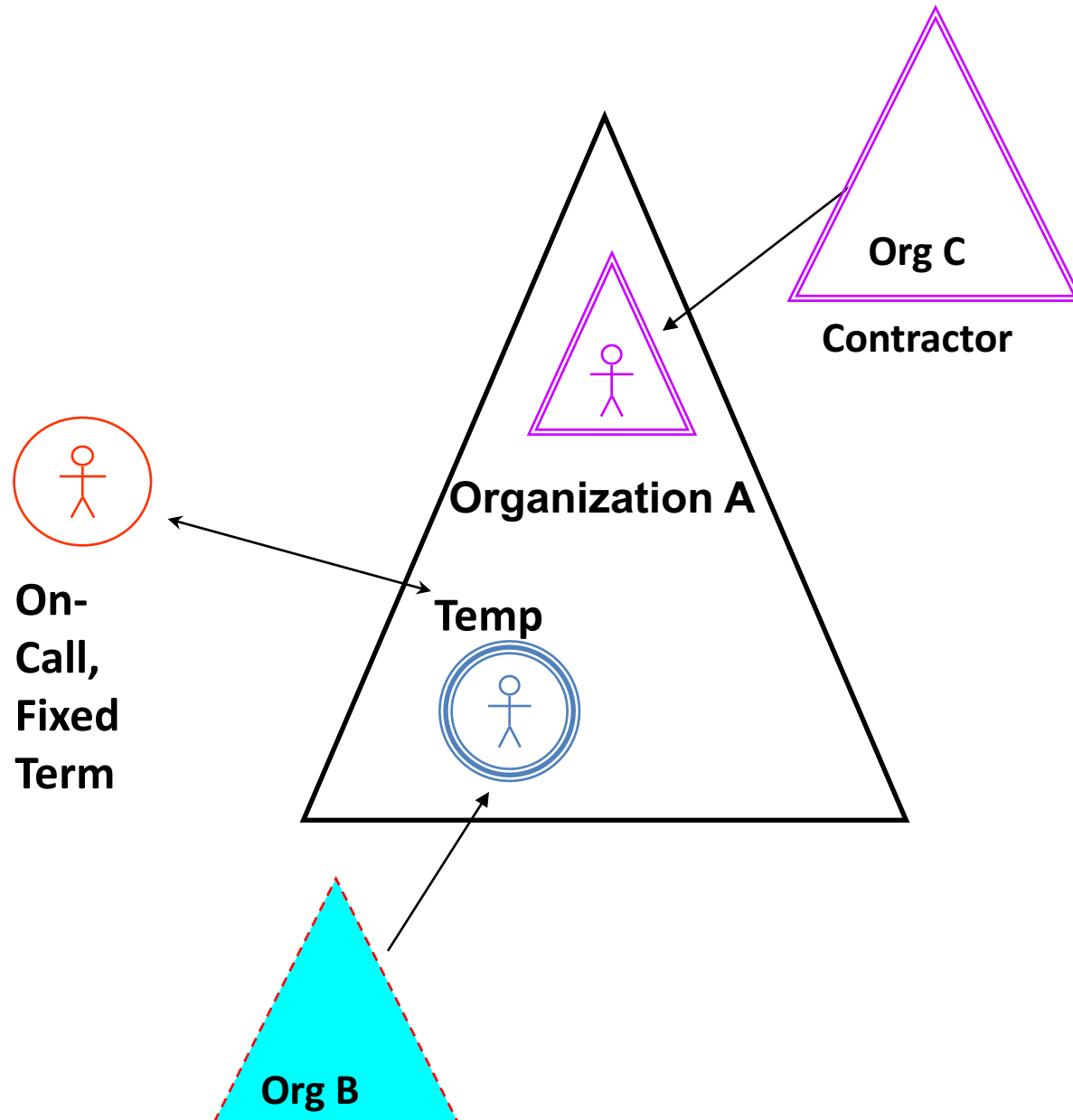
Women in LF

Education

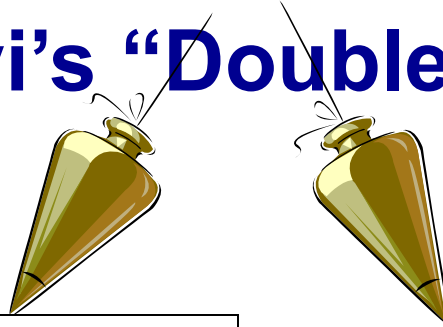
Immigration

Shift in Employment Norms

Nonstandard Employment Relations



Karl Polanyi's "Double Movement"



1870

Economic Liberalism

Market-Mediated ER

High \neq

PW: Insecurity

1930

Social Protection

Social Contract

Relative Equality

Stability & Security

1975

Economic Liberalism:

Market-Mediated ER

High \neq

PW: Insecurity

2007-9

2017

Social Protection??



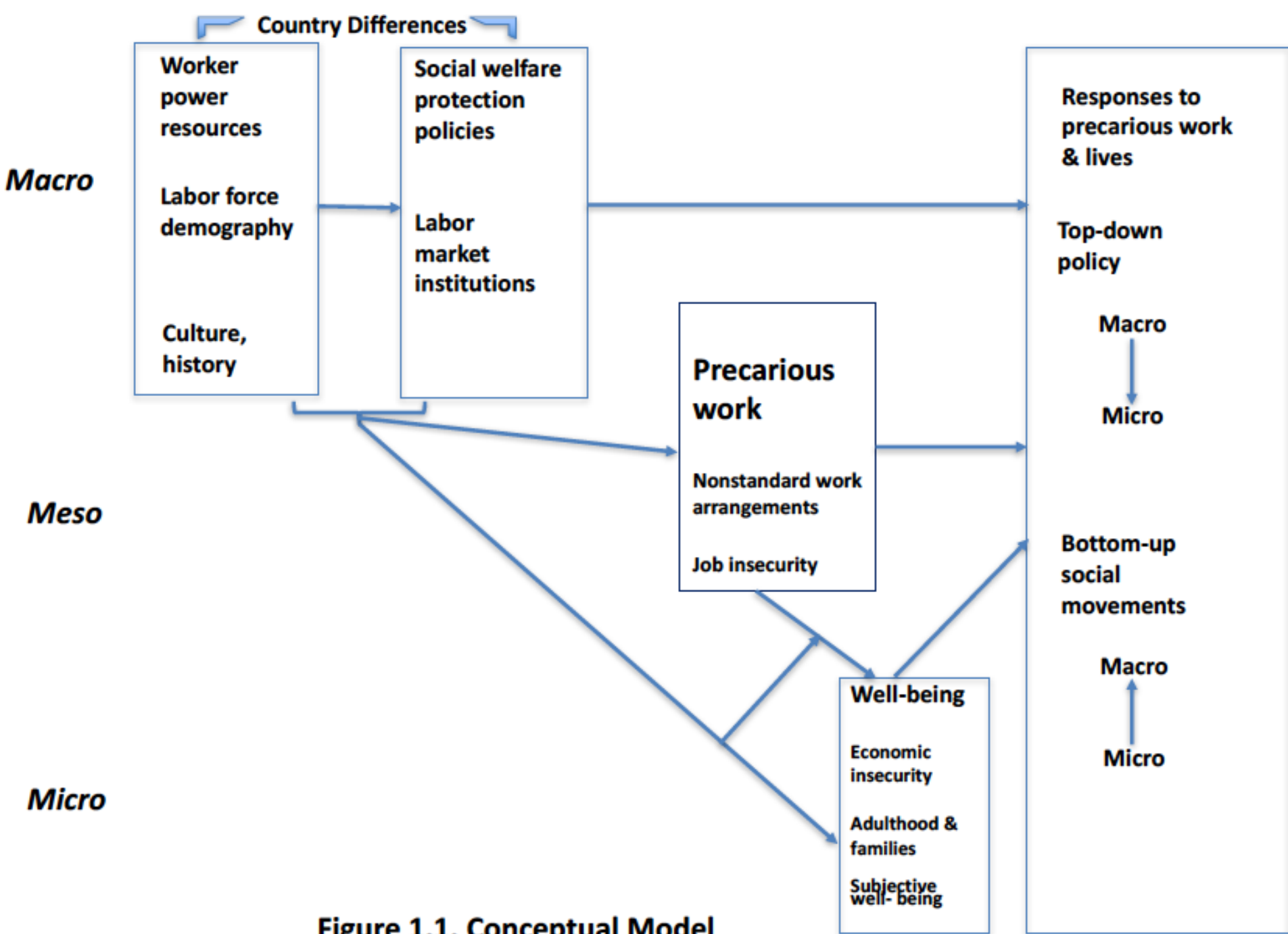


Figure 1.1. Conceptual Model

II. Cross-National Patterns and Consequences of Precarious Work

Countries and Employment/Welfare Regimes (*Rich Democracies*)

➤ **Liberal Market Economies:**



➤ **Coordinated Market Economies:**



➤ **Mediterranean:**



➤ **Productivist:**

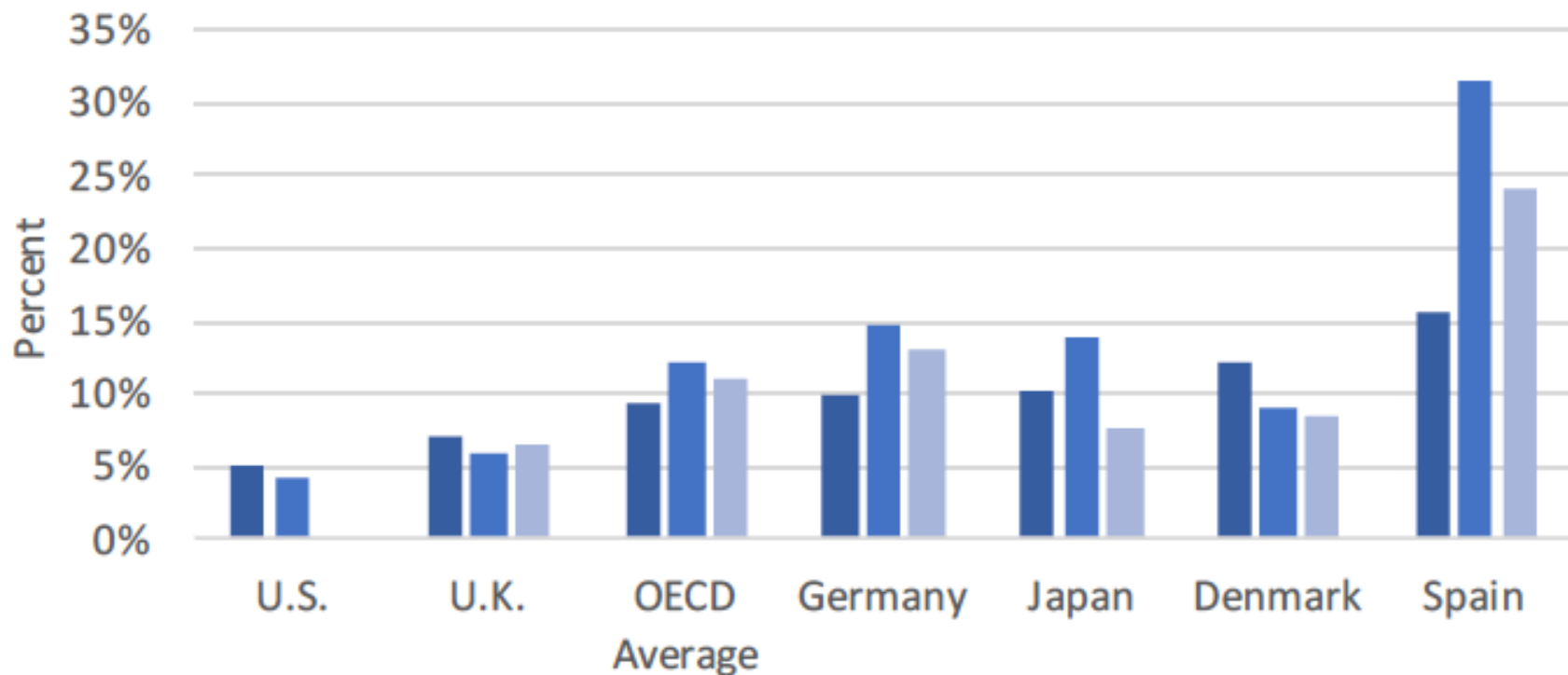


Forms of Liberalization

- **Deregulatory Liberalization** (U.S., U.K)
 - Increased marketization/decline of institutional protections; individualization of risk
- **Dualism** (Germany, Japan, Spain)
 - Growing gaps between regular and nonstandard workers; labor market insiders and outsiders
- **Embedded Flexibilization** (Denmark)
 - Market liberalization, collectivization of risk

Percent of workers in temporary employment

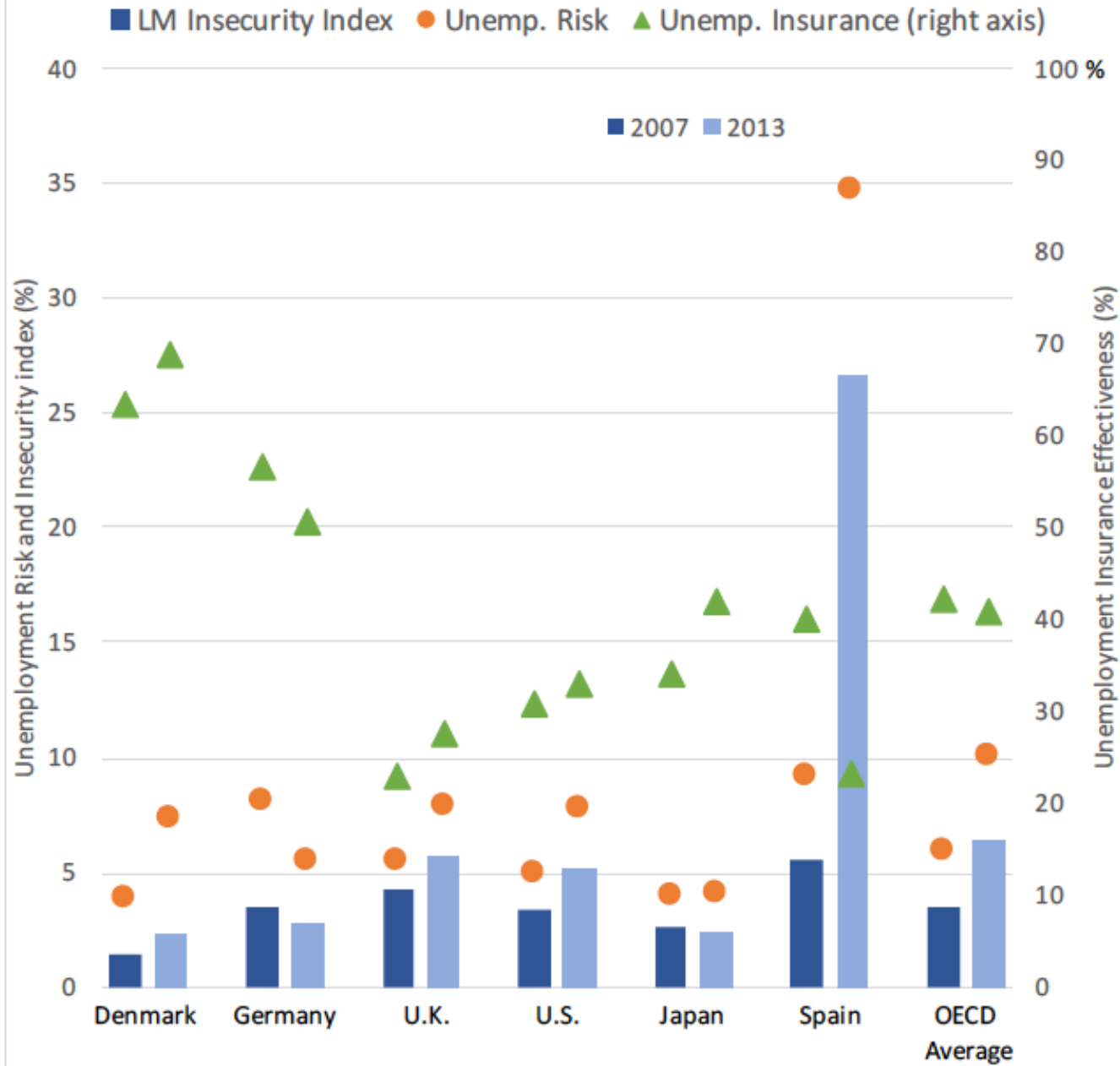
■ 1985* ■ 2007* ■ 2014



*Spain 1987; U.S. 1995 & 2005

Source: OECD Employment Database 2015

OECD Labor Market Insecurity 2007 and 2013



III. Confronting Precarious Work: Politics and Policies

Mass Mobilizations



Indignados in Spain



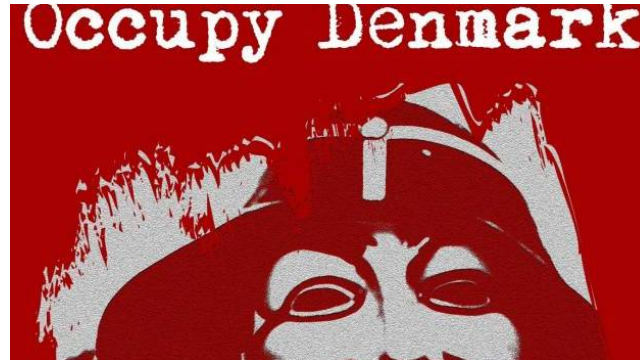
Occupy Wall Street



Occupy London



Occupy Berlin



Occupy Denmark



Occupy Tokyo

Political Movements



Politics and Precarious Work

- Economic globalization and rapidity of technological change are inexorable forces
- But precarious work and its consequences are *not* determined only by technology or globalization
- Social actors can create economic, political and social conditions that ease the consequences of precarious work

New Risks Require a New Social and Political Accord

➤ Collectivize Risk

- Social insurance and economic security not tied to employment with a particular employer**

➤ Social Investments in Education and Skills

- Broader Access**
- Retraining, Lifelong Learning**

➤ Revise Labor Laws

➤ Manage Diversity

- Gender, Age, Family, Immigration Status, Race/Ethnicity, Etc.**

Implementing a New Social and Political Contract

- Need **government** policy to:
 - Provide social protections (health, pensions, economic security, etc.)
 - Facilitate education and training systems
 - Broker and sustain coalitions between employers and workers
 - Balance interests of employers and workers (e.g., via flexicurity)
 - **National vs. Local Regions (e.g., communities)** as sites of policy implementation (e.g., Principle of *Subsidiarity*).
 - Examples of State-level policies in the U.S.: CA and NJ family-leave laws; State differences in UI, minimum wage laws, private-public (e.g., community college-business) partnerships, etc.
- Need greater solidarity among **organized labor and social movement organizations** and between mutual interests of **regular** and **precarious workers** (e.g., meritocracy, gender equality, work-family relations)
- Need greater sense of social responsibility/concern by **business** (A long-standing challenge is balancing interests of large vs. small businesses.)

Obstacles to Acceptance of New Social Contracts

- **Dominance of Neoliberal Ideology**
- **Shift from Manufacturing to Services**
 - **Greater need for precarious work arrangements**
 - **Reconfiguration of post-WW II employer/labor/state coalitions**
- **Globalization**
- **Weakening of the State**
 - **Distrust of Government (and big institutions generally)**
- **Weak/Weakening Labor Movements**
- **Legacy of Great Recession and Economic Crisis**

Possible Future Scenarios

> Dystopian

- Continued expansion of **BJ** and Precarious Work (Low pay, poor benefits insecurity, dead-end jobs, scheduling uncertainty); “Uberization” of economy
- Weak economic growth
- Continued increase in Inequality

> Utopian

- Expansion of **GJ**, perhaps fueled by revival of local areas as locus of economic activity
- Decoupling of social protections and income from paid work
- Enlargement of notion of “work” beyond market-based work