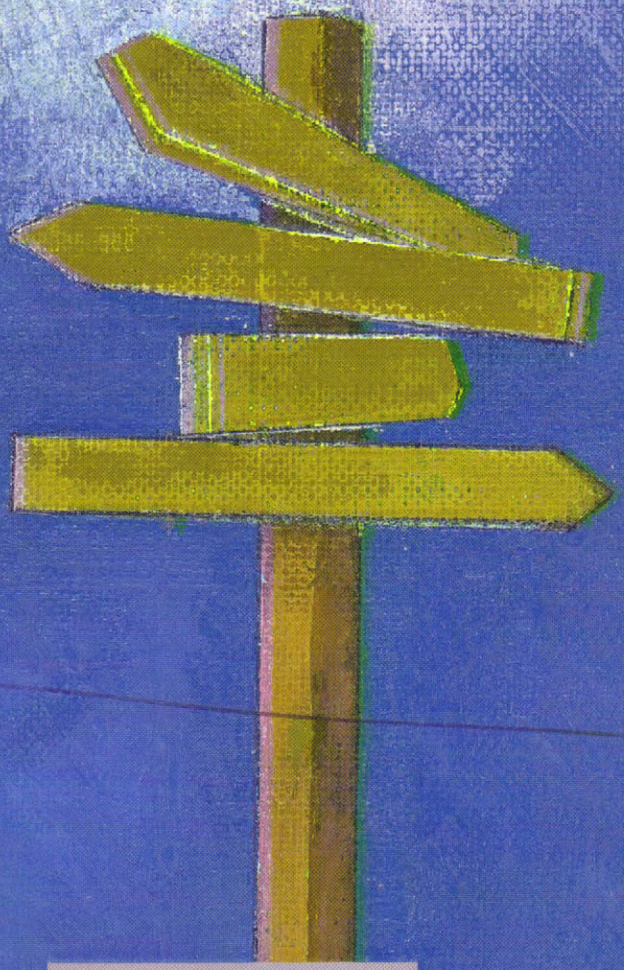
N O V A

Youth Unemployment and Marginalisation in Northern Europe

Andy Furlong & Torild Hammer (eds.)



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ANDY FURLONG AND TORILD HAMMER
(EDITORS)

Norwegian Social Research
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Preface

This report presents the main results from a comparative research project funded by the European commission, the fourth framework programme, TSER for the period 1997 to 1999. Torild Hammer has co-ordinated the project: "Youth unemployment and marginalisation processes on the northern European periphery." The study has also received funding from the commission's youth research programme: "Youth for Europe" as well as additional national funding from the different countries involved. The project has been extended by a new contract with the commission. Information about research partners, publication list etc can be found on the project's home page:

http://www.isaf.no/nova/fou/Hammer/Unemployment.htm.

The report is based on different articles and reports which have been written individually by the different research partners in the project. These are articles that have been submitted or are forthcoming in different international journals. These articles constitute the main report of the first EU contract of the project, from 1997 to 1999. They are based on the same data set and the same project and we wanted all the articles to be available together in a common report.

Oslo, February 2001

Andy Furlong *Torild Hammer*

Contents

Introduction

This report is based on the different articles and reports published by the research group. The research group includes research teams from seven European contries in northern Europe: Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Finland, Scotland and Ireland. All the partners in the group have made a contribution. In the first part of the report we present some of the main research problems in the study. Then we describe the survey samples and attrition rates in each country, and the research design. In the third part of the report we present the main results based upon eight different articles produced by the researchers in different countries.

Throughout the European Union, rates of unemployment among young people tend to be higher than among the general population and there is a serious risk of marginalisation and exclusion (EC, 1994). In1998, the rate of youth unemployment within the EU was around 20%, more than twice the rate experienced by adults (9%). In other words, about 40% of the unemployed were less than 25 years old, although this age group comprises only 20% of the total labour force. Moreover, this increase in youth unemployment has occurred despite a demographic decrease in youth and an increased level of educational participation within most member states. The EU countries have 8 million young unemployed people, and 40% of them are long-term unemployed, i.e. unemployed for more than one year (OECD, 1998). Different countries have handled these problems in different ways, both regarding labour market measures and welfare policy.

The main objectives of our study was to analyse the career of unemployed youth, and factors which influenced the probability of finding a job or re-enter education. In countries with different labour-market and educational policies, unemployed youth can end up in work, education, employment schemes or permanent unemployment.

Surveys were carried out among representative samples of 2,000-4,000 young unemployed people in Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Scotland. The samples were drawn from national unemployment registers, and the respondents were young people between the ages of 18 and 24 who had been unemployed for a period of at least three months over the previous six months. The final sample consisted of 2,386 young unemployed people in Finland, 4,000 in Sweden, 2,000 in Iceland

and Norway, and 1,500 in Denmark and 1500 in Scotland. The surveys were carried out in 1996/1997, and were initially based on postal questionnaires, with additional telephone interviews carried out to minimise the bias caused by a skewed response rate.

The response rate in the surveys reached 73 per cent in Finland, 60 per cent in Iceland, 56 per cent in Norway, 63 per cent in Sweden, 55 per cent in Scotland and 79 per cent in Denmark. The entire sample consists of 8600 unemployed young people, aged 18-24 years across six countries in northern Europe.

In Ireland, the researchers were denied access to the unemployment register. It was therefore impossible to use the same survey design. The Irish research team therefore used the ECHP (European Community Household Panel) data from Ireland and eight other European countries of unemployed youth in the same age group. The first chapter in this report by Jan Carle gives a broader description of methods and research design.

The study focus on a number of different research questions which ultimately help to provide an explanation of the ways in which unemployment experiences may lead to social marginalisation or exclusion: How are different levels of youth unemployment in different countries with different educational, labour market and social policies related to marginalization processes, and how do different career trajectories lead to the integration or social exclusion of young people? Are there different careers for males and females?

How are young people's trajectories related to the previously identified problems such as mental health problems and drug use?

Is continuos unemployment related to political orientation and political participation among youth?

How is the relationship between the unemployment career and social exclusion?

Why do some young unemployed people re-enter the educational system while others do not?

What factors determine the transition from unemployment to employment in different countries?

These questions are addressed by the authors of the different articles in the report.

Ira Malmberg-Heimonen and Ilse Julkunen analyse the gendered transitions in the labour market career. The labour market remains highly gendered even though women's participation in working life has increased The percentage of women in paid work is lower, they work more part-time and employment growth has been mainly concentrated in the service industries and occupations where their presence was already strong. The gender differences in the labour market are linked to the fact that women take greater responsibility for unwaged care work at home and in the community. Motherhood has a great impact on the employment participation rate. In general, mothers in Europe have lower employment rates than women without children.

The impact of children on participation in working life among mothers varies in different countries however. In the UK, women with small children are more often economically inactive compared to women without children. The trend is the opposite in the Nordic countries: mothers with small children have higher levels of economic activity than childless women. Recent statistics also indicate that economic inactivity among women with children mainly affects those with a low level of education. Among unemployed youth in the age group 18 to 24 years old, a higher proportion of females than males have children. The article analyses gender differences in work involvement and job search activity, which influence the unemployment career differently for males and females. The article has been submitted to International Journal of Social Welfare.

Thordis Sigurdardottir and Thoroddur Bjarnason analyse the relationship between psychological distress and unemployment and the importance of social support. In addition to economic cost of youth unemployment for both the young and their societies, there are considerable social and psychological costs involved. Unemployed people experience worse physical health and higher levels of psychological distress, including depression, anxiety and low self-esteem. In general, research suggests that the longer unemployment lasts, the more severe the adverse effects of unemployment on individual well being become The vast literature on social support demonstrates the importance of close emotional ties and practical help in times of distress. Indeed, there is strong evidence of social support buffering the effects of unemployment on individual well being. Social support is a multidimensional construct, and the effects of such support on individual well being may vary across contexts and by the type of support involved. Unemployed youth who enjoy parental support are more likely than others

to find a job, but relatively little is known about the importance of different types of social support in different labour market outcomes over time. The article addresses these questions and analyses the moderating effect of social support. The article has been submitted to an American journal called Youth & Society.

A lot of research has been carried out regarding the labour market career among previously unemployed youth. However, for unemployed youth, return to post-compulsory education is another important option. This is especially important in the current situation in European labour markets.

First, because previous research has found that unemployed youth have low education and often lack qualifications demanded in the labour market. Declining youth cohorts from the middle of the eighties, may imply an increased demand for young people in the labour market in many European countries. To give unemployed youth better qualifications seem to be an adequate measure. Second, better qualifications may help the less advantage group and thereby redistribute unemployment more evenly among young people. If unemployment does not hit one especially marginalised group, but is more evenly distributed, it would not have such adverse consequences. Many European countries increase places in education in order to combat youth unemployment. However, we know very little about who among unemployed youth do re-enter education and under what conditions. The article by Torild Hammer addresses these questions and analysees the importance of social and educational capital for the probability of entering education or employment in countries with different educational systems. The article has been submitted to European Societies.

An often-discussed thesis in social research is the association between unemployment and political behaviour. The empirical facts that support this are however not that clear as they seem to be in the public debate.

One of consequences that is widely discussed in research is if a person's possibilities to take an active part in political matters really are associated with the position in the labour market. There are basically two main arguments concerning this connection. The first one claims a clear connection between the two while the other one says that this is hard to say. Broadly speaking the first argument falls back on research from the well known Marienthal study during the 30s where the evidence showed that unemployed people are less interested in politics. Unemployed tend to

participate less in political activity and they also tend to pay less attention to information about political issues. They also tend to feel that they have less capacity to control their life situation. These types of results are until today reported in a variety of studies from many different countries. But at the same time a variety of studies also indicate that there are no clear connection between unemployment and political activity. There is, in fact, no clear evidence that unemployment produces alienation from politics The indication of political alienation is less clear than it seems to be in the public debate. There is also evidence showing that unemployment does not influence young people political behaviour at all. Instead, it seems that other factors besides unemployment play an important role and interplay with people's political activity f ex gender, family background, social class, origin of birth within and outside the country.

Jan Carle has in his article about unemployment and political participation analysed three interesting indicators of political activity. These indicators are: what type of political activity the young people (I) have participated in, (II) would consider to participate in, (III) and would not consider participating in, (IV) and finally political attitudes measured as the common used left and right scale. The article has been accepted in 'Young', Nordic Journal of Youth Research.

Hans Uldall-Poulsen analyses the impact of different protection systems for unemployed youth in the five Nordic countries. In all the Nordic countries an extensive social security net exists with the object of securing people in case of unemployment. Primarily, public support consists of either unemployment insurance benefits or social assistance benefits and in most cases the unemployment insurance benefit payment is considerably higher than the social assistance benefit payment.

In the unemployment systems of the Nordic countries it is possible to distinguish between the insured and the non-insured. The insurance systems of the individual countries vary considerably, for instance, all the employees in Norway are automatically included in an insurance system, while the choice of insurance status in Denmark is voluntary. In Finland and Sweden the employees are covered by an obligatory minimum insurance, while the choice of additional insurance as a supplement to the minimum insurance is voluntary.

The level of unemployment benefit that a claimant is entitled to in case of unemployment, depends on insurance status as well as work experi-

ence, as the payment of unemployment benefits is provided on the condition that the unemployed person previous to the unemployment spell has gained a certain amount of work experience. The article focuses on the connection between the criteria of unemployment benefits and on the composition of the groups of «unemployment benefit claimants» and «social benefit claimants», and explains the consequences of the unemployment benefit system regarding the connection between form of support and life situation. The article is published as working paper no.5: 2000 by The Danish National Institute of Social Research.

Andy Furlong and Fred Cartmel analyse in their article the relationship between unemployment trajectories and social exclusion. For many, unemployment represents a temporary stage in an otherwise smooth and predictable trajectory. Yet it is clear that others find it extremely difficult to escape from unemployment Social exclusion can be regarded as a process in which dominant groups exclude outsiders so as to protect their own position or to a lack of resources which results in inadequate social participation, lack of social protection, lack of social integration and lack of power. Exclusion is not simply linked to a prevailing situation of an individual or group, but is also linked to future prospects and draws on past experience. As Atkinson argues, 'people are excluded not just because they are currently without a job or income, but because they have few prospects for the future' (1998: 6). In this sense, exclusion is also related to past labour market experiences which may leave 'people feeling that they lack control of their lives' (O'Brien, 1986). In other words, the concept of social exclusion is used to highlight dynamic linkages between material situations and attitudes and values which may be seen as reinforcing a situation of disadvantage. It underlines the ways in which disadvantage in one dimension of life can result in a new and more debilitating set of disadvantages.

The authors use cluster analysis in order to study the unemployment career among unemployed youth across countries, and how these trajectories are related to different dimensions of social exclusion. The article is forthcoming in Furåker, B. (ed): Employment, Unemployment and Marginalisation: Studies in Contemporary Labour Markets. Gottenburg University Press, Gottenburg 2001.

Helen Russell and Philip O'Connell use the European Community Household Panel data (ECHP) to analyse transitions from unemployment

to employment. They have focused on the process of getting a job, using event history data to analyse the transition from unemployment to employment among young people in nine European countries. This allows them to compare across different countries, and therefore between differing institutional settings, how the employment prospects of young unemployed people are affected by their personal characteristics such as age, gender and educational attainment, as well as by previous employment experience and unemployment duration. The article is forthcoming in the journal of Work, Employment and Society.

In the last article Anne Hammarstrom has analysed the relationship between unemployment, health, drug use and use of alcohol. The unemployed group clearly reports more health problems than those in employment in all countries. She does not find any relationship between unemployment and use of alcohol. However, drug use is related to unemployment. Poverty is strongly related to health problems as well as drug use. Young unemployed men in urban areas report the highest prevalence of drug use.

Jan Carle

Method and research design

Research design

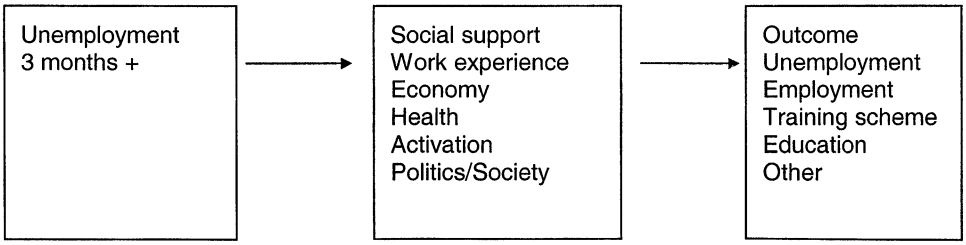
We used marginalisation as the leading concept. The main research question was to study to what degree position on the labour market correlates with other social circumstances in the life situation of young people.

Different aspects of marginalisation in relation to youth unemployment are highlighted and analysed in the study. We chose the following different dimensions of marginalisation and integration:

- employment
- family situation
- living conditions
- social network
- politics and society.

The study is cross-sectional. At one point of time, a group of young people who had been at least 3 months continuously unemployed during the first half of the year was selected as a sample. Thus, we chose to study a group, which, according to marginalisation theories, had a more problematic relationship with one central area: employment. The crucial question is, then, to what extent can this position be interpreted as problematic in relation to other domains as well? To what extent does this covary with access to other resources and with the individual capacity of the young people involved?

The research design can be illustrated as follows:



At the time when the samples were drawn, all of the young people in our study were unemployed. Approximately a 6-12 months after, when they were interviewed, the situation had changed. What factors had an influence on this outcome? We chose a certain number of variables to investigate this relationship:

- social support
- work experience
- unemployment experiences
- financial situation
- health situation
- experiences of labour-market schemes
- political attitudes.

From an analytical perspective, however, it is not self-evident how these variables should be regarded. Do they reflect circumstances that can be influenced by an outcome, or are they more permanently structured? To deal with the time dimension we included different time perspectives in our questions under the assumption that certain variables are stable enough to be regarded as being able to influence employment outcome.

We chose this research strategy in order to shed light on how different degrees of marginalisation, or rather different levels of integration into the labour market, may be related to other circumstances in the lives of the young people in our study. Our aim was also to be able to form an opinion on the processes of marginalisation in terms of the relationship between the outcome of unemployment and differences in the life situations of young people.

In countries with different labour-market and educational policies, unemployed youth can end up in work, education, employment schemes or permanent unemployment.

Surveys were carried out among representative samples of 2,000-4,000 young unemployed people in Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Scotland. The samples were drawn from national unemployment registers, and the respondents were young people between the ages of 18

and 24 who had been unemployed for a period of at least three months over the previous six months. The final sample consisted of 2,386 young unemployed people in Finland, 4,000 in Sweden, 2,000 in Iceland and Norway, and 1,500 in Denmark and 1500 in Scotland. The surveys were carried out in 1996/1997, and were initially based on postal questionnaires, with additional telephone interviews carried out to minimise the bias caused by a skewed response rate.

The response rate in the surveys reached 73 per cent in Finland, 60 per cent in Iceland, 56 per cent in Norway, 63 per cent in Sweden, 55% in Scotland and 79 per cent in Denmark. The entire sample consists of 8600 unemployed young people, aged 18-24 years.

In Ireland, the researchers were denied access to the unemployment register. It was therefore impossible to use the same survey design. The Irish research team therefore used the ECHP (European Community Household Panel) data from Ireland and eight other European countries of unemployed youth in the same age group.

Collecting the survey data

The questionnaire was addressed to unemployed young people aged 18-24 years. We decided on the following criterion in our sample: *at least 3 months of continuous unemployment during the first half of 1995 in the five Nordic countries.* In Scotland, the sample included the same criteria, the first half year of 1997. This allowed us to focus on the group defined in the Nordic countries (with some exceptions) as long-term unemployed youth. It would have been both interesting and fruitful to include a randomly selected group of young people as a reference group to see if there were any marked differences between our chosen group and a randomly selected sample of the whole youth population. We counted on making comparisons on the basis of existing register data. Still, the primary reason for not including a control group was that we wanted to compare the unemployment situation in the countries at first hand. We did expect that, even within the group we had selected, a considerable number of young people would be employed at the time of the interviews, and this would guarantee variations in the group. We were thus able to focus on the question of what groups remained unemployed and what groups gained employment or re-entered education.

Sample

The criteria for the sampling procedure were the same as in the research design. The statistical representativeness was controlled on the basis of region, unemployment level, unemployment duration, gender and education. The sample was drawn from national unemployment registers and included young people who were receiving either flat-rate benefits or unemployment insurance payments. The following criteria have to be fulfilled to be included in the register:

- 17-64 years of age
- capable of work
- job seeker at the employment office
- looking for full-time work.

Attrition analysis

The Finnish register material comprises information concerning the age, residence, education, employment and unemployment of the young people in the study, and also the municipal unemployment level. It also gives information on the unemployment and employment spells of the young people during 1992-1995.

The Finnish sample consisted of 2,386 persons. A total of 1,736 young people responded to the questionnaire, which gives a response rate of 73 per cent. Seven age classes were included, the oldest subjects being born in 1970 and thus 24 years old at the time of the sample. The youngest were born in 1976 and thus 18 years old at the time of the sample. The 19- and 20-year-olds were the groups with proportionally the highest response rate, nearly 80 per cent, while it was 70 per cent for the 18- and 23-year-olds. The response rate was lowest among the 24-year-olds, 62 per cent. Of the women 78 per cent responded, and 69 per cent of the men and women were thus somewhat over-represented in the material. Concerning variables such as education and unemployment duration, the analysis showed that there were no significant differences between the entire sample and the respondents. The attrition analysis on the local unemployment level showed

that young people from average unemployment areas (17-22 per cent) were slightly under-represented, whereas those from high unemployment areas (>22 per cent) were slightly over-represented (cf. Julkunen & Malmberg-Heimonen 1998).

Iceland

Sample

The sample was selected from the same age groups as in the other Nordic countries but there were some different sampling procedures. The questionnaire was sent out to those who were registered as unemployed at the 20 different unemployment offices all over Iceland. The sample consisted of young unemployed people with at least 2 months of unemployment or longer during the first half of 1995. The total number of unemployed young people is relatively small in Iceland, particularly in comparison with the other Nordic countries (the population of Iceland is approximately 270,000, which corresponds to the population of Bergen). Due to the small numbers of unemployed and particularly long-term unemployed young people in Iceland, the research was carried out as a total study in which almost every person who was unemployed at the time of the sample was included. This created some problems in the statistical analysis, which assumes random sampling. The following rules are applicable for being registered as unemployed in Iceland:

- Wage-earner who has worked at least 425 hours during the previous 12 months before becoming unemployed (has also the right to receive compensation from the unemployment insurance fund).
- Looking for work, older than 16 years but younger than 70 years, and live in Iceland or in another EEC country.
- The unemployed are required to provide certification from an employment office that they have been unemployed for at least 3 whole days at the beginning of the period for which the unemployment compensation is applied.
- Private entrepreneurs have the same rights as wage-earners, provided that they fulfil all the basic criteria and can prove that their business has been closed down.

The questionnaire was answered by altogether 1,290 persons, which gave a response rate of 60 per cent. The sample consisted of 53 per cent of men and 47 per cent of women, with 70 per cent of the women answering the questionnaire and 61 per cent of the men. Thus, women are slightly over-represented in the material.

Norway

Sample

A total of 97,934 young people aged 18-24 years were registered as unemployed at some time during the first half of 1995, and 19 per cent of these were long-term unemployed (>3 months). The sample was selected from among those who had been at least 3 months continuously unemployed during the period (1.1.-30.6.1995), and who were looking for a full-time job. The group consisted of 39,020 persons, of which 17,909 were unemployed at the time of the sample. From this population 2,000 people were selected. The sample seems representative of the population (39,020) in terms of key characteristics that can be controlled through the register. When it comes to age there was a slight over-representation of the older age groups in the sample.

Attrition analysis

Altogether 1,106 people answered the questionnaire, which gave a response rate of 56 per cent. The register data was coupled to the information of those young people in our study who had given their permission (85 per cent) (n=944). It is possible to use register information of the whole sample (n=2,000) to analyse eventual skewness which may affect the possibility of making generalisations from the sample.

In the attrition analysis we compared the sample with the respondents regarding very extensive register information. There were no differences between the sample and the respondents with regard to: proportion who had received benefits, the length of the unemployment period, total experience of unemployment, school dropout from compulsory school, previous work experience, proportion without any relevant work experience or education, or place of residence. The only difference was that 22.9 per cent in the sample had only compulsory school education or had no qualifications, compared with 16.1 per cent among the respondents. The difference is statistically significant (z=4.47). However, more among the respondents

had only one or two years of vocational education compared to the sample where more had completed a full vocational education. There were no differences with regard to other educational categories. Contrary to expectations and despite a low response rate, the attrition can not be considered skewed.

Sweden

Sample

The criteria applied to the sample were the same as in the research as a whole. The sample was selected through the AMS (The Labour Market Board) who made a random sample among people registered as unemployed in HÄNDEL, the database on people actively seeking work. There are no formal limitations to being included in the register other than having gone to an employment office and reported to be looking for a job. The next phase comprised coding the different categories, e.g. student, working, unemployed. The sample therefore consisted of people registered as unemployed (which excludes full-time students and retired persons).

Attrition analysis

There was a total of 801,093 young people aged 18-24 in Sweden in 1995. During the first half of the year there were on average 82,000 unemployed people aged 16-24 per month (AKU). This gives a sample fraction of 1.2 per cent of the unemployed young people during the sample period.

The sample comprised 4,000 persons (two persons were excluded due to technical problems, and the net sample was therefore 3,998). There were altogether 1,853 women (46 per cent) and 2,147 men (54 per cent). The questionnaire was answered by 2,534 persons, 1,247 women and 1,287 men, which gives a response rate of 63 per cent. The questionnaire was answered by 49 per cent of women and 51 per cent men. The response rate among the women was 67 per cent and 60 per cent among the men.

The attrition consists of 1,084 persons. An attrition analysis was carried out on the basis of information from the register material. Due to technical problems, however, a comparison between the sample and the respondents could not be completed for all. Information on 191 respondents (97 women and 94 men) was not included in the attrition analysis.

The attrition analysis showed that there were no statistical differences when comparing citizenship, work handicap and place of residence. Men turned out to have been 22.8 weeks unemployed on average, compared with 20.9 weeks among the respondents. Unemployment among women was on the average 8.9 weeks in the attrition and 9.7 weeks among the respondents.

Denmark

Sample

The sample was randomly drawn from the Central Unemployment Register (CRAM) in which all unemployed are currently registered. Most unemployed people (about 85 per cent) and the main part of the labour force (about 80 per cent) are a member of an unemployment insurance fund. Both insured and non-insured are registered in the Register. The non-insured unemployed are persons receiving social assistance from the local authorities. However, many persons receiving social assistance are not registered as unemployed in the Central Unemployment Register. This means that some non-insured young people without employment are not registered as unemployed in the register. Therefore, and because of the limited size of sample it was decided only to include insured young unemployed persons in the present study.

The population from which the Danish sample was drawn was defined in the following way:

- Insured persons in the age of 19-24 years (1.1.1995) with a total of less than 3 months in the second half-year of 1994, and with more than 13 weeks of unemployment in the last 26 weeks before week 1-26 in 1995.

Consequently, the population consists of young insured persons with more than 3 months of unemployment in the last 26 weeks before weeks 1-26 in the first half-year of 1995. Or put it more simply, the Danish population consists of young insured persons having been unemployed more than 3 months. From this population (about 12,000 persons) a simple random sample 1,500 persons was drawn. Of these, 19 persons had invalid person identification numbers. Consequently, the effective sample consisted of 1,481 persons to whom the questionnaire was sent. Those who did not answer

were contacted by interviews (by telephone). The questionnaire was answered by 1,171 persons, which gave a response rate of 79 per cent.

Attrition analysis

The questionnaire was answered by 83 per cent of the women and 78 per cent of the men. This difference is statistically significant ($p<0.001$). The response rate did not depend on age, but young people from the eastern part of Denmark (Copenhagen and the islands) answered generally to a smaller extent than young unemployed people in the western part of Denmark. There were no statistically significant differences with regard to the duration of previous unemployment.

As mentioned, the Danish sample only includes insured persons. In general, it is to be expected that the insured unemployed category comprise of "stronger groups" than non-insured. However, there exists no recent nation-wide studies on the composition of insured and non-insured unemployed people and the mobility between these groups. There exists a clear need of research and statistics in this area in Denmark.

Scotland

The sample

The sample was selected from the same age groups as in the Nordic countries, but there were different sampling procedures In the Nordic countries, the sample was collected through the unemployment registers, while in Scotland interviewers were placed in a representative range of unemployment benefit offices throughout the country. All the young people had been unemployed for a minimum of three months at time of first contact. Postal questionnaires were completed six months after sampling at which time some young people had found jobs, entered schemes or returned to education, while others remained unemployed or were experiencing a further spell of unemployment. The questionnaire was completed by 817 respondents, which gave a response rate of 56%. The sample consisted of 65% males and 35% females, which reflects the actual proportions of males and females unemployed in this age group in Scotland.

Attrition analysis

The attrition consisted of 629 individuals. The attrition analysis could only be based upon gender, area of residence (rural or urban) and length of un-

employment, as we did not have access to unemployment register data. There were slightly more males who failed to respond than females, although not statistically significant. The length of unemployment did not affect response rates, but there were more non-respondents living in poorer urban areas than in rural areas although this was not statistically significant.

Ireland

In Ireland, the researchers were denied access to the unemployment register. It was therefore impossible to use the same survey design. The Irish research team therefore used the ECHP (European Community Household Panel) data from Ireland and eight other European countries of unemployed youth in the same age group.

Conclusions about the sample and attrition in the countries

With the exception of Iceland the sample was based on a criterion of at least 3 months of continuous unemployment during the period 1.1-30.6.1995. Iceland used 2 months as a criterion. There were several reasons for this. The number of young unemployed people would have been too small with the requirement of 3 months. Furthermore, it was thought to be advantageous to have 2 months as the limit, and then to conduct a total study on all the unemployed young people in Iceland.

The Danish sample did not include non-insured young people. It can be assumed that the non-insured young unemployed people differ with regard to experiences of both unemployment and employment, financial resources, living and family conditions, and political and social attitudes. If differences between the countries involved in the study are to be found, the question arises as to whether they are due to the divergent sampling frame, or to real differences in the unemployment situation between the countries. One way to examine the importance of a divergent sample is to try to compare the national samples to see if there would have been differences if the non-insured were excluded. Another way is to compare the insured in the respective countries and analyse differences and similarities within these groups. Statistically this can be controlled for in multivariate analyses.

The time variations in the realisation of the survey also create some problems. We are aware of these problems and therefore we have been cautious in analyses that concern time aspects. The data material was

coded in a way that enables tendency analysis of response differences between the postal questionnaire rounds and the telephone interviews. Information is available on 6,006 individuals (77 per cent of the respondents, Denmark is not included) in terms of whether they responded directly, to the first, second or third reminder or through the telephone interview. Certain tendencies were observed in the responses of those who responded directly and those who responded after the reminders:

- Women responded to a greater extent to the first mailing.
- The 20-22 year-olds responded to a greater extent to the first mailing.
- People in Finland responded best to the first mailing, followed by those in Norway, Sweden and Iceland.
- Those with less experience of unemployment responded to a greater extent to the first mailing.
- Those with higher education responded to a greater extent to the first mailing.
- Those who did not feel that people looked down on the unemployed responded to a greater extent to the first mailing.
- Those who did not feel isolated or unhealthy, and who had not lost confidence responded to a greater extent to the first mailing.
- Those who experienced more mental problems, as anxiety, feelings of hopelessness and nervousness, responded to a greater extent to the first mailing and the telephone interview.
- Those who reported being more to the political left responded to a greater extent to the first mailing.

According to one hypothesis the tendency of the attrition follows the tendency of the reminders. If this is the case, it seems that the questionnaire was less likely to reach the young people with longer experience of unemployment, with a lower educational background and those who felt more isolated. The differences were small, however, but taken together they point to a tendency in the material. This is not surprising. The opposite would be sensational. However, there is evidence from previous research of a process of gradual passivity and coping. What is interesting in our

study, is the implication that there was a group of people who were worried about their situation, some of whom responded rapidly and some after several reminders. This could indicate that people who worry about their situation want to tell others about their experiences, and at the same time, reminders reach groups that have become more passive during the process of unemployment.

It is obvious that there are various methodological problems in comparative research. However, the attrition analyses conducted for the countries involved showed that, all in all, the material is well balanced and that there is no need to correct skewness.

Ira Malmberg-Heimonen and Ilse Julkunen

Gender, family context and labour-market involvement in six Northern European Countries

Introduction

Research on the effects of unemployment on mental health has shown that women generally tend to adjust to unemployment better than men (Lahelma 1989; Mannila 1993; Gershuny 1994; Hyyppä 1996). One explanation for this is that women have more extensive social networks offering support for the unemployed (Vähätalo 1983, Vähätalo 1998; Gershuny 1994), and that they maintain their level of activity better when unemployed (Vähätalo 1983; Kotilainen & Mäenpää 1993; Gershuny 1994). Another explanation is that women have lower salaries and fewer career opportunities, and thus view employment as less important than men do (Gallie & Marsh 1994). The family situation can serve as a buffer for women's negative experiences of unemployment (de Witte & Wets, 1996). De Witte & Wets' (1996) study of unemployed women showed that the availability of an alternative role, such as being at home with the children made the experience of unemployment less distressing, especially among women with low education.

Results from empirical studies on women's adjustment to unemployment are controversial however. Some indicate that young women in particular view unemployment as very negative (Carle 1992; Nordenmark 1995, Hammarström 1996; Malmberg 1997). Recent findings (Nordenmark 1995; Malmberg 1997) have also shown that young women are more work-motivated than young men. Background variables such as age, education and duration of unemployment did not explain the differences in women's experiences of unemployment and work involvement, as they did for men however. On the other hand, Ellingsæter (1995) concludes that motivation to have paid work is determined by both job and family factors for both women and men. These results indicate that traditional explanations for why women adjust better are no longer valid for contemporary work-oriented young women, and that we need to examine women's experiences more thoroughly according to family structure, living arrangements and incentives to enter the labour market.

Work involvement, however, does not solely depend on the individual life situation, rather it is formed within institutional structures of possibilities and constraints, which vary between countries. On the whole, the Nordic countries seem to have very high levels of work commitment compared to other European countries, in spite of having the most generous social benefits systems (Halvorsen 1997). On the other hand, comparative studies (Almqvist & Boje 1999) have shown that there seems to be a clear connection between a high overall female labour market participation and a generous caring regime. However, we lack evidence based on individual data. Indeed, recent information from Finland (cf Sipilä & Korpinen 1998; Salmi 2000), has identified contrasting policies showing that the impact of welfare arrangements may have a reverse outcome, implying a drift towards a more Central European homemaker-model. It remains unclear, however, in what way the unemployment situation affects the outcome.

This article focuses on analysing young people's unemployment experiences, job-search intensity and employment possibilities, from a gender perspective, in Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Iceland and Scotland. It further analyses how the employment prospects of young unemployed people differ in different countries with different institutional settings and how they are affected by personal characteristics, such as gender, family status, educational attainment, as well as by (un)employment experiences and unemployment duration.

The six countries in this study represent two geographical clusters with similar welfare strategies. The first is the Nordic model, and the second is the intermediate central European welfare system as exemplified by Scotland. The Scandinavian countries are known to have a comprehensive and generous family policy that encourages female labour market participation. Indeed, about 80% of mothers participate in the labour market, compared to 60% of mothers in the UK (Bradshaw et al 1996). The more liberal free market regime of the UK is considered to be an individualistic society not encouraging reliance on the welfare state and considering child care responsibilities as a concern for the individual family to solve. It is often felt that Nordic welfare and labour-market measures have reduced overall inequalities and improved women's integration into the labour market. Still, studies tend to either treat the Nordic countries as an entity or only use one country as an example. Thus, differences between the countries are seldom highlighted. The emergence of the mass unemployment has also triggered a crisis for the Nordic model and it is not clear whether

it is still serving its purposes. The first aim of this article is to study how having children affects adjustment to unemployment, the level of work commitment and job-search activity. The second aim is to analyse how having children affects the transition from unemployment to employment in countries with different welfare arrangements. It may be expected that the Nordic modelm encourages labour-market involvment among young mothers, whereas the Scottish welfare arrangements hinder young mothers to re-enter the labour market.

The following hypothesis were:

Hypothesis 1: The presence or absence of children has an impact on young persons' *work involvement and experiences of unemployment,* and the impact of the family situation is different for unemployed women than for men: children are a buffer against the negative experiences of unemployment among women, but a motivational factor to get a job for men.

Hypothesis 2: The presence or absence of children has an impact on young persons' *opportunities to return to employment,* and the impact is different for women than for men: unemployed women with small children have fewer employment opportunities than women without children. The rate of re-employment is higher among men with children than among men without children.

The article is divided into two main parts. In the first part the bricks that are important for analysing adjustment with unemployment and re-integration into labour market among young unemployed people in Nordic Europe are laid. These include the labour market context for young people in Europe and cross-country differences regarding welfare arrangements. The empirical research is reported in two sections; gender differences in work involvement, job-search activity and negative experiences of unemployment and the probability of becoming employed again.

Gender and the labour-market

Compared to the rest of Europe, unemployment is a rather new phenomenon in Scandinavia, but there are also differences between the Nordic countries. The unemployment situation in Denmark and Norway differs from that in the other Nordic countries in that these countries experienced increased unemployment before the recession in the 1990s. The case of Iceland is unique in that unemployment was practically non-existent before the 1990s. Unemployment increased dramatically after the recession in the

1990s in Finland, and Sweden was hit by the crisis somewhat after. By way of contrast, the British economy improved in the early 1990s and unemployment started to fall. The decrease in figures, however, was at least partly due to changes in the definition of unemployment. Finland currently has the highest unemployment level, followed by the UK and Sweden. Long-term unemployment is by far the highest in the UK, although the rate in Finland is rather high. In the Nordic countries the youth adult ratio has been decreasing, in the UK the trend is reverse however, showing that adult unemployment is falling faster than youth unemployment.[1]

Women's participation in working life increased all over Europe during the 1990s. In 1997 the employment rate for women rose to 51 per cent, and the gender gap was 20 per cent compared to 26 per cent in 1990. Women's employment rates are only slightly lower than men's in Sweden and Finland opening to 13-15 percentage points in Denmark and the UK. The public sector has played an important role in the development of women's employment in the Scandinavian countries (Sconfienza & Gamberale, 1997). Although women's participation in working life has increased generally, the unemployment rate among women in Europe remains high. Contemporary statistics show that unemployment among young women is higher in Denmark, Finland and Norway, whereas it is lower in Iceland, Sweden and the UK (OECD 1998).

The labour market remains highly gendered even though women's participation in working life has increased (Westergaard-Nielsen 1995). The percentage of women in paid work is lower, they work part-time more and employment growth has been mainly concentrated in the service industries and occupations where their presence was already strong. Motherhood has a great impact on the employment participation rate. In general, mothers in Europe have lower employment rates than women without children. The impact of children on participation in working life among mothers varies in different countries however. In the UK, women with small children are more often economically inactive compared to women without children. The trend is the opposite in the Nordic countries: mothers with small children have higher levels of economic activity than childless women. An interesting exception can be found in Finland, since the participation rate

[1]The unemployment level in 1995 was in Denmark 7.0, (long-term unemployment 28.1), in Finland the level was 17.0 (37.0), in Iceland 4.8 (17.5), in Norway 4.9 (26.5), in Sweden 15.4 (15.8), in 1997 in the UK 7.1 (43.6). For women the respective rates were in DK 8.6, in Finland 16.8, in Iceland 4.9, in Norway 5.2, in Sweden 6.9, and in the UK 5.8.

of mothers with children below the age of 3 decreased drastically in the 1990s, from about 70% to 40%. This change coincided with the introduction of the home care support. The drop was temporary, however, and the employment rate among mothers with children above the age of 3 was as high as 76% (Salmi 2000).

Economic inactivity among women with children may also affect mainly those with a low level of education. In Europe, 78 per cent of all women with children under five were employed or looking for work in 1997, while the figure was only 43 per cent for women with basic schooling (Rubery & Fagan 1999, Employment in Europe 1998, Reconciliation of work and family life and the quality of care services 1997). According to the European Labour Force Survey, involvement in both full-time and part-time employment rose with the qualification level for mothers in Denmark Sweden and the UK, while in Finland qualifications mainly increased the full-time employment rates for mothers.

Part-time work is a way for women to reconcile work and family. About 40 per cent of women work part-time in Sweden, Denmark and UK[2] and almost 50 per cent in Iceland and Norway. However, the percentage of women working part-time in Finland is only 11 (Nososko 1997). The large proportion of women in Finland working full-time has a long history and can be explained by the importance of the agricultural sector, which has been a more important employer than elsewhere in the Nordic countries, for both women and men (Melkas & Anker 1998, Haavio - Mannila 1990). However, other important factors also explain this phenomenon: the historically work-centred culture and a cultural heritage of hard working women, safe environments, hot lunches at school and a social norm that allows children to be alone or with each other have made it easier for women to engage in full-time work. (Julkunen & Nätti 1999).

Gender and welfare strategies

In order to understand gender differences in modern welfare states, the complex relationship between paid work, unpaid work and welfare has to be taken into consideration. A key factor that enhances women's chanses of being economically active is naturally childcare possibilities while parents

[2] It should be noted however, that there is a difference in what is perceived as part-time work. A substantial proportion of women in Sweden work 30 – 35 hours per week, whereas in the UK a large proportion of women work shorter hours (Almqvist & Boje 1999).

are working. The most common care arrangements in the UK, are informal, combined with the mother working part-time. In the Nordic countries, on the other hand, childcare is mainly a public service[3], and parental leave is relatively highly renumerated (Reconciliation of work and family life and the quality of care services, 1997; Bergqvist 1999). Another key factor involves the economic conditions and regulations for job security, working time and wage conditions, all of which affect the way in which women enter the labour market.

Institutional differences play a central explanatory role in accounting for international differences. Traditionally, there has been a distinction between the male breadwinner and the dual breadwinner models. Lewis (1992) distinguished between strong, weak and modified breadwinner welfare-state systems to highlight the extent to which policies encourage or inhibit women in terms of working when they are wives or mothers. Scandinavian countries are examples of weak male breadwinner models, where the majority of adults in working age are employed or seeking for a job. Taxation and benefit systems are individually based in the Scandinavian countries, although welfare benefits involve household means-testing once individual entitlements are exhausted. The various forms of family support have dramatically transformed family life, and very few women are entirely dependent on their husband's incomes (Palme 1999). According to Palme (1999) the importance of the individualised social support and tax systems should not be underestimated. This stands in sharp contrast to the traditional way of designing these systems in the countries of Continental Europe. Nevertheless, when the generosity of the model is accounted for, one can conclude that the Icelandic social security deviates significantly from the Nordic model, and is closer to the UK welfare model (Ólafsson 1999).

The UK belongs to the modified male-breadwinner model, which is a rather contradictory hybrid. Although the UK has an individualised taxation system it is combined with a strong breadwinner logic of household-based means-testing in its welfare system. The combination of short maternity leave and no parental leave, with low flat-rate benefits and nearly no provision of public child care puts pressure on mothers to choose between full-time care-giving or early return to employment (Almqvist & Boje 1999).

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[3] Between 45 per cent and 67 per cent of all children up to six years are registered in some form of collectively organised and publicly financed childcare (Bergqvist 1999).

Fagan and Rubery (1999) have argued that focusing solely on differences in childcare arrangements and welfare policies which encourage or hinder women's labour supply is one-sided. Other factors such as economic conditions, labour- market regulations and other organisational features of employment affect women's job options. The fact that women have taken part in education to a higher degree is one important factor behind their massive entrance on the labour market.

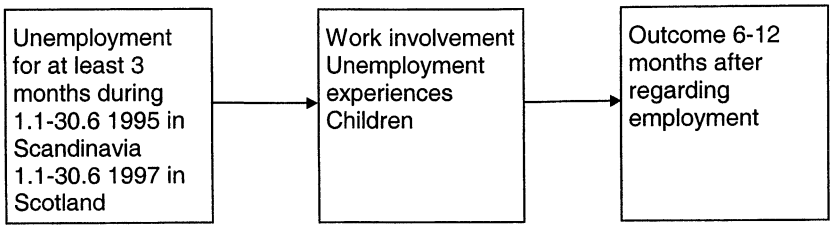
Based on a comparative analysis Fagan & Rubery (1999) found five different models of maternal employment: high full-time involvement in employment, high involvement with extended leave plus other working-time adjustments, reduced involvement and short part-time hours, reduced but full- time involvement, and low full- time involvement for all women. In this article the involved countries represent three different models: high full-time involvement in employment (Finland), high involvement with extended leave plus other working-time adjustments (Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Iceland), and reduced involvement and short part-time hours (the UK).

Can we distinguish different patterns of re-employment among unemployed mothers with children in the involved countries and in what way do they reflect differences in the overall unemployment situation in the countries and the welfare strategies applied? In this article Rubery and Fagans' (1999) models of maternal employment are used as a point of reference in interpreting the differences and similarities in women's possibilities to reconcile labour market involvement and family responsibilities.

Data and method

The data is based on a survey of 8,654 young unemployed 18-24-year-olds from six countries including Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Scotland. The study was completed in 1996 in Scandinavia, and in 1997 in Scotland. The sample in Denmark consisted of 1,540 young people (response rate 76%), in Finland of 2,386 (73%), in Sweden of 3,998 (63%), in Norway of 2,000 (56%), in Iceland of 2,280 (63%) and in Scotland of 1,427 (55 %). Attrition analysis based upon register data in Norway showed no skewed attrition. Long-term unemployed male respondents were underrepresented in Sweden. In the other countries, permission was not given to couple the survey to register data. However, country-specific attrition analyses based on gender, age, education and residence have found the data to be representative (cf Julkunen & Carle 1998).

The research design can be illustrated as follows:



The study is cross-sectional. At one point of time, a group of young people who had been at least 3 months continuously unemployed during the first half of the year was selected as a sample. Thus, we chose to study a group who had a more problematic relationship with one central area: employment. The sample was collected through the unemployment registers in the Nordic countries, while in Scotland, interviewers were placed in a representative range of unemployment-benefit offices throughout the country. The interviewers collected names and addresses of young people that had been unemployed for a minimum of three months during the first half year of 1997, and this formed the Scottish sample[4].

Postal questionnaires with identical questions in each of the countries were completed 6-12 months after the sampling, by which time some of the young people had found jobs, entered schemes or returned to education, while others remained unemployed or were experiencing a further spell of unemployment. Retrospective data on labour-market history was collected through specific questions on jobs and unemployment. We chose this strategy in order to shed light on how different levels of integration into the labour market may be related to circumstances in the lives of the young in our study.

The young people in our study are not a representative sample of unemployed young people in general, which should be born in mind when interpreting the results and comparing them to other studies of unemployment. On the other hand, young people are mobile and shorter periods of

[4] Scotland used a different sampling strategy due to registration data protection. The sample was collected by researchers placed in Jobcentres, remaining there from 4 to 8 days, to get in touch with young people in both weeks of signing. The number of young people who were unemployed over 3 months and who would sign in were calculated in each Jobcentre. This provided figures to make the sample representative. In addition, one Jobcentre with a high percentage of postal signers was included. The Jobcentre sent out a letter from the reseachers inviting the young to take part in the survey, and those who agreed were sent a questionnaire 6 months later.

unemployment are common among the younger age groups. Therefore, when studying unemployment experiences and labour market marginality among young people, it may still be motivated to restrict the sample to young people with a longer experience of unemployment.

At the time of the interview 34 per cent of the respondents had found jobs, 10 per cent had entered schemes, 16 per cent were in education, 10 per cent were doing something else (e.g. on maternity leave, in military service), and 31 per cent were still unemployed. 46 per cent of the respondents were women and 53 per cent were men in the Nordic countries. In Scotland, the sample consisted of 65% males and 35% women, which reflects the actual proportions of males and females unemployed in this age group in Scotland. Overall 20 percentage of the respondents had children (n=1696), and the mean age of the children was 2.5 years at the time of the interview. The proportion of women with children varied considerably in the countries in question. In Iceland, nearly 70 per cent of the women had children, and only 10 per cent in Scotland. Overall, 13 % of the respondents that had children were single parents. The size varied from 11% in Finland and Scotland to 14% in Sweden. A relatively large percentage of young people with children were still living in their parental home in Scotland (32 %), and Iceland (13 %).

Measurements

The measurements and indices used in this analysis were as follows:

Job-search intensity refers to how many different job-seeking channels the young people had used when they were unemployed. The following six items were included in the questionnaire and they were comparable in the different countries: Looking at vacancy boards at the job-centre/through the employment office; Contacting local employers; Asking friends about job vacancies; Asking relatives about job vacancies; Looking at advertisements in the newspapers; Replying to advertisements. The internal consistency measuring work involvement was satisfactory (Cronbach's alpha =0.65).

Labour-market inactivity. The respondents who answered that they had not searched for a job during their unemployment were defined as inactive job-seekers.

Negative experiences of unemployment were studied using an index based on six items: When I am unemployed I do not accomplish anything; When I am unemployed I have problems planning for the future; When I am unemployed I am financially dependent on others; When I am unem-

ployed I lose my self-confidence; When I am unemployed I feel isolated; When I am unemployed I feel that my health deteriorates. The items were rated on a five-point scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. Together, these items provide a reliable scale for the negative experiences of unemployment (Cronbach's alpha=0.83).

Work involvement was measured using a six-item version of the Work Involvement Scale, which is a well-known index measuring work involvement (Warr, Cook & Wall, 1979). The following items were included: It is very important for me to have a job; If I won lots of money I would want to work; I hate being unemployed; I feel restless if I do not have a job; Work is one of the most important things in my life; I would prefer to work even if the unemployment benefits were generous. The items were rated on a five-point scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. The internal consistency of the work-involvement scale was good. (Cronbach's alpha=0.82).

The level of financial deprivation was assessed according to how often during the previous 12 months the young people had been forced to give up various things due to lack of money. Townsend (1988) developed measurements to define multiple deprivation including material and social deprivation. In this study we used an 11-item index assessing basic needs, recreation, and social and cultural participation. This index has been used in the Nordic countries (Stjernö 1985; Hove 1993; Tanninen & Julkunen 1992). The items were as follows: hot meals; essential clothes for yourself and your family; paying the rent and your bills on time; going to the cinema, theatre or concerts; inviting friends to your home; visiting relatives or friends living in other towns; buying birthday or Christmas presents for friends and family; taking holidays away; buying newspapers; engaging in hobbies or other recreational activities; and going to pubs and restaurants. The items were rated on a three-point scale comprising 0 (never and not applicable), 1 (sometimes) and 2 (often). The internal consistency of the scale was good (Cronbach's alpha = 0.8897). The respondents were divided into three different classes depending on their financial situation: those who never or seldom had to give up any of the items (<3 points, lower quartile), those who sometimes had to give up some of the items (3 - 13 points) and those who often had to give up some or many of the items (<13 points, upper quartile).

Demographic information was gathered by using standard comparative questions on age, gender, education, the presence or absence of children, residence, occupation, work experience and duration of unemployment.

Analyses

Means testing was used for analysing gender differences in labour-market activity, work involvement and negative experiences of unemployment. The respondents with children were tested against those without children. Logistic regression was used to predict the dichotomous dependent variable not re-employed vs. re-employed. The analyses were carried out separately for women and men. The independent variables age, work involvement, work-experience, duration of unemployment, education, financial deprivation, and presence or absence of children were included in the analyses.

Results

Gender differences in work involvement and negative experiences of unemployment

When we compared labour-market activity, work involvement and negative experiences of unemployment by gender,[5] we found that the unemployed women in Finland and Sweden generally had higher work involvement and felt more negatively about being unemployed than the men in these countries did. In Norway, on the other hand, the men had higher work involvement, but there were no gender differences in negative feelings about unemployment. No gender differences were traced in Denmark, Scotland or Iceland in work involvement or negative experiences of unemployment. The Swedish unemployed women had higher job-search activity than the men during their periods of unemployment, while there were no significant differences in the other countries (cf Julkunen & Malmberg - Heimonen, 1998). These results are concordant with previous studies that show no gender difference in unemployment experiences (Alm, 1995) and studies (Nordenmark, 1995) that imply that, among young people, the motivation to be employed tends to be even stronger among women than among men. The only exception to this pattern could be found in Norway, where men

[5] General gender comparisons by country: FINLAND: work involvement: women 3.94, men 3.83 (p=0,009), negative experiences: women 2.76, men 2.65 (p=0.040). No gender differences according to job- search activity or labour-market inactivity. NORWAY: work involvement: women 4.06, men 4.21 (p=0.002). No gender differences were found according to job-search activity, labour-market inactivity or negative experiences. SWEDEN: job search activity: women 4.00, men 3.83 (p=0.00), work involvement women, 4.15, men 3.94 (p=0.00), negative experiences women 3.23 men 2.82 (p=0.00) No gender differences were found according to labour-market inactivity. DENMARK, ICELAND and SCOTLAND: No gender differences were found according to labour-market inactivity, job-search activity, work involvement or negative experiences of unemployment.

had a higher work involvement. Previous studies have still overlooked the family context and how children affect the outcome.

In this study we have analysed young women's and men's experiences of unemployment, job-search activity and work involvement based on their family situation. Table 1 gives a comparison of the gender differences between the women and the men, and the analysis was done separately for those with children and those without. We also compared the results by gender, by comparing work involvement among the women who had children with those who did not have.

Table 1. Young women's and men's labour-market activity and unemployment experiences based on their family situation: a gender comparison

	CHILDREN				NO CHILDREN			
	Inactivity (%)	job-search activity mean (0 to 6)	work involvement mean (0 to 6)	negative experiences (0 to 6)	Inactivity (%)	job-search activity mean (0 to 6)	work involvement mean (0 to 6)	negative experiences mean (0 to 6)
Finland								
women	**8,7**	3,1	4,58	3,05	2,6	3,41	**4,71**	**3,33**
men	1,4	**3,78**	4,68	3,01	**5,5**	3,25	4,58	3,16
Iceland								
women	8,4	3,63	4,96	3,34	3,9	4,17	**5,36**	3,71
men	6,3	**4,25**	5,23	**3,61**	7,1	3,89	5,08	3,59
Norway								
women	**11,4**	3,12	4,61	3,63	4,7	3,44	5,09	4,08
men	2	**3,85**	**5,24**	**4,07**	6	3,21	5,05	3,47
Sweden								
women	5,9	3,96	4,97	**3,89**	3,3	**4,38**	**5**	**3,91**
men	4,7	4,01	5,06	3,44	3,9	4,16	4,72	3,45
Denmark								
women	5,3	3,06	3,94	2,37	3,1	3,42	4,46	**2,81**
men	5,8	3,46	**4,48**	**2,73**	3,8	3,22	4,35	2,52
Scotland								
women	0	4,14	4,13	3,71	0	4,04	4,73	4,06
men	0	4,64	**4,79**	3,93	0	4,32	4,72	3,96

We found a different gender pattern in labour-market inactivity among the young persons without children and those with children. Labour-market inactivity among women was combined with motherhood and it was thus more common among the women with children than among the men with children. These gender differences were substantial in Finland and Norway. We found a similar pattern in Sweden, although the gender differences were less significant. No gender differences according to inactivity on the labour market were found in Iceland, Denmark or Scotland. This could

have been connected to the more stringent rules on labour market activity, which can be found particularly in Scotland and Denmark, whereas Iceland generally is highly work-oriented.[6] Labour-market inactivity was also more common among the young men without children than among those with children. The differences were substantial in Finland, Norway and Sweden, but the pattern was similar in the other countries.

In Finland, Iceland and Norway, the men with children had been more actively searching for jobs than the women with children. This gender pattern occurred in the other countries too, even if the gender differences were not significant. On the other hand, the women without children had higher work involvement than the men without children. The gender differences were significant in Finland, Iceland and Sweden.

In Sweden, and also in Finland, the women had more negative experiences of unemployment than the men, regardless of whether they had children or not. Still, the women with children had fewer negative experiences of unemployment than those without in all the countries concerned, except Sweden, where no substantial differences were traced. There were no differences in unemployment experiences according to whether the young men had children or not. Children appear not to be a buffer against negative experiences of unemployment for men, as they are for women.

The probability of becoming employed again related to gender and the respondents' family situation

The design of the study enabled us to analyse whether different background variables, and especially the family situation had an impact on young women's and men's employment prospects. The women who were on maternity leave when interviewed were excluded from the analysis.

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[6] In Scotland young people in the 18 to 24 age group receive a payment called Job-seekers Allowance. The young people are required to sign a declaration every two weeks in a job-centre stating they have been actively seeking work. The system has recently become more stringent and young people have to provide evidence that they have been applying for jobs. The difference in the systems in the different countries explains why there are no actual inactive job-seekers in Scotland. Since the Nordic data was collected in 1995, the unemployment benefit system concerning young people has also become more stringent in most of the Nordic countries. "Activation" is required to get allowances.

Table 2. Regression analysis: The odds ratio for re-employment by central background variables, country and gender

	FINLAND		ICELAND		NORWAY		SWEDEN		DENMARK		SCOTLAND	
	Women B (SE)	Men B (SE)	Women B (SE)	Men B (SE)	Women B (SE)	Men B (SE)	Women B (SE)	Men B (SE)	Women B (SE)	Men B (SE)	Women B (SE)	Men B (SE)
Agegroup 18-19 ref=1												
20-21	-.1538	.1355	.1118	.2562	.2538	**-.8614****	-.1672	.4311	ref=1	ref=1	.1876	-.1694
	(.2742)	(.2681)	(.2732)	(-.2337)	(.3891)	(.3227)	(.22371)	(.2511)	ref=1	ref=1	(.4580)	(.3336)
22-24	.0867	**.5970***	.0672	.1724	.0400	-.1947	-.0959	.3835	.3604	.1546	.7196	.1294
	(.2817)	(.2884)	(.2721)	(.2470)	(.3918)	(.3181)	(.2482)	(.2677)	(.2239)	(.2070)	(.4451)	(.3244)
Cohabiting no ref=1												
yes	**.5403***	.3886	-.3674	**.4756***	.4908	.2270	.1017	**.3849***	.1847	.2007	-.1050	-.3135
	(.2151)	(.2067)	(.2017)	(.2332)	(.2633)	(.2358)	(.1570)	(.1654)	(.2130)	(.2064)	(.5018)	(.5010)
Children no ref=1												
yes	**-1.357***	.3867	-.3110	.1613	**-.8901****	.0402	-.1963	-.1127	**-.6371****	.6446	**-2.1422***	.2512
	(.5646)	(.3454)	(.2118)	(.2623)	(.2922)	(.2833)	(.2294)	(.2578)	(.2464)	(.3724)	(.8459)	(.5113)
Vocational education yes ref=1												
no	-.1348	-.3458	.2898	-.1816	.2791	-.1589	-.2749	-.6008	-.5279	-.3910	-.7738	**-.5765***
	(.3177)	(.2469)	(.2170)	(.2119)	(.3446)	(.2881)	(.2886)	(.3074)	(.3172)	(.2431)	(.4079)	(.2722)

Continued next page

** p<0.05*

*** = p<0.01*

**** = p<0.001*

Table 2. Continued

Work experience no ref=1												
> 1 year	**1.023*** **	**1.1858*** **	**1.1673** **	**.8711** **	.1094	**.9256** **	**.9512*** **	**.6201***	.6943	.3695	**1.9242*** **	**1.2165** **
	(.2649)	(.2499)	(.3571)	(.3367)	(.3991)	(.3252)	(.2334)	(.2459)	(.5727)	(.6025)	(.5695)	(.4156)
< 2 years	**1.251*** **	**1.3142*** **	**.9448** **	**1.3795*** **	**.7235***	**1.4790*** **	**1.009*** **	**.8398*** **	**.8737**	.0194	**1.6492** **	**1.1630** **
	(.2875)	(.2615)	(.3072)	(.2785)	(.3345)	(.3040)	(.2187)	(.2351)	(.4864)	(.5188)	(.5361)	(.3617)
Unemployment 3m-2 years ref=1												
< 2 years	-1.029**	**-.9756*** **	-.3490	**-.9388** **	-.4416	-.4102	**-.8195** **	**-1.130*** **	-.1740	**-.8834***	-.4268	**-.6719***
	(.3150)	(.2311)	(.3829)	(.3316)	(.3132)	(.2505)	(.2495)	(.2335)	(.2957)	(.3927)	(.5010)	(.2960)
Financial strain no ref=1												
occasionally	-.1895	**-.4374***	-.0944	**-.4827***	-.8826**	**-.7070** **	-.3442	**-.6765*** **	**-.6030** **	**-.6346*** **	-.2019	-.2012
	(.3130)	(.2183)	(.2698)	(.2170)	(.3326)	(.2304)	(.2110)	(.1635)	(.2101)	(.2025)	(.5727)	(.3682)
yes	-.4164	**-1.1290*** **	-.5249	**-.6558***	**-.9897***	**-1.723*** **	**-.8347*** **	**-1.144*** **	**-1.422*** **	**-1.764*** **	**-1.551***	.0578
	(.3570)	(.3135)	(.3197)	(.3083)	(.3896)	(.3401)	(.2406)	(.2289)	(.3870)	(.5198)	(.6711)	(.4335)
Work involvement low ref=1												
medium	.3725	**.6012** **	.3180	.3566	**.9254***	-.1053	.1632	.2370	**.4891***	**.4836***	-.1205	.3582
	(.2735)	(.2215)	(.2947)	(.2771)	(.3633)	(.2803)	(.2164)	(.1834)	(.2190)	(.2141)	(.4561)	(.2901)
high	.5725	**.7792** **	**.7657** **	**.6540***	**1.0580** **	.1831	.0486	.1560	**1.0186*** **	**.9294** **	-,1874	.1213
	(.3072)	(.2542)	(.2969)	(.2794)	(.3834)	(.2863)	(.2330)	(.2130)	(.2866)	(.2956)	(.6518)	(.4300)
Negative experience low ref=1												
medium	-.1128	**.6161** **	.2955	.2213	.5420	**.6964***	-.0115	.3110	**.2162**	**.1206**	.2162	.2238
	(.2574)	(.2120)	(.2473)	(.2326)	(.4280)	(.3141)	(.2244)	(.1800)	(.2125)	(.2100)	(.2125)	(.6038)
high	.2264	.4064	.3426	.2466	.6575	**.8172***	.2050	**.5799** **	.3442	.4897	.3442	.5360
	(.2952)	(.2183)	(.2844)	(.2630)	(.4376)	(.3352)	(.2339)	(.2189)	(.3601)	(.4090)	(.3601)	(.6236)
N	620	876	496	553	388	545	926	1036	508	487	181	309
Constant	-2.14	-2.73	-1.45	-1.28	-1.81	-1.20	-1.17	-1.63	-1.51	0.11	-1.31	-1.31

** p<0.05*

*** = p<0.01*

**** = p<0.001*

Work experience, short duration of unemployment, and financial deprivation were factors which influenced re-employment in nearly all the countries concerned. The degree of work involvement also had an impact on employment prospects in most of them. Interestingly enough cohabitation had a positive impact on the men's employment prospects in Iceland and Sweden, and only in Finland was the impact positive among women. A lack of vocational education, age and negative experiences of unemployment were not such significant indicators of re-employment in this context.

Young mothers appeared to have difficulties in becoming employed in all the countries when all the demographic variables were controlled for. The odds for re-employment were the lowest among the Scottish women with children, but also very low for Finnish women. There were substantial differences in the employment prospects of the Norwegian and Danish mothers, and similar trends among the Icelandic women, although the differences were not substantial. The only exception to the pattern was Sweden, where we could find no differences in employment outcomes between the women with children and those without. This could also be seen among the men.

Generally, the men with children seemed to have better employment prospects than their counterparts without children. The differences were not substantial, but the pattern was the same in every country except Sweden where no differences between men's employment prospects could be found.

The closed gender gap

Our gender comparison revealed that women in Finland and Sweden are highly work-motivated and experience unemployment more negatively than men. The Danish women also viewed unemployment more negatively than the Danish men, although the result was not significant. There were no substantial gender differences in regard to work involvement and negative experiences in Iceland and Scotland and only in Norway did the men value work more highly than the women did. An interesting aspect is that the men with children generally had a higher work involvement, job-search activity and more negative experiences of unemployment. An earlier study (Julkunen & Malmberg – Heimonen 1998) showed that women-specific negative experiences of unemployment included feelings of becoming financially dependent on others and being isolated. Feelings

of dependency in particular were strongest in Norway. In this respect Norway seems to foster the most traditional form of family.

The results of this study indicate the existence of a closed gender gap (cf Malmberg 1997; Hammarstöm & Olofsson 1998). Young women value work highly and have negative feelings when unemployed. Even in Scotland, which represents the most traditional country considering gender roles and employment partcipation rates, we could not find any gender differences in women's and men's work involvement, job-search activity or negative experiences of unemployment.

Children were shown to have a different impact on men's and women's unemployment experiences, however. Being a parent seems to increase job-search activity and work involvement among men, and on the other hand, children become a buffer that alleviates unemployment experiences among women as they have fewer negative experiences of unemployment. Having children also apparently decreases their job-search activity and work involvement. Inactivity on the labour market was related to motherhood among young women, but was more common among the men who did not have children. Previous studies have shown that labour-market inactivity among young men is often connected to alternative lifestyles and marginality (Hammarström 1996, Rönkä 1994). Employment prospects are poorer for unemployed women with children than for unemployed women without children. These results indicate that being a parent increases labour-market marginality among young women. Young women with children seem to have lower odds for re-employment in Finland, Norway, Denmark and Scotland. The trend was similar among women with children in Iceland, although the result was not significant. This finding is comparable with the results of Russel & Barbieri (1999). They compared employment deprivation among men and women in Denmark, Italy, Britain and France, and they found generally that neither being married nor having children over the age of five lead to a significant reduction in employment deprivation among unemployed women. The situation was different for women with pre-school children: they found joblessness less problematic. These research results actually clarify the results of our study. We should clearly bear in mind that only seven per cent of the young people with children had children who were over five years old and that the mean age of the children was only 2.5 years. It is therefore to be expected that the impact of children is smaller if they are older.

Equal opportunities or different solutions?

Sweden seems to represent the country with equal employment opportunities for both women and men. No gender differences were identified in Sweden and the employment prospects were the same for women and for men regardless of whether the respondents had children or not. According to Fagan & Rurbery's (1999) model of maternal employment, Sweden has high maternal employment, which has been eased by flexible working-time adjustments. Although, Denmark belong to the same maternal-employment model as Sweden, Danish women with children appear to have a poorer chance of being re-employed than women without children. One explanation for this could be that the unemployment level among women was higher than among men in 1995/1996 when we collected the data. The higher female unemployment is due to the cuts in the formal economy in the 1980s and 1990s (Nososco, 1996). Another possible explanation could be that more young women in Denmark had found an alternative occupation (Julkunen 2000), which might have had something to do with the leave-of-abscence schemes. All in all, leave arrangements in Denmark have become a way for women to reduce the tensions between family-care responsibilities and work life, and only a small minority of the leave arrangements are used by men (Etherington, 1999).

Scotland has the poorest odds for re-employment, which could be explained mainly by poorer day-care arrangements than in the Scandinavian countries. Reduced economic activity during motherhood indicates that hidden unemployment among mothers would be high in the UK. Therefore this result should be interpreted with care, although it is possible that the problems unemployed mothers face in becoming re-employed are bigger rather than smaller than the results of this study indicate.

The poor re-employment prospects for unemployed Finnish women could be explained by inflexibility in working-time arrangements. Part-time employment is not a part of the Finnish working culture, and only a marginal proportion of women work part time. The lack of labour-market flexibility makes it difficult for unemployed mothers to return to work. There are long waiting lists for daycare places, and it is almost impossible to take a job at short notice. It is easier for women to arrange childcare if they work part-time and have flexible hours, as is the case in Sweden. However, earlier research has shown (Mannila, 1993) that the high propor-

tion of women working full-time has been a key factor in the avoidance of financial problems and marginality among single mothers.

Family status had an inconsistent impact on labour-market involvement. Cohabiting men in Iceland and Sweden had better odds for re-employment than non-cohabiting men. On the other hand, the importance of family status did not seem to determine the employment prospects for women. The only exception was found in Finland, where cohabiting women had better employment prospects than non-cohabiting women. This could possibly indicate that single mothers in Finland in particular have difficulties entering the labour market after a period of unemployment. Having small children is then a barrier against women returning to work after a period of unemployment. The existence of home-care allowances can, on the other hand, provide an alternative for lone mothers to stay at home. According to Rubery & Fagan (1999), women without formal qualifications face the greatest problems reconciling motherhood with employment. The explanation for this is that the combination of low wages, job instability and high child-care costs makes it difficult for a non-educated women with small children to return to employment after maternity leave, labour-market exit or a period of unemployment. In our analysis, education did not have a significant effect on young women's re-employment odds, except for Scotland where those without vocational education had poorer odds of re-employment than those with this level of education. One possible explanation for this is that our study concerns mobile young people, some of them still moving back and forth between education, schemes and work, and therefore the educational level does not yet explain the odds of re-employment.

Conclusion

All in all, the results presented in this article show that young women have high work involvement, and experience unemployment as negatively as men do. On the other hand, they have lower search activities and poorer employment prospects. Only in Sweden did the women show higher search activity and as good employment prospects as the men. Recent studies have found positive correlations between the right to parental leave and childcare on the one hand and the rate of employment for women with children on the other (Almqvist & Boje 1999). According to the results of our study, the key factor does not seem to be good daycare arrangements,

since womens' labour-market prospects are the same in countries as different as Finland and Scotland. Is it the case that young women today really have the opportunity to stay at home, and that this is more a reflection of their own choices? This seems to be so in Denmark, and to some extent in Finland, where young women have alternative occupations, staying at home or taking a sabbatical leave. Nevertheless, reconciling work and family is not an easy task, a fact which could well be seen in the financial deprivation among the women, but also among the men. The only exception to this was Finland, where financial deprivation was no higher among the women.

Obviously, there is no simple relationship between motherhood and labour-market involvement. The interface between motherhood and womens' labour-market behaviour is extremely complex and difficult to interpret. Many different dimensions intervene. Scandinavian countries are generally seen as representing the most generous welfare model and the starting point for childcare policies has been to make it possible for both women and men to combine paid employment with family responsibilities. According to the results of our study, the Scandinavan countries do not form a coherent whole and both labour-market experiences and employment prospects vary. According to Bergqvist (1999) Norway and Iceland have not linked childcare to gender equality and women's employment as explicitly as the other Nordic countries. In contrast to Denmark and Sweden, Norway has invested relatively little with regard to both the care of children under three years of age and full time care. Thus, childcare provision still seems to be based on the assumption that most mothers of small children remain home. Our findings show that Norway seemed to reflect the most traditional male-breadwinner model. In Iceland, and Scotland, the effect of short maternity leave and poor daycare arrangements seems to be hidden unemployment (cf Thorisdottir 1999). The full-time work culture in Finland, on the other hand, seems to discourage single mothers in particular from entering the labour market. Our analysis revealed positive correlations between motherhood and work only in Sweden. This poses the question whether it is merely the combination of a flexible labour market (part-time work), daycare arrangements, good salaries and generous family policies that is needed to make it possible for women to reconcile work and family. At least in Sweden, the employment conditions for part-time workers are usually similar to those for full-time working women in terms of social rights and employment protection (Almqvist &

Boje 1999). These policies appear to encourage women with children to enter the labour market.

The problematisation of single parenthood and employment marginality has been insufficient, since in this article we have not been able to study single parenthood in relation to gender, family responsibilities and employment prospects. This is mainly because of the hidden unemployment among single mothers, as in the cases of Iceland and Scotland. Nevertheless, our data showed that, particularly in Scotland and Iceland it seems that young single parents would have difficulties to leave their parental home, while this is not the case in the other countries. In conclusion, we would like to stress the importance of a more focused comparative research in this area.

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Psychological distress among youth during unemployment and beyond

Unemployment constitutes one of the more serious problems facing European youth at the turn of the millennium. Despite the dwindling number of young people in an aging Europe, their employment situation has not improved significantly. For instance, during the 1990's unemployment rates among young people rose in all the Nordic countries except Denmark, where the labor-force participation of young people has increased somewhat (Roshdal, 1996). In 1995, about 18% of young people in the European Union were unemployed, compared to about 9% of the adult population (Carle and Julkenen, 1999).

In addition to economic cost of youth unemployment for both the young and their societies, there are considerable social and psychological costs involved. On a societal level, unemployed youth signify costly unemployment benefits and other social welfare expenditures, wasted production potential and lower tax revenues. On the individual level, unemployed people experience worse physical health and higher levels of psychological distress, including depression, anxiety and low self-esteem (Dooley and Prause, 1995; Banks and Jackson, 1982; Hammerstrom and Janlert, 1997: Sigurdardottir, 1998; Carle and Julkenen, 1999). Accordingly, unemployed individuals have been found to be more likely to suffer from suicidal ideation, to attempt suicide, and to ultimately commit suicide (Brenner and Mooney, 1983; Dooley and Catalano, 1980; Platt, 1984). Unemployment furthermore appears to be associated with somewhat higher levels of illicit drug use (Gunnlaugsson and Galliher, 2000; Hammer, 1992; ; Carle and Julkenen, 1999). Interestingly, re-employment is apparently not associated with a corresponding decrease in illicit drug use (; Carle and Julkenen, 1999). In general, research suggests that the longer unemployment lasts, the more severe the adverse effects of unemployment on individual well being become (Hammer, 1993; ; Carle and Julkenen, 1999; Warr, Jackson and Banks, 1988).

The vast literature on social support demonstrates the importance of close emotional ties and practical help in times of distress (e.g. Cobb, 1976; Jacobson, 1986; Thorlindsson and Bjarnason, 1998; Vilhjalmsson, 1995). Indeed, there is strong evidence of social support buffering the

effects of unemployment on individual well being (Gore, 1978; Hammer, 1993; Hammerström and Janlert, 1997; Pearlin et al., 1981). Social support is a multidimensional construct, and the effects of such support on individual well being may vary across contexts and by the type of support involved. For instance, Ullah, Banks and Warr (1985) found material support among unemployed youth to be associated with less psychological distress in general, while emotional support was more specifically related to less depression.

Unemployed youth who enjoy parental support are more likely than others to find a job (Sigurdardottir, 1998; Carle and Julkenen, 1999), but relatively little is known about the importance of different types of social support in different labour market outcomes over time.

In the present study, we will use data from the *Youth Unemployment and Marginalization Project* to examine cross-culturally the effect of social support on psychological distress during and following spells of unemployment among youth. We distinguish between parental emotional support, instrumental or practical help, and parental advice. We then examine the effects of these different types of social support and key social and attitudinal variables on emotional distress among continuously unemployed youth as well as those who have moved on to other roles in life.

Data and Methods

This survey was conducted among representative samples of unemployed young people in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Scotland. The samples in the Nordic countries were drawn from national unemployment registers, with eligible respondents defined as young people between the ages of 18 and 24 who had been unemployed for a period of at least three months during the spring of 1995[1]. As the sample was surveyed six months after drawing the samples from national unemployment registers, many of the respondents were no longer unemployed. The current study takes advantage of this somewhat unique feature of the data, examining the fit of the general model proposed across groups with different labor market outcomes.

The dependent variable of psychological distress is tapped by a short version of the *Hopkins Symptoms Checklist* for anxiety and depression (Derogatis et.al., 1974). In this data, the short scale is found to be highly reliable (Alpha: .88).

The current study controls for a variety of socio-demographic characteristics, including gender, age, levels of urbanization, and years of formal schooling. The respondents were categorized by living arrangements, distinguishing between those living with their parents, alone or with friends, or with a spouse or a partner. In addition, we took into account if the respondent had a child that lived in the home. Three pairs of items are used to distinguish between the dimensions of parental emotional support (r: .66), parental instrumental support (r: .71) and parental advice (r: .57).

The economic situation of the respondent is indicated by eleven items (alpha: .90) of having had to do without meals, clothing, entertainment, recreational activities or visits because of lack of money. Attitudes towards unemployment have two dimensions. On one hand, six items measuring how important it is to the respondent personally to have a job (alpha: .83). On the other hand, six items (alpha: .36) measuring the respondent's perception of others holding negative attitudes towards unemployment and the unemployed.

Results

Table 1 shows the labor market status of the previously unemployed youth in the six countries under consideration. The unemployed youth in Iceland have been most successful in getting out of unemployment, with only 14% of them still unemployed at the time of the study. The highest proportion of continuously unemployed people is to be found in Scotland (42%) and Finland (36%).

Table 1. Labor force status of previously unemployed youth across countries

	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden	Scotland
Still unemployed	29%	36%	14%	23%	26%	42%
Permanently employed	35%	8%	39%	17%	14%	26%
Temporary job	9%	14%	12%	18%	22%	15%
School	11%	14%	16%	16%	11%	5%
Homemaker or maternity	2%	9%	14%	12%	6%	3%
Other	15%	18%	5%	14%	22%	9%

The highest rates of permanent re-employment are to be found in Iceland (39%) and Denmark (35%), while the lowest rates are observed in Finland

(8%) and Sweden (14%). The highest rates of temporary jobs are to be found in Sweden and Norway, where 22% and 18%, respectively, have moved from unemployment to a temporary job, compared to 9-15% in the other countries. In the five Nordic countries, 11-16% of the young unemployed has returned to school, compared to 5% in Scotland. Finally, the highest proportion of unemployed young people becoming home makers is found to be 12-14% in Iceland and Norway, while the lowest rates of 2-3% are found in Denmark and Scotland.

The psychological distress reported by the respondents differs significantly between countries and across labor market outcomes. Table 2 shows that psychological distress is significantly higher in Iceland (.10 ± .06) and significantly lower in Denmark (-.19 ± .04) than in the sample as a whole. Those who are still unemployed are significantly worse off than the national mean in Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The Icelandic permanently unemployed experience the greatest statistically significant psychological distress of all country-employment status groups, being on average 0.4 standard deviations more distressed than the sample as a whole. The permanently employed are significantly better off than the national average in all six countries.

Table 2. Differences in mean psychological distress across countries and labor force status

	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden	Scotland
Still unemployed	-.09 (.05)	.05 (.04)	.42 (.09)	.23 (.07)	.20 (.04)	.16 (.07)
Permanently employed	-.38 (.04)	-.21 (.07)	-.08 (.04)	-.11 (.04)	-.24 (.05)	-.23 (.07)
Temporary job	.05 (.09)	-.10 (.06)	.29 (.09)	.05 (.07)	-.06 (.04)	.08 (.03)
School	-.11 (.08)	-.12 (.06)	-.07 (.06)	-.10 (.07)	.10 (.06)	.14 (.21)
Homemaker or maternity	-.19 (.22)	.24 (.08)	.23 (.09)	-.01 (.08)	.02 (.08)	.56 (.33)
Country average	-.19 (.02)	-.02 (.02)	.10 (.03)	.03 (.03)	.02 (.02)	.07 (.04)

Note: Standardized across all samples with a grand with mean of zero and a standard deviation of 1. Standard errors in parentheses

Temporary employment is related to significantly greater psychological distress in Denmark and Iceland. Interestingly, the temporarily employed are only significantly worse off than other groups in Denmark. Those who have returned to school neither differ significantly from the national average of the sample as a whole, nor from the national average in their respective countries. Finally, home makers only differ significantly from others in

Finland and Norway, where they are worse off than their respective national averages and the average of the sample as a whole.

It is interesting to note that the relation between unemployment and labour market outcomes varies significantly across countries. Although the permanently employed are better off than any other labour market group in all six countries, it varies between countries which group is the worst off. In Iceland, Norway and Sweden, the continuously unemployed are most distressed. In Finland and Scotland the homemakers are worst off, and in Denmark the highest level of distress is found among those holding a temporary job.

The multivariate associations of country, socio-demographic characteristics, employment status, support from family, perceived deprivation and attitudes towards the unemployed on psychological distress are shown in Table 3. In Model 1, only the countries are included, with Denmark serving as the omitted contrast country. The model shows that the respondents in all the other countries are significantly more distressed than the Danish respondents. In Model 2, socio-demographic characteristics and living arrangements are added to the equation. Females and urban respondents are significantly more distressed than others, but psychological distress decreases with higher education. Compared to the omitted category of respondents that live with their parents, those who live alone or with friends are significantly more distressed. No significant difference is apparent between respondents living with their parents and those living with a spouse, but those who have a child who lives with them are significantly less distressed.

Table 3. Standardized multiple regression covariates of psychological distress in the total sample

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Country					
Finland	.07***	.07***	---	---	-.06***
Iceland	.10***	.09***	.12***	.11***	.04**
Norway	.07***	.09***	.07***	.06***	---
Sweden	.09***	.10***	.08***	.07***	---
Scotland	.08***	.08***	.06***	.05***	---
Socio-demographic					
Sex (1=female)		.21***	.21***	.23***	.20***
Age		---	---	---	---
Urban (ln)		.05***	.03***	.03***	---
Respondent's education		-.09***	-.06***	-.05***	-.03*
Family situation					
Living alone or w/friends		.11***	.11***	.11***	.04***
Living with spouse		---	---	---	---
Child		-.05***	-.07***	-.06***	-.05***
Employment status					
Length of unemployment			.09***	.09***	.05***
Permanently employed			-.12***	-.11***	-.06***
Temporarily employed			-.05***	-.04***	---
Attending school			-.06***	-.06***	-.04***
Homemaker or maternity			---	---	---
Other			-.05***	-.04***	-.04***
Support from parents					
Emotional support				-.15***	-.10***
Advice				.11***	.06***
Instrumental support				.03*	---
Economic situation					
Feels deprived					.34***
Attitudes towards unemployed					
Own attitudes					---
Others' perceived attitudes					.09***
R^2	**.01**	**.06**	**.08**	**.10**	**.20**

In Model 3, measures of employment status are added to the model. Psychological distress increases with length of unemployment, net of current employment status. Compared to those who are still unemployed, however, all other groups except for homemakers are less distressed. Interestingly, the Finnish respondents are not significantly more distressed than the Danish contrast group, once employment status has been controlled for.

In Model 4, measures of support from parents are added to the equation. Those who report more emotional support from their parents appear to be significantly less distressed. Net of such emotional support, however, parental advice and instrumental help with practical things is associated with more psychological distress.

Finally, in Model 5, perceived economic deprivation, the respondent's attitudes towards unemployment, and his or her perception of the attitudes of others towards the unemployed are added to the equation. Feelings of economic deprivation appear to be the major factor mediating social factors and psychological distress. Interestingly, once these perceptions and attitudes are controlled for, there is no difference in psychological distress between Denmark and Norway, Sweden or Scotland. Furthermore, the Finnish respondents appear significantly less distressed than the others, once these factors have been controlled for. Only the Icelandic respondents remain significantly more distressed than the Danish comparison group in the final model. The small effects of being urban, temporarily employed, and receiving instrumental support from one's parents' ceases to be significant, and several of the other effects are significantly reduced. This final model accounts for about 20% of the unexplained variance in psychological distress.

In Table 4, the final model is run separately within groups of gender and employment status. It shows that the higher levels of distress among the Icelandic respondents are only significant among males who are still unemployed. Furthermore, the lower level of distress in Finland than in the Danish contrast group is only significant among males and females who have moved from unemployment to a temporary job or have become students. Females in temporary jobs in Norway and Sweden are similarly less distressed than their Danish counterparts. Among permanently employed males, the Norwegians are significantly more distressed, while the Scots are significantly less distressed than the Danes. Finally, Scottish males who have moved from unemployment to school are significantly more distressed than males in the same Denmark, while Scottish females in that situation are significantly less distressed than their Danish counterparts.

Table 4. Multivariate covariates of psychological distress among previously unemployed youth by gender and current labor market status

	Unemployed		Employed		Temp job		Student		Homemaker	
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Country										
Finland	---	---	---	---	-.16*	-.15**	-.12*	-.18**	---	---
Iceland	.11***	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Norway	.07*	---	.12***	---	---	-.12*	---	---	---	---
Sweden	---	---	---	---	---	-.13*	---	---	---	---
Scotland	---	---	-.10**	---	---	---	.09*	-.10*	---	---
Socio-demographic										
Age	.06**	---	-.06*	-.09*	.11**	---	-.11**	-.12**	---	---
Urban (ln)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Respondent's education	---	---	---	-.10**	---	---	---	---	---	---
Family situation										
Living alone or w/friends	.11***	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Living with spouse	---	---	-.08*	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Child	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-.27**	-.11***
Employment status										
Length of unemployment	---	---	---	---	---	.09*	.19***	.13**	---	---
Support from parents										
Emotional support	-.09**	-.13***	---	-.12**	-.09*	-.10*	-.17***	-.16***	---	-.13**
Advice	---	---	---	.15***	.12**	---	---	---	---	.09*
Instrumental support	.06*	.11**	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Economic situation										
Feels deprived	.35***	.35***	.34***	.33***	.37***	.31***	.29***	.32***	.48***	.33***
Attitudes towards unemployment										
Own attitudes	---	.07*	---	---	---	.07*	---	---	---	---
Others' perceived attitudes	.11***	.11***	.06*	.08**	---	.11**	---	.10**	---	---
Adj. R^2	.20	.18	.15	.16	.18	.16	.19	.16	.25	.18
N	1492	901	1116	704	674	696	546	514	116	548

Although age is not linearly related to psychological distress in the sample as a whole, it has different significant effects depending on gender and occupational status. Thus, among those who have moved from unemployment to full employment or student status, older males and females are significantly less distressed. On the other hand, older males that are still unemployed or have a temporary job are significantly more distressed than others in those situations.

The effects of living arrangements on psychological distress also appear to vary by gender and occupational status. Thus, only unemployed males who live alone or with friends are more distressed than males in the same situation living with their parents, while only permanently employed males who live with a spouse are less distressed than their single counterparts living with their parents. Having a child in the household is only related to less distress among females and in particular males who have moved from unemployment to becoming homemakers. Interestingly, length of previous unemployment is only associated with higher levels of distress among male and females students and females in temporary jobs.

Emotional support by parents is associated with less psychological distress among females, regardless of current labor market status. Among males, such emotional support is significantly related to less distress among the unemployed, the temporarily employed and students, but not among the permanently employed or the homemakers. Interestingly, parental advice is associated with higher levels of distress among women who are permanently employed or at home, and males in temporary jobs. Instrumental support is only associated with higher levels of distress among males and females who are still unemployed.

Although individual attitudes towards unemployment have no linear effect on distress in the full model, negative attitudes are associated with higher levels of distress among unemployed and temporarily employed females. Individual perceptions of negative attitudes of others towards the unemployed are associated with higher levels of distress among unemployed and permanently employed males, and all employment categories of females except homemakers. Perceived economic deprivation, however, is the strongest and most consistent covariate of psychological distress, regardless of gender and employment status.

Discussion

In this chapter we have examined the role of social support in mitigating psychological distress among currently and recently unemployed youth in several different countries. We found the Danish respondents to be significantly less distressed than the sample as a whole, while the Icelandic respondents were on average more distressed than their counterparts in other countries.

Denmark and Iceland may in some respects be considered to be at the opposite ends of a continuum of societal strains exerted on the unemployed. It has been pointed out in countries with high unemployment rate for a long period the public acceptance of unemployment (Schaufeli, 1997). Coupled with relatively generous unemployment benefits and a trend towards increased youth employment, the Danish respondents may in fact feel less social and economic pressure, and have reasons to be more optimistic about their future prospects of becoming and remaining employed.

In the hierarchical model, controlling for socio-demographic characteristics, employment status and support from parents, the national differences in levels of psychological distress remained largely unchanged. Once differences in economic deprivation and perceived attitudes of others towards the unemployed are controlled for, however, most of these differences became non-significant. Only the Icelandic respondents remain somewhat more distressed than the Danes. The Finnish respondents in fact turn out to be less distressed, once all factors in the model have been accounted for. Finally, we find significant national differences in the full model across different labor market outcomes. The complex differences by country, gender and labor market outcomes that emerge are somewhat beyond the scope of the present study, but warrants further investigation.

The effects of age on psychological distress vary significantly by labor market outcomes. Age has no main effect on psychological distress in the full model. However, older age is on one hand related to less distress among the permanently employed and those who have returned to school. On the other hand, older males that have remained unemployed or only have a temporary job are more distressed than others in that same situation. It could be argued that net of length of unemployment, biological age increasingly becomes a stressor among the unemployed and the temporarily employed, in particular among males that may feel the added weight of traditional gender expectations on their shoulders. Conversely, the feeling

of progress through becoming permanently employed or returning to school may have greater psychological benefits for the older unemployed youth. Indeed, prior research suggests that the adaptation problems and social pressures associated with unemployment become more serious with age (Winefield et al., 1993).

We find that currently and recently unemployed youth who live alone or with friends are worse off than those living with their parents. Furthermore, those who have a child that lives with them appear to be somewhat better off. However, analyzing the data by labor market outcomes reveals several important caveats. Thus, those living alone with friends are only worse off than those living with their parents if they are continuously unemployed males, this is in line with older research (Hammer, 1994). Having a child in the household similarly only decreases psychological distress among those who have become full-time homemakers. Thus, the effect of living arrangements on psychological distress appears to be strongly dependent on labor market outcomes.

We find that emotional support from parents is associated with less psychological distress among females, regardless of labor market outcomes. Among males, emotional support from parents is associated with less psychological distress among the unemployed, the temporarily employed, and among students. Interestingly, parental emotional support is unrelated to psychological distress in the most traditional category of permanently employed males and in the most non-traditional category of males who are homemakers.

Other types of parental support are found to be unrelated to psychological distress or to be associated with higher levels of such distress. Continuously unemployed males and females that receive instrumental support from their parents are found to be more distressed than others in that situation, although the underlying causal mechanism is not entirely clear. In particular, greater parental instrumental support may be a reaction to severe psychological distress and fewer resources to deal with it among unemployed adolescents.

Finally, the relation between parental advice and psychological distress shows an interesting variation across gender and labor market outcomes. Thus, parental advice is unrelated to psychological distress among males, with the notable exception of being associated with higher levels of distress among those temporarily employed. Among females, however,

parental advice is only associated with greater distress among the permanently employed and homemakers. It can be tentatively suggested that parental advice may become a significant stressor in and of itself, in particular in contested domains, where considerable generational differences of opinion can be expected.

The overall conclusion of this chapter is that economic deprivation is the greatest determinant of psychological distress among currently and recently unemployed youth. Becoming permanently employed or going back to school is associated with less distress, while temporary employment or becoming a homemaker does not. Emotional support by parents is an important resource for this group, but once such support has been taken into account, parental advice may be experienced as an interference that further increases psychological distress.

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Torild Hammer

The Probability of Re-entering Education among Unemployed Youth. A Comparative Study of Six Countries in Northern Europe

A lot of research has been carried out regarding the labour market career among previously unemployed youth. However, for unemployed youth, return to post compulsory education is another important option. This is especially important in the current situation in European labour markets.

First, because previous research has found that unemployed youth have low education and often lack qualifications demanded in the labour market (OECD 1998). Declining youth cohorts from the middle of the eighties, may imply an increased demand for young people in the labour market in many European countries. To give unemployed youth better qualifications seem to be an adequate measure. Second, better qualifications may help the less advantage group and thereby redistribute unemployment more evenly among young people. If unemployment does not hit one especially marginalised group, but is more evenly distributed, it would not have such adverse consequences. Many European countries increase places in education in order to combat youth unemployment. However, we know very little about who among unemployed youth do re-enter education and under what conditions.

This paper examines the return to education or employment among unemployed youth in countries with different educational systems. Comparative surveys in Sweden, Finland, Iceland, Denmark, Norway and Scotland of nearly 8600 unemployed young people enable us to study the probability of re-entering post compulsory education versus employment among unemployed youth .

In Norway and Sweden, upper secondary education is well developed and about 96% of the cohort enter upper secondary school. Vocational education is integrated in the school contrary to Denmark which is more similar to the German dual system with vocational education organised according to an apprenticeship system. In Iceland and Scotland, upper secondary education is less developed, especially regarding vocational education, and about 30% leaves school with only compulsory education.

Differences between countries imply that post compulsory education will be a more available option for unemployed youth in Scandinavia than in the other countries. Especially in Denmark, since apprenticeship training may be more attractive to unemployed youth than school based education.

The countries also differ greatly in terms of the level and history of unemployment. Denmark has had an unemployment problem for the past 20 years, whereas in the other four this is a new phenomenon, especially in Iceland. Norway and Sweden have had the same development, but Norway has had higher unemployment for a longer time than Sweden. In recent years, however, and contrary to the case in Sweden, Norway's unemployment rate has decreased dramatically. At the time of the interview, the youth unemployment rate was about 15% in Sweden and Scotland, and somewhat lower in Denmark, Norway and Iceland (12%). In Finland, youth unemployment was very high indeed ,30%.

In other words, both the availability of education and the unemployment rate may influence the return to education or employment, and explain different outcomes between countries.

However, from a theoretical point of view we would expect that the factors which determine the probability of a re-entering education or employment will be the same across countries. The hypotheses is that cultural capital, and especially educational capital, in the family will influence re-entering education, while social capital will be a more important factor regarding re-employment.

Theoretical approach

The concept of human capital is used in economic theory to describe the qualifications of the individual in the labour market, as opposed to physical capital such as machinery and means of production. Sociological theory has developed the concept of human capital further, and differentiate between cultural and social capital.

Cultural capital is according to Bourdieu one form of symbolic capital. The persistence of such capital, which can be defined as recognised values and available resources, is dependent of the recognition by society as well as a demand in the market. (Broady 1991). The demand also determine to what extent cultural capital is convertible to other kind of capital such as economic or social capital. In Bourdieu's terminology is social

capital in many ways defined as available social networks and connections: " The volume of social capital possessed by a given agent thus depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilise and on the volume of capital (economic, cultural and symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected" (Bourdieu 1986 p 249).

Previous research has found that parents' cultural capital influence their children's' educational career and prospects on the labour market. Bordieu has shown how cultural capital affects social reproduction through the educational system in France (Bourdieu & Passeron 1990).

According to Bourdieu is cultural capital the dominating symbolic capital in France. Cultural capital is objectified through institutions related to art, literature, music and the educational system, where good degrees and examines from recognised schools and universities are significant. In other words such examines do not only prove certain qualifications or human capital convertible in the labour market, but "a school diploma is a piece of universally recognised and guaranteed symbolic capital, valid on all markets. As an official definition of an official identity, it realise its holder from the symbolic struggle of all against all by imposing the universally approved perspective" (Bourdieu 1990, p 136).

However, according to Bourdieu, with increasing educational level in the population, there is a risk of diploma inflation. When nearly everyone attend higher education, such educational credential will lose their value, both when competing for attractive jobs in the labour market, and as cultural capital. However, those without such diplomas, which is often the case among unemployed youth, will lose even more as a result of such devaluation (Bourdieu 1984). Unemployed youth are less educated than their comparable age group (OECD 1996) and the majority has a working class background with less educated parents.

Cultural capital is often measured by the parents' educational level, what Bordieu would call educational capital. However, parents' attitudes towards education, involvement with school and their help with homework may be additional indicators of educational capital relevant to their children's achievement

Social capital may also influence the individual's career. Coleman (1990; 1988) has developed a theoretical framework about social capital in the creation of human capital, according to which it is important to study the social structural conditions under which social capital arises, as well as

social capital as a resource for action by the individual. In other words, social capital constitutes a particular kind of resource available to an actor and, unlike other forms of capital, it is inherent in the structure of relations between and among actors (Coleman 1988, 598). Coleman's definition of social capital is much broader than the concept used by Bourdieu. He differentiates between three forms of social capital: obligations and expectations, information channels and social norms. The return to education among unemployed youth, as well as their future career on the labour market, can be determined by a lack of social capital. Family background may be important, especially for young people, and parents' capital both in terms of cultural, financial and social capital may influence their children's education and prospects on the labour market. A lot of research has documented low levels of education among unemployed youth as well as among their parents (OECD 1996). However, research has focused to a lesser extent upon the lack of social capital. Parental divorce or being brought up by a single parent may imply loss of social capital if there are strong permanent conflicts in the family, or if the father is missing. Several studies indicate that parental divorce has an impact upon their children's educational attainment (Bosman & Louwes 1988; Dronkers 1994) and selection to unemployment (Caspi et al 1998, Pedersen 1997). Previous findings from the present study show that parental divorce has an independent effect upon the probability of re-employment among unemployed youth, even controlling for school attainment, duration of unemployment, parental support and mental health (Hammer 1999).

Furthermore, unemployment among parents reduces their financial capital, but can also reduce the social capital available to their children, both in terms of social norms regarding work commitment, and most importantly, through information channels about vacancies and social contacts usually accessible to those in employment. However, such factors do not give adequate information about the quality of the relationship between young people and their parents. Young people's experience of parental instrumental and emotional support in general could be a better gauge of parental engagement and social capital available to their children.

The aim of the article is to investigate under which conditions unemployed youth return to post compulsory education in countries with different educational systems. Further, we want to explore the hypothesis that the probability of re-entering education is dependent of educational capital (cultural capital), while social capital (more than cultural capital)

will determine re-employment. It is also possible that both processes will be present and interact to determine the outcome.

Research design

Surveys were conducted among representative samples of between two and four thousand young people in each of the five Nordic countries and Scotland. Previous research in all six countries had provided information on how the unemployed, as a group, differ from those in work or education, and revealed that unemployed young people comprise a very vulnerable group. Less, however, was known about the determinants of the unemployment 'career' in the different countries.

Representative samples were therefore drawn from national unemployment registers, with eligible respondents defined as young people between the ages of 18 and 24 who had been unemployed for a period of at least three months during spring 1995. Our sample consisted of young people with a variety of work histories who, at the time of the interviews (6-12 months later) were to be found in a full range of positions inside and outside of the labour market. This survey design was conducive to a comparison of young people with unemployment experience, some of whom managed to establish positions in the full-time labour market, others who re-entered full-time education and others who remained unemployed, withdrew from the labour market or became marginalised in some other way.

While a longitudinal design would have been appropriate for a study of this type, the cross-sectional approach enable us to obtain timely information on these crucial policy-relevant issues. Retrospective questions were used to glean information on previous work histories, experience of unemployment, and participation in training schemes. This type of methodology has been used successfully in other relevant studies; the problems of recall often associated with retrospective studies appear to be less in evidence with questions concerning key life events (Ashton et al., 1982 1986).

The surveys were based on initial postal questionnaires, with additional strategies employed to minimise bias due to skewed response rates. Those who failed to respond to the initial questionnaire after having been sent a reminder were interviewed by telephone. Such measures have been found necessary in a study of unemployment and exclusion, as young people without work tend to be less likely to respond (Dodds et al., 1989).

Methods

In Sweden the sample consisted of 3,998 young people (response rate 63%) in Finland 2,386 (73%), Iceland 2,280 (60%), Denmark 1,540 (76%), Norway 2,000 (with a response rate of 56%). In Scotland 55% of the contactable sample responded providing 809 cases. In Denmark, the sample was drawn among young unemployed who were insured, and most of them entitled to unemployment benefits.

Attrition analyses based upon register data in Norway showed no skewed attrition on the basis of information about educational level, duration of unemployment, work experience, proportion without relevant work experience or education, proportion receiving unemployment benefits, age, sex and county. In Sweden, register data showed no biased attrition (Carle and Julkunen 1997). In the other countries, permission was not granted to cross-check survey against register data.

The measurements and indices used in this article are:
Economic problems the last year, index 11 items. During the past 12 months, which of the following have you had to give up due to lack of money: warm meals, essential clothing for yourself or your family, paying rent and bills on time, going to the cinema, theatre or concerts, inviting friends to your home, visiting relatives or friends living in other towns, buying birthday or Christmas presents, holidays away from home, newspapers, hobbies or other recreational activities, visiting pubs or restaurants. Scored from 1 (often) to never (3), The index was coded as a dummy for each question (often=1) (range 0 to 1.0) Cronbach alpha=0.85.

Age, year of birth, continuos variable

Education: number of years of formal schooling (the respondent, father and mother).

Unemployment *duration* was measured as total months unemployed.

Total unemployment spells ever

- The work commitment scale (Warr et al., 1979) of 6 items scored from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree): It is very important to me to have a job; if I won a lot of money I would want to work; I hate being unemployed; I feel restless if I do not have a job; work is one of the most important things in my life; I would prefer to work even if unemployment benefits were generous. (range: 6 to 30) Cronbach alpha=0.83.

Parental support (7 items) covered two dimensions: emotional and instrumental support. In the past two weeks, how often have your parents: lent you money, given advice about your studies or work, talked to you about personal matters, provided advice about financial matters, helped you in practical ways, done other favours for you, shown you warmth or affection. Scored from 1 (very often) to 5 (never) (range 1.00 to 5.00) (Chronbach alpha=0.81).

Parental support to education was measured by 4 items: When you were 16 years old: Did you often get help from your parents with your homework? Did your parents think that a long education was a waste of time? Did your parents appreciate it if you got good marks? Did your parents attend parents' meetings at school regularly? (score yes/no, additive index 0 to 3, Cronbach alpha = 0.73)

Family background was measured by: Parental divorce before 15 years old, Brought up with a single parent, Mother or/and father ever unemployed.

The data were analysed by the SPSS programme. In the analyses, the selection biases of the Danish sample was taken into account by controlling for whether or not the respondent received unemployment benefits, and educational level. The STATA programme was used for multinomial logistic regression analyses.

Results

Table 1 shows the respondents main occupation by country at the time of the interview (last week).

Table 1. Main occupation among previously unemployed youth by country

		Frequency	Percent
Finland	Unemployed	706	**40,7**
	Work	356	20,5
	Training	187	10,8
	Education	322	**18,5**
	Other	153	8,8
	Total	1724	99,3
Iceland	Unemployed	237	**18,4**
	Work	593	46,0
	Training	37	2,9
	Education	226	**17,5**
	Other	187	14,5
	Total	1280	99,2
Norway	Unemployed	287	**25,9**
	Work	353	31,9
	Training	125	11,3
	Education	199	**18,0**
	Other	138	12,5
	Total	1102	99,6
Sweden	Unemployed	731	**28,8**
	Work	763	30,1
	Training	405	16,0
	Education	409	**16,1**
	Other	209	8,2
	Total	2517	99,3
Denmark	Unemployed	334	**28,5**
	Work	512	43,7
	Training	63	5,4
	Education	168	**14,3**
	Other	90	7,7
	Total	1167	99,7
Scotland	Unemployed	343	**42,0**
	Work	335	41,0
	Training	47	5,8
	Education	25	**3,1**
	Other	45	5,5
	Total	795	97,3

In all countries except Finland, where the unemployment rate was very high among young people, more young people were re-employed than returned to education. Moreover, in Finland, a higher proportion of the sample was between 18 and 20 years old, and the probability of return to education was higher in the youngest age group. In Finland, Iceland and

Norway, the proportion that went back to education was about 18%. We would have expected more young unemployed in Denmark to return to education, because of the dual educational system in this country, but only 14% went back to education. In Scotland, very few, only 3% returned to education. This is probably partly because of restricted access to education for young unemployed people in Scotland. Thus, the high proportion of unemployed in Scotland, which is just as high as in Finland with a much higher unemployment rate, can be explained by the low proportion who entered education in Scotland. The proportion in employment was the same as in other countries with the same unemployment rate.

Table 2 shows what kind of education they entered. We have here also included training schemes which give them some kind of education or diploma, such as AMO courses in Sweden and Norway and new apprenticeship training in Scotland.

Table 2. Educational scheme among previously unemployed youth by country

	Vocational School		Apprentice-ship		Academic School		University		Training Scheme	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Finland	15	,9	103	**5,9**	23	1,3	112	6,5	57	3,3
Iceland	50	3,9	28	2,5	91	**7,1**	68	5,3	17	1,3
Norway	18	1,6	17	,7	22	2,0	107	**9,7**	63	**5,7**
Sweden	6	,2	10	,9	64	2,5	172	6,8	145	**5,7**
Denmark	24	2,0	15	1,8	25	2,1	54	4,6	54	4,6
Scotland	15	1,8	12	1,5	-	-	10	1,2	30	**3,7**

According to the table, more young people in Iceland went back to academic courses in the upper secondary school, than in the other countries. This is probably because they have less access to vocational courses and training schemes in Iceland. Interestingly, nearly 10% entered education in the university in Norway which was higher than the other countries. As expected more young people in Norway and Sweden started educational programmes in different training schemes. The availability of such schemes are higher in these countries.

Further analyses showed that the probability of entering education was dependent upon the level of education. In general, those with a lower educational level, had a lower probability of return to education. However, there were substantial differences between countries.

Table 3. Respondents education by country

Finland	Not completed compulsory	13	0,7	**Sweden**	Not completed compulsory	15	,6
	Completed compulsory	391	22,5		Completed compulsory	198	7,8
	Vocational	759	43,7		Vocational	1138	44,9
	Apprenticeship	25	1,4		Apprenticeship	94	3,7
	Academic	328	18,9		Academic	466	18,4
	University	31	1,8		University	160	6,3
	Other	167	9,6		Other	251	9,9
	Total	1714	98,7		Total	2322	91,6
Iceland	Not completed compulsory	44	3,4	**Denmark**	Not completed compulsory	45	3,9
	Completed compulsory	779	**60,4**		Completed compulsory	163	14,1
	Vocational	68	5,3		Vocational	117	10,0
	Apprenticeship	45	3,5		Apprenticeship	460	**39,3**
	Academic	234	18,1		Academic	187	**16,0**
	University	21	1,6		University	188	16,2
	Other	78	6,0				
	Total	1269	98,4		Total	1160	100
Norway	Not completed compulsory	8	,7	**Scotland**	Not completed compulsory	41	**5,5**
	Completed compulsory	167	15,1		Completed compulsory	337	**45,2**
	Vocational	402	**36,3**		Vocational	151	20,3
	Apprenticeship	51	**4,6**		Apprenticeship	15	2,0
	Academic	282	25,5		Academic	110	14,8
	University	107	**9,7**		University	91	12,2
	Other	74	6,7				
	Total	1091	98,6		Total	745	100

The table shows that especially in Scotland and Iceland the educational level was very low, about 50% had only completed compulsory education. As discussed in the introduction, in these countries access to education is more restricted and less developed than in the other countries. Still, as previously reported in table 1, Islandic unemployed youth return to education, while in Scotland, they do not.

As expected, the Danish unemployed had the highest level of education. 40% had completed three years of vocational school or apprenticeship training and 16% had courses from the university. This could be explained by the dual educational system in Denmark. Comparing only those who had received unemployment benefits in the age group 20 to 24 years old, the country differences remained the same. Consequently, the high level of education among unemployed youth in Denmark, is not a result of the biased sample, where the sample was drawn among the insured unemployed (see the method section).

The Norwegian respondents had also a high educational level compared to the other countries. 26% had three years of upper secondary school of academic courses and 10% courses from the university, and nearly 40% some kind of vocational education. However, contrary to Denmark, only 17% had completed three years of vocational school or apprenticeship training, 26% had only one or two years of vocational school.

Educational level, age, sex and drop out from previous schools influenced the probability of re-entering education. However the effects were different between the countries. Table 4 shows a multivariate logistic regression on return to education versus continuos unemployment.

Table 4. Predictors of return to education among unemployed youth by country. Logistic regression 1=education, 0=unemployed. Unstandardised coefficients

	Finland	**Iceland**	**Norway**	**Sweden**	**Denmark**	**Scotland**
	(N=1019)	(N=456)	(N=478)	(N=1062)	(N=502)	(N=329)
1=female	**-0.51*** **	-0.34	0.38	**0.50*** **	0.02	**0.63**
Age	0.22***	0.19***	0.22***	0.15***	0.19**	-0.01
School Drop out	-0.40*	-0.44*	**-0.97*** **	-0.08	0.04	-0.17
Education Level	0.42***	**0.38*** **	0.45***	0.35***	0.48***	**0.70*** **
Constant	-2.4	-1.6	-2.6	-2.7	-3.2	-5.2
Chi-Square	152.2	53.4	83.9	97.1	45.8	31.1

Interestingly, females have a lower probability of entering post compulsory education than males in Finland and Iceland, while it is the other way around in the other countries. School drop out has a negative impact upon the probability of return to education, especially so in Norway compared to for instance Finland (z= 27). A high level of education increase the probability, and the effect is stronger in Scotland than in most of the other countries. The results show that it is not especially young unemployed people with low educational credentials or who have dropped out of previous schools who try "to catch up" with their comparable age group by re-entering education. On the contrary, the probability is higher, the higher educational level they have. Could this tendency be explained by a higher level of educational capital discussed in the introduction?

Table 5 shows a multinomial regression analyses where we compare the probability of re-entering education or re-entering employment with continuos unemployment (the reference group). In this analyses we want to look at the influence of social and educational capital discussed in the introduction, to predict the outcome.

Educational capital is measured by the respondents, mother's and father's education, the respondents adjustment in school, school drop out and parents support for education.

Social capital is measured by parental divorce, parents emotional and instrumental support, parents unemployment, and whether the respondent has used family connections to obtain work. Sex, age and previous labour market experience and work involvement is controlled for in the analysis. This is because it is reasonable to assume that those who have previously been well integrated in the labour market and have a high work involvement, will have a higher probability of re-employment than entering education.

Table 5. The influence of social and educational capital on return to education or employment

Multinomial regression Number of obs = 6183
LR chi2(38) = 997.95
Prob > chi2 = 0.0000
Log likelihood = -6267.07

	Employment		Education	
	B	SE	B	SE
Female=1	-0.11 ns	0.07	0.39***	0.07
Age	0.02 ns	0.02	0.06**	0.02
Educational capital:				
Parents support school	0.43**	0.14	0.27*	0.13
School adjustment	0.02ns	0.04	-0.06ns	0.04
School drop out	-0.22**	0.08	-0.22**	0.08
Respondents edu.	0.14***	0.03	0.19***	0.02
Fathers edu	-0.02ns	0.02	0.03*	0.01
Social capital:				
Parental divorce	-0.28**	0.08	-0.12ns	0.08
Parents unemployment	-0.16*	0.08	-0.04ns	0.08
Parents support	0.20***	0.04	0.04ns	0.04
Work involvement	0.40***	0.04	0.05ns	0.04
Total months worked	0.004*	0.001	-0.001ns	0.002
No. Unemploy Spells	-0.13***	0.02	-0.18***	0.02
Finland	-1.04***	0.12	0.09ns	0.12
Iceland*Female	-0.09**	0.03	-0.08**	0.03
Iceland	0.54***	0.13	0.92***	0.13
Norway	-0.51**	0.14	0.58***	0.14
Sweden	-0.44***	0.11	0.45***	0.11
Scotland	0.14ns	0.16	-0.79***	0.22
Constant	-2.19		-2.7	

Reference group: Unemployed

The table presents the probability of re-employment versus education compared with the reference group; those continuously unemployed. However, when I in the following compare the significance level of the coefficient regarding education versus employment, I have run the same analyses but used the employed group as reference group.

The most important result, is that when controlling for previous labour market integration, females have a higher probability of entering education in all countries except in Iceland, while there are no sex differences in entering employment (B=0.50, Z=7.7 $p<0.0001$).

Educational capital seems to be important both regarding labour market and educational outcome. Social capital is as expected important for the probability of entering employment but has less influence upon re-entering education.

The table shows that social capital such as parents instrumental and emotional support increase the probability to enter employment but not to enter education, the difference is clearly significant. However, also parents support and positive attitudes towards education had an impact on entering employment, but also on educational outcome. According to Coleman, parents support towards education is a form of social capital. However, we have here operationalised such support as educational or cultural capital in the family, following Bourdieu's arguments. The results here show that Coleman's approach is probably more fruitful, since such support was actually equally important for labour market and educational outcome. In other words, parental support is a form of social capital which is important related to labour market outcome. Those who enter education seem to be more independent of their parents, in spite of being younger than those who enter employment. Lack of social capital operationalised by parental divorce and experience with unemployment had an effect on the probability of employment but not of return to education. However, the difference was not significant. Educational capital such as the respondents education and father's education influenced the probability of entering education significantly stronger than entering employment, while drop out from previous schooling was equally important for entering education and employment. School drop out is probably also related to a person's adjustment and behaviour and does not only imply lack of educational capital.

Educational capital had an impact both on the probability of re-employment and re-entering education. In other words, their educational capital is convertible in the labour market.

Surprisingly, to find work through family had no effect and is therefore not included in the model. However, to find work through friends had actually a negative impact upon job chances, probably implying an impact of negative social capital in the youth culture.

As expected, work involvement and work experience influence the probability of re-employment, but had no effect on the probability of entering education. Interestingly, number of unemployment spells have a significantly stronger negative impact on entering education than entering employment ($B=-0.05$, $Z=-2.5$, $p<0.01$). However, if we include information about the total duration of unemployment in the model, we find equally strong effects on employment and educational outcome. It is the number of unemployment spells which have a stronger negative impact upon return to education than return to employment. This is not easy to explain. It is not lack of labour market experience which have an impact and not duration of unemployment. A possible explanation could be that number of unemployment spells also express several drop out from education and not only unemployment as a result of problems in the labour market. Such a group would probably have less motivation to return to education again. However, if we look at the relationship between school drop out and number of unemployment spells, we do not find any strong correlation, but we do not have information about the frequency of school drop outs. Previous research has revealed that those with repeated spells of unemployment may be a different group from those who are long term unemployed (Hammer 1997). Many of them work in occupations in the private sector, which are vulnerable to changes in the economy. They are locked in special segments of the labour market, and this is expressed by a strong history dependence in unemployment (occurrence dependence). For these young people, return to education is clearly not an option. They find new jobs interspersed with unemployment.

The results are in accordance with the hypothesis discussed in the introduction, even if social and educational capital is not easy to separate so strictly as expected. It is possible that their financial situation, lack of economic capital, may make it difficult to return to education. In all countries, young people in education are not eligible to unemployment benefits.

However, they may have access to social security, get student loans or live with their parents to finance education. If we include such information in the model, it does not change much. Financial problems and to receive social assistance have equally negative impact on the probability to enter education or employment compared to the unemployed group.

The differences between countries in labour market outcome were as expected clearly influenced by the level of unemployment in the different countries. Unemployed youth from Finland, with the highest unemployment rate, had the lowest probability of employment, while young males in Iceland had the highest probability compared with Denmark. The results are in accordance with previous findings (Hammer 1999).

The probability of re-entering education was significantly different from entering employment in all countries. Country specific analyses showed basically the same results, but also revealed some interesting differences. The results in Scotland differed in some ways from the other countries. First, parents emotional and instrumental support had a stronger impact upon the probability of re-employment in Scotland than in the other countries (B=0.33, Z=3.6). In Finland, Iceland, Denmark and Sweden, this effect was not significant. Second, school drop was not significant, but school adjustment had a clear effect upon the probability of re-entering education in Scotland. The results were basically the same as in Denmark, but different from all other countries.

Discussion

As discussed in the introduction, upper secondary education is less developed in Scotland and Iceland compared to Scandinavia. However, obviously, it is not only the availability of post compulsory education in a country which determine the probability of re-entering education among unemployed youth. When controlling for the level of education, which was low in both countries, unemployed males from Iceland had the highest probability of entering education, and Scotland the lowest.

The educational level among the unemployed in Iceland and Scotland were much lower than in the other countries. These countries may therefor have a lot to gain by increasing the availability of education to combat youth unemployment. However, this is not easy because those with low educational credentials, and poor adjustment in previous schools, have a

lower probability of re-entering education in all countries. It is possible that apprenticeship training could be a better option than school based education. The Danish dual educational system, based on apprenticeship, could be a model. Danish unemployed youth had definitely the highest level of education.

Social capital, such as family background, influenced the return to employment. Parental emotional and instrumental support had a much stronger impact on entering employment than post compulsory education, while fathers educational level only had an impact on re-entering education. The results are in accordance with the theoretical argument outlined in the introduction. Parental support is probably a good operationalisation of social capital, which involve social competence as well as information channels about the labour market, important for young unemployed people who try to find work. It is also interesting that parents support regarding the respondent's education also had an impact upon the probability of re-employment. Parental support in general seems to be important . Such support from the family may express social capital such as expectations, norms and attitudes which create social competence important in the labour market in order to get and keep a job, but is of less importance regarding entering education.

Those who had unemployed parents probably have less social capital or social capital which even may have a negative impact on their children's job chances. To find work through family had no effect upon re-employment, and to find work through friends had actually a negative impact on job chances, probably implying an impact of negative social capital in the youth culture. In accordance with Coleman's concept, social capital does not necessarily have a positive effect upon educational attainment or labour market outcome. Norms and attitudes as well as relevant information channels, could constitute a youth culture which devaluate work, or devaluate school and the value of education. Paul Willies' analyses of the male school culture in his book " Learning to Labour" (Willies 1979) shows an anti-school culture which is highly appropriate regarding their future prospects in the labour market. We do not know if such norms and values still dominate much of the youth culture among young working class boys: "the macho culture" which regards intellectual work as feminine, and which reject educational attainment and school as representative for middle class values. However, it would certainly give a relevant explanation to why young unemployed males have a much lower probability of

returning to the educational system compared to females. Furthermore, previous research has found that unemployment seems to strengthen traditional gender roles. The male role as provider imply that income through employment is probably more important for young males than females. Further education may therefore be less attractive for males than females. However, traditional gender roles does not explain why so few among unemployed youth in Scotland returned to education compared to the other countries. From educational statistics as well as from the results presented here, it seems clear that young people in Scotland have a lower level of education in the general population, and among those unemployed half of the sample left education after compulsory school. The motivation for further education is probably lower in Scotland than in the Scandinavian countries both in the general population and among unemployed youth.

In a theoretical discussion of the concept of social capital, Portes (1998) argues, based on a review of the literature, that it is possible to distinguish three forms of social capital: "(a) as a source of social control; (b) as source of family support; (c) as a source of benefits through extra-familial network". We have here only examined social capital or lack of such capital through family support. Such support may of course also function as social control and can express dependency of parents in an age group where most young people (at least in northern Europe) seek independence. It is in this context interesting that to live with parents had a negative impact upon both the probability of employment and return to education. This is in line with previous findings from the study, which showed a curvilinear relationship between family support and mental health. Young people with little or very much support reported more mental health problems (Hammer 1999).

It is also interesting that parents support or lack of social capital operationalised through family divorce or parental unemployment, had no impact upon the probability of re-entering education. The results may imply that it is not emotional and instrumental support in itself which is important, because such support should also be important as a support to their children regarding re-entering education. It is more reasonable to assume that support from parents in employment express a good relationship where young people have internalised norms, attitudes and values regarding employment as well as information about the labour market. Though, parental support towards education had an impact upon re-entering education,

probably because such support also express cultural capital and educational motivation among parents.

However, the most interesting result presented here is the higher probability of re-entering education among young unemployed women compared with young unemployed men. Most European countries increase the number of places in post compulsory education in order to combat youth unemployment. The results here show that it is primarily young women who use this option. This has some political implications which should focus on how re-entering education could be a more attractive option also for young unemployed men.

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Jan Carle

Social and political activity among unemployed young people in Six Northern European Countries

Introduction

An often-discussed thesis in social research is the association between unemployment and political behaviour. The empirical facts that support this are however not that clear as they seem to be in the public debate. The aim of this article is therefore to discuss this relation. I will start by presenting some research results concerning the relation between unemployment and political attitudes and activity.

One of consequences that is widely discussed in research is if a person's possibilities to take an active part in political matters really is associated with the position on the labour market. There are basically two main arguments concerning this connection. The first one claims a clear connection between the two, while the other one says that this is hard to say. Broadly speaking the first argument falls back on research from the well known Marienthal study during the 30s where the evidence showed that unemployed people are less interested in politics (Jahoda, Lazarsfeld & Zeisel 1972). The other argument has been confirmed by research during the last two decades (f ex Furlong & Cartmell 1997, Wallace & Kovatcheva 1998).

Unemployed tend to participate less in political activity and they also tend to pay less attention to be informed about political issues. They also feel that they have less capacity to control their life situation. These types of results are up until today reported in a variety of studies from many different countries. But at the same time a variety of studies also indicate that there are no clear connection between unemployment and political activity. There is, in fact, no clear evidence that unemployment produce alienation from politics (Furlong & Cartmell 1997, Wallace & Kovatcheva 1998, Rantakeisu, Starrin & Hagqvist 1997, Petersson et al 1998, Griffin 1993).

The indication of political alienation is less clear than it seems to be in the public debate. Instead the evidence goes in many different directions. It is not that clear if unemployment or time spent as unemployed comes

together with higher sympathies to the left or right on the political scale. In fact are both trends reported in research (Furlong & Cartmell 1997, Wallace & Kovatcheva 1998). In some studies there are also evidence showing that unemployment does not influence young people's political behaviour at all. Instead it seems that other factors besides unemployment play an important role and interplay with people's political activity f ex gender, family background, social class, origin of birth within and outside the country (Furlong & Cartmell 1997, Wallace & Kovatcheva 1998).

One of these other factors is associated with the general circumstances concerning people's possibilities to take part in political matters in society. In societies where people besides the political organisations and participation in elections also have (or feel that they have) other possibilities to influence the political agenda, unemployment seems to have a different effect on political behaviour compared to societies where this is not the case (Wallace & Kovatcheva 1998). One example is a membership in a social and cultural organisation outside the labour market (religious or non-religious). Sometimes this membership means that unemployed people have access to the political system. In southern Europe as well as in some of the Nordic countries a membership in a religious organisation is such an example. One other example goes for the Nordic countries where a membership in a temperance movement traditionally means that people have access to power since a number of parliament members also are members of such an organisation. In some countries family and family network and relations are an important factor, which interplay with and influence people's political activity. The influence on political life of these different social network organisations varies between different countries. It is therefore important not to underestimate the importance of this organisation of everyday life around the family and local community since it might have an important impact on young people's way of coping with unemployment in general.

Political activity is therefore a reflection of young people's life situation as a whole where gender, age, social class and other social matters might have a significant influence. In this article I will explore in more detail young people's political activity in the Nordic countries and Scotland. The common basis for the analysis are the young people who participated in a study where all had experienced a unemployment period of six month during the first half of 1995 (the Nordic countries) 1996 (Scotland). (See below on methodology).

Theoretical and methodological problems

The key question, which is under constant debate in social research, is how the relation between unemployment and social and political behaviour is to be understood. One possible connection is between the inflow and duration of unemployment on the individual and collective level and the formation of certain political and social behaviour. It is perhaps possible to find evidences, which show that the experience of unemployment will lead to a certain social and political behaviour. If we look at methodology there are very few studies made which tell us stories about life course changes, no cross sectional study will give you that type of data (if they do not include historical data of course).

A few panel studies have been made which show some connections between different types of social situations in people's life courses (in which unemployment is calculated as one key situation) and what is thought to be different types of social and political behaviour. But not even in these types of panel studies is it possible to find a clear cut relationship between people's employment and social status and certain social and political behaviour. If people get unemployed during periods of their life course, this does not automatically mean that they will change their social behaviour in a certain way, and conversely that unemployed people change their way of thinking and living once they get a job.

It has been said that unemployment is particularly harmfully to young people's life chances and future prospects in life, they will be socialised into certain ways of living and thinking which are assumed to be difficult to change during their life course as adults. A lot of research on youth and youth cultures also reflects the idea that the way of life that is established during the adolescent period will hang on into adulthood. This is especially true for attitudes and social behaviour. Research on youth and generation also shows that young people to a higher extent reflects changes that are going on beneath the surface of today's society. The idea is that since young people not only react but also are actors in society, they actively participate in forming the society of today and thus consequently of tomorrow.

Compared to adults, young people's behaviour and thoughts today thus also reflects the future. Since unemployment has been experienced by a lot of young people in our society, this will in some sense be a part of young people's way of interpreting life. This comes either by own experience or as a reflection of the collective experience of unemployment in

society. Statistics shows, that in nine European countries, around 30% up to 60% of a population of young people have faced unemployment during 1993-1994 and almost the same amount have faced continuously unemployment during the same period (Russell & O´Connel 1999 manuscript). A study carried out in 15 European country shows that between 12.1 % (Luxembourg) and 69.8% (Finland) of young people of 20-24 years have experienced unemployment during the last five years (Vogel 1997, data from 1994).

This means that the impact of youth unemployment is one of many factors that influence individuals. Youth unemployment is also something that happens in a phase in the life course where people are mouldable. Finally unemployment is also something that happens in a certain historical period where different generations have different experience from which they interpret the experience of unemployment. Political reactions and social behaviour are answers to both historical as well as individual experiences. So if we want to examine if unemployment goes hand in hand with a certain type of politically behaviour or a certain way of living, the best way to do so would be to consider the general situation for young people. If we want to make comparative studies that go beyond gender, age, social background etc. and also include different countries, one realises the huge problems at hand. In these types of studies one as to generalise and to make simplifications.

In our study we looked at young people who have had an experience of a certain period of unemployment (in our case 3 months continuous unemployment the first half of 1995/1996) and what had happened to them 6-12 months thereafter. This was at that time for most of the Nordic countries the criterion for being long term unemployed. This meant that the young people, who were included in our study, at least in statistical terms would have been the example of an excluded group. In the Nordic countries, there had been done quite a lot of studies which contained random samples of young people, but very few studies were actually made on this more, at least the in statistical terms, excluded group. We then thought we had the possibility to say something important about the life situation and future prospects of the young people who are more vulnerable in our societies.

The young people were asked to answer a postal or telephone questionnaire. Besides the questions about political attitudes and political participation the questionnaire mainly contained questions about labour market career history and outcome in work, unemployment, studying or other out-

comes since the day of the selection. It is also important to know that at the time of the questionnaire some of the young people were still unemployed. Some of them worked, some were in school or in labour market measurements and finally some of them did something else (f ex military force or childcare).

Main questions in this article

In our European study we have the possibility to analyse three interesting indicators regarding unemployment and political activity. These indicators have very seldom been analysed in the same study and in such a variety of societies. These indicators are (I) what type of political activity the young people have participated in (II) would consider to participate in (III) and would not consider participating in (IV) and finally political attitudes measured as the common used left and right scale.

This article is mainly going to explore political attitudes and political activities.

Are there any differences in the attitudes and behaviour among young unemployed people in the different countries included in the study?

Are there differences in attitudes if we take in to consideration different occupational situations (being in work, still unemployed, etc)?

Are there any differences in political attitudes and behaviour if we take in to consideration time spent as unemployed (month)?

I will focus on:

Differences between the Nordic countries and Scotland. In this case I will treat country as a variable.

Differences among the young in each country concerning gender, occupational status and experience of unemployment.

Results

Political interest

In the questionnaire one question dealt with political interest. The respondents were asked to answer if they were politically interested or not. The idea of this question was to get an idea of how many of the young people who actively are prepared to state that they have no political interest at all.

The table below shows the percentage of the young people who answered that they felt they had some interest in politics.

Table 1. Interest in politics, by gender and occupation (percentage of the young people who have at least some interest in politics)

	Total	Female	Male	Unemployed	Work	Training*	Education*	Other
Finland	43	39	46	34	43	40	61	44
Iceland	60	53	66	54	62	57	66	52
Norway	65	59	69	58	66	59	82	58
Sweden	70	69	71	64	72	68	80	71
Denmark	69	66	72	63	69	68	80	71
Scotland	50	51	50	45	55	60	68	40
Overall	60	58	62	52	63	60	73	58

The categories in the table above are the different occupational status that the young people had at the time of the survey. This means that the category "unemployment" consists of those who where unemployed both at the time of the sample as well as the time of the survey (6-8 months after the time of the sample). The category "work" then consists of those young people who went from unemployment to work. The category "other" consists of maternally leave, military service, pension etc.

As one can see in the table, above 60 percent of all the young people in the study stated that they had some interest in politics. The differences between the countries are quite large, we find the lowest level of interest in Finland and Scotland and the highest level of interest in Sweden and Denmark. The interest is generally lower among the unemployed and for those in training schemes, while the interest is higher for those in education. The order between the countries is roughly the same in each occupational category, except for those in education in Finland, Iceland and Scotland where young people have a lower level of interest compared to the other countries.

These results could be compared to another European comparative study. In this study, close to 50 percent of the young Danes stated that they were very or somewhat interested in politics. The differences are quite substantial between the countries, only close to 25 percent in Spain and Italy but around 70 percent in East Germany and Bulgaria stated that they were interested in politics (Wallace & Kovatcheva 1998). Yet in another study, in Sweden indicates that around 50 percent of young Swedes stated that they were interested in politics (SOU 1994:73). It is quite important to realise how different types of questions measure interest. It is reasonable to

think that it is not easy to answer weather you are not interest in politics, compared to make a statement on a scale. In the Swedish study mentioned above a scale was used. It is therefor possible to transform the information to the percentage that stated that they were not at all interested in politics (SOU 1994:73). 13 percent made this statement, but among the unemployed young people around 35 percent in the age group between 16-24 years stated that they were not at all interested in politics. This means that these figures (from a Swedish representative study including 3 455 persons in the age between 16-74 years old) are very close to what we find in our unemployment study.

What about time spent in unemployment? In our study we find the following difference in political interest differentiated by cumulative unemployment time, calculated as the total experience of unemployed month.

Table 2. Political interest and cumulative unemployment month, by gender and country

	1-6 months	7-12 months	13-24 months	25-26 months	37-months	Change %
Female	64	63	56	52	56	8
Male	71	68	62	56	48	32
Finland	49	50	45	36	39	20
Iceland	64	64	56	56	53	17
Norway	75	68	66	66	59	21
Sweden	74	70	72	71	63	15
Denmark	76	72	66	66	50	34
Scotland	57	61	45	44	48	16

The impact of time spent in unemployment on political interest seems to be higher among the males than females. If we compare the countries, we find that the impact of unemployment is highest in Denmark, then in Finland and Norway and finally lowest in Iceland, Sweden and Scotland. It is also possible to see different patterns. In Finland the impact of unemployment comes after more than 25 months of total unemployment, in Iceland, Denmark and Scotland after 12 month of total unemployment. In Sweden and Norway we find two steps in the decrease in political interest, the first step after 6 month and a second after 26 month of total time spent in unemployment.

The main results show that unemployed youth do have less interest in politics, a result that holds both if we compare among the selected group in

our study or if we compare young unemployed people with a "normal" group (data only for Sweden). There are differences among the countries in our study, unemployed young people are less interested in politics in Finland and Scotland compared to Sweden and Denmark. The ranking order between the countries is roughly the same if we compare within each occupational group. Males are in general and compared to females more interested in politics. Finally, the experience of unemployment does have a substantial impact on political interest, especially among men and among young people in Denmark, and to some extent also in Finland and Norway.

Political attitudes

The differences in political attitudes are measured with a left-right scale. This type of scale has been widely used in different comparative studies within Europe. One result from these studies is that people tend to be more to the left in the former Western countries, compared to people in the former Eastern European countries. Young people in the Western countries are more to the left than their adults are. In the former eastern countries it is the other way round. Young people in the former eastern countries are also more in favour of market capitalism then the older generations are. To support left ideas in the former eastern countries are the same as being conservative and against reforms. In the western countries it is more the other way round (Wallace & Kovatcheva 1998).

The general impression is that the right-wing support among young people increases as you move to the east in Europe and decreases as you move to the west. However Denmark seems to break this pattern since the percentage of young people who place themselves to the left in Denmark is closer to the percentage who do so in the former eastern countries (Wallace & Kovatcheva 1998). The results presented in Wallace & Kovatchevas study then suggest that young unemployed people might be more to the right in Denmark and Finland and reversibly more to the left in the other countries.

It is possible to examine this question in at least two different ways. One way is to recode the results from answers on a scale, and combine those who have said that they are definitely and somewhat to the left (respectively to the right) in just two categories, left and right (this is the method used by Wallace & Kovatcheva). Another way to handle the results from a left and right scale is to use mean values (the general picture from these two methods is roughly the same). The six countries come in the

following ranking order (support of left), Scotland (43%), Sweden (42%), Denmark (36%), Iceland (29%), Norway (25%) and finally Finland (15%). As one can se there are huge differences between the countries. However, the result is close to what is known from other studies. The amount of young people who places themselves to the left differs from close to 60 percent in Spain, 30 percent Denmark and only 10 percent in Poland (Wallace and Kovatcheva 1998).

The young people in our study who live in Scotland and Sweden are clearly more in favour of the left compared to the young people in Finland. The general picture is the same if we look at females and males. This means that the same ranking order between the countries is the same but in each and every country (except Denmark) females are in general more in favour of left than the males are.

Iceland and Norway break the east and west pattern mentioned above, the expectation was that the young people in these countries would have placed themselves more to the left. The results however are that the support to the left is relative high at least among the young people in our study who live in Scotland and Sweden.

Another interesting result to discuss is the amount of young people who feel that they have their sympathies to the right. If there is a rising support for right wing parties is one often-debated question among youth researcher today, especially in connection to youth unemployment. In fact, there is a fear of an increase in a right-wing support (rather than an increase in a left-wing support) which probably goes back to the experiences from the crisis during the 30s. Research in the Nordic countries also shows an increase in support for neo fascist parties among especially young men (whom very often also are unemployed). A good economic profit from record sales and shops selling merchandise with neo fascist outfit also indicates that there are possibilities for these movements to be both economic strong and independent (Björgö 1997). The special security police in Sweden can also report that the political violence and sexual harassment that are associated with skinheads and neo fascist movements have increased drastically during the 90s. In the debate a lot of this has been explained by a combination of a general economic decline and high unemployment among low educated young men in urban areas. While I was preparing this article (mid October) a male member of the syndicalism union movement who lived in Stockholm was murdered by three young

male members of a neo-fascist movement. A spokesmen of the movement talks about a war going on and how each and every one who talks bad about the movement from now on will face the risk of ending up with a bullet in his/her head. During March 2000 the three young men where prosecuted for the murder, all of them in the age of 18-25 years of age, all of them with nazi sympathies.

In our study we find the following order of countries ranking from highest to the lowest amount of sympathies to the right, Denmark (37%), Norway (31%), Finland (30%), Iceland (29%), Sweden (24%) and Scotland (12%). The young unemployed people in Sweden and Scotland do not seem to have their sympathies to the right, while in Denmark, Norway and Finland the sympathies are more to the right.

To simplify the discussion it might be useful to use an index. This index is basically the support for left (being clearly and somewhat to the left) minus the support for the right (clearly and somewhat to the right), split by country and sex and type of occupation at the time of the study. The table shows the left and right support index.

Table 3. Political support, by gender and occupation (–support for right, +support for left)

	Total	Female	Male	Unem-ployed	Work	Training*	Educa-tion*	Other
Finland	-15	-8	-19	-9	-18	-9	-21	-23
Iceland	0	9	-7	-3	-3	36	-4	12
Norway	-6	6	-14	-5	-15	8	-2	1
Sweden	18	22	15	27	10	26	11	17
Denmark	-1	1	-5	0	-3	8	1	-13
Scotland	31	33	31	34	30	36	44	12
Overall	4	10	-1	9	0	16	-2	3

**The amount of people in the cells is limited for Scotland, which means that the figures are unsure*

If we look at the table we will find that the general pattern mentioned above sticks, the young people in the study are more to the left in Sweden and Scotland, while they are more to the right in Iceland and Finland. Compared to women, males are not that much to the left. We can also see that the young people who are still unemployed at the time of the study together with those who went on to training, generally are more to the left. We also find that those who went on to education, work and other occu-

pational statuses are not that much to the left, and this pattern is the same in each country. It seems to be correct to say that higher sympathy to the left is more associated with being unemployed rather than being in education or work. This result would then suggest that it is not the unemployed young people that have right-wing sympathies. The fear of an increase in the support for different right wing movements might not exclusively have its roots among the unemployed people themselves but also among young people in a society where high youth unemployment is apparent.

Another question in research is the impact of prolonged unemployment on political attitudes and behaviour. Are there any signs of a shift to left or right if we take the experience of unemployment into consideration? The research is not as clear as one might think. In table 4 below I have used the same type of index as in table 3 above, but divided by cumulative experience of unemployment.

Table 4. Political support as left and right sympathies and cumulative unemployment, by gender and country (-support for right +support for left)

	1-6 months	7-12 months	13-24 months	25-26 months	37 months
Female	5	10	14	17	19
Male	-9	-4	-1	9	7
Finland	-23	-20	-17	-8	0
Iceland	-1	5	8	15	1
Norway	-12	-11	-8	8	-3
Sweden	2	15	27	32	27
Denmark	-17	1	2	-1	5
Scotland	37	27	33	29	33

The results are striking! The general pattern is that the total time spent in unemployment does have an effect on the young people's political attitudes. With time spent in unemployment comes (for both female and male) an increase in support for the left. This general pattern sticks in Finland, Iceland Norway and Sweden, but only up to a total time of 26 month as unemployed. After 26 month spent as unemployed the support starts to go the other way round (an increase in the support for the right). In Denmark we find that the support for the right decreases strait away after 6 month of total unemployment and stays on an even level up to 37 month. In Scotland the time spent in unemployment have the same pattern as in Denmark, after a first sharp decrease in the support for left after 6 month the support stays roughly at the same level up to 37 month.

There are however another result that is striking, which actually underlies the figures above and these figures are shown in the table below, the amount of young people who does not take a political stand at all. This is clearly related to total time spent in unemployment.

Table 5. Political support as not taking political stand and cumulative unemployment, by gender and country

	1-6 months	7-12 months	13-24 months	25-26 months	37 months	Change %
Female	35	38	44	49	47	33
Male	31	36	40	47	50	61
Finland	50	50	54	63	52	0
Iceland	39	41	40	52	55	41
Norway	32	41	40	52	55	72
Sweden	27	33	34	38	43	59
Denmark	26	23	30	39	41	58
Scotland	39	45	45	49	44	13

As one can se from the table there is a tremendous change in the amount of young people who do not take a political stand if we at the same time take in to consideration the total time spent as unemployed. The general trend is that the amount of young people that does not take a political stand increases with time spent in unemployment. We find the same patterns for both males and females, as well as for four of the countries includes in the study. Two of the countries brake this pattern though, Finland and Scotland. In these countries the change is relatively low and only after 26 month of total unemployment. After this the amount of young people who do not take a political stand decreases a bit.

It is therefore probably fair to say that perhaps the most important results are that (except for Denmark and Sweden) close to 50 percent of the young people in our study feel themselves being in the middle of the left-right scale. For those who went on to education (except for Scotland and Finland) close to 30 percent feel themselves being in the middle of the left-right scale. This means that to be unemployed also comes together with not taking a clear stand on the left-right scale, while it is more like the other way round among those who went on to education (except for Scotland and Finland). It is also fair to say that the greatest difference between the political opinions among the unemployed seems to be between those who live in Sweden and Scotland (with more left-wing sympathies) compared to those who live in Denmark (with more right-wing sympathies).

In my opinion the results above also show two different but important things about the connection between youth unemployment and political attitudes. Firstly, the total time the young people spend as unemployed do seem to have an influence on their political attitudes. It does so in the sense that the support for the left increases in Finland, Iceland Norway and Sweden up to 26 month of total unemployment, after that we find that the support decreases and goes the other way round with an increase in the support for the right. Secondly, the total time the young people spend as unemployed increases the proportion of young people who does not take a political stand (except in Finland and Scotland). This means that the total time young people spend as unemployed actually has two types of impact:

- A clear standpoint in political attitudes to the left but after a very long experience of unemployment a swing to more right-wing sympathies.
- A growth in the impact on young people's indifference to left and right opinions, which could mean that experience of unemployment comes hand in hand with political apathy.

Political actions

In our study we asked questions about participation in political actions and the attitudes on the willingness or reluctance to do so. The participants in the study were asked about their involvement in several pre-specified political actions on three illustrative levels: whether they had engaged in a stated political action; could imagine carrying out a stated action; or absolutely could not imagine carrying out a stated action. This type of technique has also been used in international as well as national studies (e.g. Eurobarometer 37.0 1992, Ny tid – Nya Tankar 1998). The following actions were covered in our study:

Signing a petition
Taking part in boycotts
Taking part in legal demonstrations
Taking part in wildcat/illegal strikes
Occupying buildings or factories
Wearing a pin to show support for a cause
Voting
Attending meetings organised by a political party
Attending meetings organised by a union organisation
Attending meetings organised by other organisations.

The table below shows the percentage of the young people who said that they have participated in any of these different types of political actions.

Table 6. Participation in political action, by country (percent)

	All	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden	Denmark	Scotland
Signed a petition	62	46	61	63	74	59	60
Taken part in boycott or strike	19	11	19	16	26	22	14
Taken part in demonstration	12	6	12	15	15	14	11
Taken part in unofficial strike	2	1	2	3	2	2	2
Occupied factories etc	1	1	1	2	1	1	4
Carried badge	22	9	34	26	15	21	43
Voted in elections	83	80	86	83	85	89	68
Attended political meetings	12	4	19	14	12	13	11
Attended union meetings	15	5	15	16	17	27	8
Attended organisations meetings	18	11	26	18	18	19	18
Mean all actions	2,4	1,7	2,7	2,5	2,7	2,6	2,3

The young people have to a high extent participated in elections, in the Nordic countries on a general and higher level compared to Scotland. Behind these figures we can also witness a well-known pattern, the percentage of participating in election is rising dramatically with age, especially after 20 years of age. This actually shows the general effect of the low participation rate among first voters. This general pattern is the same if we look at each occupational category, lowest voting rate though among unemployed (76%) and highest among those in education (89%), and this pattern sticks even if we take age into consideration.

Besides election the young people have (in ranked order) participated in: signed a petition and carrying a badge, taken part in boycott or strike, attended other organisations meetings, attended union meetings, attended political meetings, taken part in unofficial strike, taken part in demonstration and finally occupied factories etc. It is quite clear that quite a few of the young people in our study have participated in more violent actions.

The general impression is that participation is higher in Sweden and lower in Finland and Scotland, expect for carrying a badge were the figures

are quite high in Scotland. To check this impression even further I made a total index. This index is the mean for all the different actions put together (index value from minimum 1 and maximum 10). The index shows that it is possible to put the countries into three different groups, Finland (clearly below the overall mean) followed by Scotland and Norway and Denmark (close to the overall mean) and finally Iceland, Sweden and (above the overall means).

From research one might expect that unemployed to a lesser extent have participated in political actions. Also that males are more active compared to females. But one might also expect that females are more active in some of the more "softer" public oriented actions outside the parliamentary system as well as in elections. At the same time one would expect that males are more active in "harder" public oriented actions as well as to attend union and political meetings (Griffin 1993, Furlong & Cartmell 1997, Wallace & Kovatcheva 1998). The table below shows the percentage of participation according to occupational status and gender.

Table 7. Participation in political action, by gender and occupation

	Female	Male	Unemployed	Work	Training	Education	Other	All
Signed a petition	68	56	53	63	67	72	61	62
Taken part in boycott or strike	20	18	15	19	21	28	15	19
Taken part in demonstration	13	12	11	11	11	19	10	12
Taken part in unofficial strike	1	2	2	2	1	2	3	2
Occupied factories etc	1	2	1	1	2	2	3	1
Carried badge	24	19	18	24	17	27	22	22
Voted in elections	85	81	77	85	83	89	82	83
Attended political meetings	11	12	8	12	10	18	12	12
Attended union meetings	14	15	13	18	15	12	14	15
Attended organisations meetings	17	19	13	19	17	26	18	18
Mean all actions	2,5	2,3	2,1	2,5	2,4	2,9	2,4	2,4

The expectation concerning gender differences was fulfilled. Females are in general more active in "softer" actions as well as they are more active in participating in election, while men are more active in the more "harder"

actions and they also participate more in meetings with political parties, union and other organisation. If we look at the total mean (the index value for all actions taken together) we also find that females are more active compared to men.

The participating rate is in general lower among the unemployed and higher among those in education. In general there are three different levels of participation according to occupational status. Those in education are the most active, secondly those in work, training and other occupation and finally those who are unemployed. Those in education have participated much more in all of these different channels (except union meetings were those in work have participated more). It is then quite fair to say that those young people in our study who were still unemployed at the time of the interview, differ not only from those who went to further education, but also from those who went to any other occupational outcome group. If we look at the total mean value, we find differences between those who are unemployed (below the overall mean) compared to those who are in education (above overall mean), while the differences between the other groups are quite small (close to the overall mean).

To what extent does time spent as unemployed affect participation in political actions?

Table 8. Participation in different political actions, by time spent in unemployment

	1-6 months	7-12 months	13-24 months	25-36 months	37 months	Change %
Voted in elections	87	87	82	77	75	-14
Signed a petition	67	65	61	56	54	-19
Carried badge	25	32	21	19	18	-28
Attended organisation meeting	22	20	17	13	15	-32
Taken part in boycott or strike	20	21	19	16	16	-20
Attended union meetings	16	15	16	13	11	-31
Attended political meetings	15	12	11	7	10	-33
Taken part in demonstration	13	13	13	10	10	-23
Taken part in unofficial strike	2	2	2	1	3	+50
Occupied factories etc	1	1	1	1	3	+200

The total time spent in unemployment does affect political participation in a negative way (decrease in participation), but all the different political actions are effected in about the same way (participation in election and

signed a petition lesser). However, in my opinion is the most striking result the increase in participation in unofficial strike and occupy factories etc that comes with unemployment experience (one has to remember that there are a very small number of young people who have participated in these types of actions). But the fact remains that the total time spent in unemployment does have an impact on political participation.

If we look at attitudes towards potential participation and more specifically the statement that one is not prepared to take part in any political action, we find differences between the countries.

Table 9. Reluctance to participate in political action, by country

	All	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden	Denmark	Scotland
Signed a petition	11	10	15	14	7	17	7
Taken part in boycott or strike	34	31	34	48	24	47	35
Taken part in demonstration	37	37	36	44	27	49	37
Taken part in unofficial strike	70	66	74	74	67	90	51
Occupied factories etc	83	79	88	88	80	96	65
Carried badge	33	39	30	38	30	40	19
Voted in elections	6	5	6	7	5	6	12
Attended political meetings	52	46	58	47	58	48	52
Attended union meetings	31	28	23	41	28	38	35
Attended organisations meetings	29	29	23	42	23	28	29
Mean all actions	3,8	3,8	3,6	4,5	3,4	4,7	3,3

The young people in Denmark seem to be most reluctant to participate in any of these actions except to vote in elections. The young people in Scotland together with those in Sweden are in some cases much lesser reluctant to participate in actions, especially to sign a petition, take part in boycotts or strikes and occupying factories (together with Finland) and demonstrations, carry a badge (together with Iceland). If we compare the total mean value we find that the young people in Norway and Denmark are most reluctant to participate (clearly above the overall mean value),

followed by Finland and Iceland (close to overall mean) and finally Sweden and Scotland (below overall mean).

In the same way we can also look at gender and occupational status and reluctance to participate in political actions.

Table 10. Reluctance to participate in political actions, by gender and occupation

	Female	Male	Unemployed	Work	Training	Education	Other	All
Signed a petition	9	13	14	11	9	6	11	11
Taken part in boycott or strike	33	35	40	34	31	23	39	34
Taken part in demonstration	34	39	40	38	33	25	40	36
Taken part in unofficial strike	77	65	69	72	67	67	78	70
Occupied factories etc	87	79	81	86	80	80	86	83
Carried badge	26	40	39	33	32	26	31	33
Voted in elections	5	7	8	5	5	3	6	6
Attended political meetings	51	52	59	52	51	38	54	52
Attended union meetings	28	34	35	31	30	26	32	31
Attended organisations meetings	28	31	36	29	28	17	33	29
Mean all actions	3,7	3,9	4,2	3,9	3,6	3,1	4,0	**3,8**

Males are more reluctant to participate in all types of actions, except to take part in a demonstration or occupying factories etc. The unemployed young people differ from the others in being more reluctant to participate in almost all types of political actions, especially those who are oriented towards the formal political system.

Finally then, how does total time spent as unemployed affect the reluctance to participate? Does unemployment imply withdrawal from political participation?

Table 11. Reluctance to participate in political actions, by time spent in unemployment

	1-6 months	7-12 months	13-24 months	25-36 months	37- months	Change %
Voted in elections	5	4	6	7	10	+100
Signed a petition	10	11	10	12	14	+40
Carried badge	32	30	34	35	41	+28
Attended organisation meeting	24	26	31	34	37	+54
Taken part in boycott or strike	33	30	35	38	37	+12
Attended union meetings	29	29	31	34	37	+28
Attended political meetings	46	47	55	57	59	+28
Taken part in demonstration	37	34	35	40	41	+11
Taken part in unofficial strike	72	72	71	67	65	-10
Occupied factories etc	86	83	84	79	74	-14

The table above clearly shows that the reluctance to participate increases with time spent in unemployment, except for taken part in an unofficial strike and to occupy a factory etc where the reluctance to participate instead decreases. This means that total time spent as unemployed does have an impact on the reluctance to participate. This impact has two different direction, the impact seems to be negative on the more parliamentary oriented actions and positive on the more extra parliamentary type of political actions.

To conclude, there seems to be least reluctance to participate in both "softer" and "harder" public oriented action among the young people in this study who live in Sweden and Scotland. At the same time, the young people in these countries are also more reluctant to participate in political meetings, and for Scotland to take part in elections. Compared to the other countries the Danish young people are not that eager to take part in politics actions expects for voting in elections.

The lowest degree of political participation in political actions we find among those who were unemployed both at time of the selection as well as six to twelve moths later at the time of the interview. Those who are unemployed are least interested in taking part in political actions. The most

active as well as those who are least reluctant to participate in political actions are the young people who live in Scotland and Sweden These are also the young people who place themselves clearly to the left or right on the left-right scale.

The total time spent as unemployed does affect young people's actual participation rate in political actions. The participation rate decreases in all types of political actions, except for participation in extra ordinary political actions (unofficial strike and occupy factories etc). This goes hand in hand with the result which shows that the reluctance to participate increases with time spent in unemployment, expect for those same type of extra ordinary politically actions types where the reluctance instead decreases.

Summary

Except for Denmark and Sweden, close to 50 percent of the young unemployed in our study place themselves in the middle of the left-right scale. For those who went from unemployment to education (except for Scotland and Finland), close to 30 percent feel themselves being in the middle of the left-right scale. This means that to be unemployed also comes together with not taking a clear stand on the left-right scale, while it is the other way round among those who went on to education. Together with experience of unemployment comes an increase in the amount of young people who do not take a political stand. It is also fair to say that the greatest difference between the political opinions among the unemployed seems to be between those who live in Sweden and Scotland (with more left sympathies) compared to those who live in Denmark (with more right sympathies).

Unemployed young people have less interest in politics. This result sticks both if we compare the selected group in our study and if we compare young unemployed people with others in a general random sample. There are differences among the countries. Unemployed young people are less interested in politics in Finland and Scotland compared to Sweden and Denmark. The ranking order between the countries is roughly the same if we compare within each occupational group. Males are in general more interested in politics than women.

The young people who live in Sweden and Scotland seem to be least reluctant to participate in both "softer" and "harder" public oriented actions.

At the same time, the young people in these countries are also more reluctant to participate in political meetings, and in Scotland as well to take part in elections. The Danish young people are not at all that that eager to take part in politics actions (expect for voting in elections).

Those who were unemployed at the time of the selection as well as six to twelve moths later are those who have the lowest degree of political participation in political actions. At the same time the unemployed are also the least interested in taking part in political actions. The most active as well as those who are least reluctant to participate in political actions are the young people who live in Scotland and Sweden. Together with experience of unemployment comes both lesser participation in political actions as well as higher reluctance to participate, expect for types of more "harder" and extra parliamentary actions.

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Hans Uldall-Poulsen

Differences between Unemployment Insurance Benefit Claimants and Social Assistance Benefit Claimants in the Nordic Countries

Introduction

In all Nordic countries an extensive social security net exists with the object of securing people in case of unemployment. When Nordic young people suffer unemployment, the public authorities step in and provide financial support so that they can maintain a reasonable everyday life. Primarily, public support consists of either unemployment insurance benefits or social assistance benefits and in most cases the unemployment insurance benefit payment is considerably higher than the social assistance benefit payment.

In the unemployment systems of the Nordic countries it is possible to distinguish between the insured and the non-insured. The insurance systems of the individual countries vary considerably, for instance, all the employees in Norway are automatically included in an insurance system, but the choice of insurance status in Denmark is voluntary. In Finland and Sweden the employees are covered by an obligatory minimum insurance, while the choice of additional insurance as a supplement to the minimum insurance is voluntary.

The level of unemployment benefit that a claimant is entitled to in case of unemployment, depends on insurance status as well as work experience, as the payment of unemployment benefits is provided on the condition that the unemployed person previous to the unemployment spell has gained a certain amount of work experience. Therefore the employment requirements in the unemployment benefit system work as a selective mechanism, which prevent a young person with limited work experience from securing himself/herself against unemployment. Considering the connection between unemployment, financial free scope and psychological health this may seem problematic.

This working paper is primarily based on the importance of the unemployment benefit system for the young and their possibilities of getting in-

sured, but it is important to keep in mind that "free choice" becomes important for the differences between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants in the countries where the choice of insurance status is free.

Chapter 2 will focus on the connection between the criteria of unemployment benefits and on the composition of the groups of "unemployment benefit claimants" and "social benefit claimants", and chapter 3 explains the consequences of the unemployment benefit system regarding the connection between form[1] of support and life situation.

The biggest difference between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants is expected to be in the countries where the requirements for the receipt of unemployment benefits are least restrictive. The reason for this expectation is that the spread concerning the work experience of the young is left-skewed meaning that over half the young will have less work experience than the average work experience, and therefore the difference between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants will be increased along with the strictness of the unemployment benefit requirements.

In relation to the analyses of the connection between the compensation level of the benefit types and the assessment of life situation, a connection between financial free scope and the assessment of ones own life situation, is expected to be revealed. It is to be expected that the analyses will show that the biggest difference between unemployment insurance benefit claimants' and social assistance benefit claimants' assessment of their own life situation will be in the countries with the biggest differences between payment of unemployment insurance benefits and payment of social assistance benefits.

Unemployment Systems

The unemployment systems of the Nordic countries are based on similar principles. In all the Nordic countries payment of unemployment benefits requires a certain amount of work experience previous to the unemployment spell and unemployment benefits can only be claimed for a limited period. In spite of the fact that many of the fundamental principles are the same,

[1] Unemployment insurance benefits or social assistance benefits.

there are a number of essential differences between the unemployment systems of each country.

The following two tables present a short survey of the essential differences between the countries' unemployment systems at the completion of this research.

Table 1. Unemployment insurance benefit claimants

Unemployment insurance benefit claimants	**Denmark**	**Finland**	**Norway**	**Sweden**
Criterion of employment	52 weeks of employment within the latest 3 years	6 months of membership of an unemployment insurance fund	Employee income of 30.000 NOK	12 months of membership of an unemployment insurance fund
Level of income related unemployment benefits	90 p.c.	App. 60 p.c.	App. 63 p.c.	80 p.c.
Unemployment spell	5 years	500 days	480 days succeeded by 13 weeks without support	300 days, however 450 days for persons over the age of 55 years
Deferred benefit days	None	5 days	3 out of the latest 10 days	5 days

Source: Arbetslöshetens vilkor p.61-64

The table shows that the requirements for receiving unemployment benefits are the strictest in Denmark and Sweden and the mildest in Norway. Therefore, ceteris paribus, it is expected that the share of young people receiving unemployment benefits will be lower in Denmark than for instance in Norway.

Tables 1 and 2 state the situation at the completion of the survey e.g. in 1995. Since the survey was carried out considerable reforms have been carried out on the Nordic labour markets. The reforms have been marked by a larger focus on active labour market policy which, among other things, is reflected in a tightening of the eligibility rules for young people. The connections, explained in the following sections, are expected to have changed concurrently with the changes in the unemployment benefit system.

Table 2. Social Assistance benefit claimants

Social assistance benefit claimants	**Denmark**	**Finland**	**Norway**	**Sweden**
Form of support	Cash benefits	Basic unemployment benefits and labour market support	Cash benefits	Cash benefits and cash labour market support
Criteria	Young people under 25 years have both a right and an obligation to activity	Young persons in search of a job under 20 years without an education have an obligation to activity	Vary between local authorities	Maximum a 100 days of unemployment for young people between 18 and 19 years of age
Period of support	No time limit	500 days basic unemployment benefits but no time limit regarding labour market support	No time limit	No time limit

Source: Arbetslöshetens vilkor p. 61-64

Data

The data is mainly based on a questionnaire survey carried out among 8654, 18 to 24-year-old Nordic and Scottish people, who were unemployed for more than 3 months in the period from 01.01.1995 to 30.06.1995. The collected material includes data from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Scotland, and Sweden. In this working paper, however, only data from Finland, Norway, and Sweden is used; for technical reasons the Danish set of data only contains information about unemployment insurance benefit claimants, while differentiating between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants is impossible in the Scottish and Icelandic systems. Scotland and Iceland, therefore, are completely left out of the analyses while the Danish data is replaced with data from an earlier Danish survey of the composition of unemployment carried out among 1528 unemployed Danes in 1994.

The categorisation into unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants has in the case of Finland, Norway, and Sweden been made in the light of the answers of the respondents concerning their most important source of income within the last 12 months.

The young, who state that unemployment benefits have been among their most important source of income, are classified as "unemployment benefit claimants", whereas the young who state that they have received cash benefits or some other social assistance benefits but not unemployment benefits, are classified as "social benefit claimants". The young, who have not received public support, are excluded from the analysis whether or not they are entitled to receive unemployment benefits.

In the Danish data the break down into unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants has been made on the basis of the information concerning their present income. The young who indicate that they receive unemployment benefits are classified as unemployment insurance benefit claimants, whereas the young who indicate that they receive social assistance benefits are classified as social assistance benefit claimants.

The choice of this method results in the following break down of data:

Table 3. Data categorisation

Data categorisation	Finland Nordic data	Norway Nordic data	Sweden Nordic data	Denmark Danish data
Unemployment insurance benefit claimants	413	557	1238	54
Social assistance benefit claimants	1003	140	657	63
In total	1416	697	1895	127

Table 4. Youth unemployment among the 15 - 24-year-old young people, broken down by gender and country. Percentage

Youth unemployment 15-24 years	Denmark	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Men	7,8	41,3	11,9	16,7
Women	12,3	28,1	11,8	14,0
In total	9,9	27,2	11,9	15,4

The figures are based on OECD: Employment Outlook 1998

In relation to the present division it should be noted that the group of social assistance benefit claimants in Denmark, Finland, and Sweden[2] consists of two groups of young people. The difference between the two groups is marked by their relation to the unemployment insurance fund system, as the one group has had the opportunity to register as a member of an unemployment fund but has failed to do it[3], while the other group would be characterised by not having had the opportunity to register as a member of an unemployment fund. Therefore, the group of social assistance benefit claimants consists of two quite different types of young people, which is an important fact to bear in mind when interpreting the following analyses.

The analyses will be based on a series of independence tests between the group of unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants. Since there is a considerable correlation between the analysed variables[4], the analyses will be characterised by a considerable degree of multicolinarity. As an example of the statistical noise that will characterise the following analyses, there were among other things considerable differences in the unemployment situation of each individual country by the time of implementation of the study. Typically, when unemployment is low there will be an overweight of the "less able" unemployed, and it must be expected that the homogeneity of the unemployment group will be largest in the countries where the unemployment figures are the lowest.

In 1995 Finnish youth unemployment was considerably higher than unemployment in other Nordic countries and thus the group of unemployed in Finland must be expected to be less homogeneous than the group of unemployed in the other countries.

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[2] The reason why the groups only exist in these countries is that unemployment insurance is obligatory in Norway.

[3] E.g. groups who assess that the expected costs relating to being unemployed are less than the current cost of paying the insurance premium.

[4] Work experience, for instance, will depend on age and education.

The Effect of Differences in the Criteria for Receiving Unemployment Benefits

The constitution of the groups of unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants depends on the unemployment benefit criteria. If receipt of unemployment benefits requires a long previous employment period relatively few young people will be entitled to receive unemployment benefits whereas relatively many young people will be entitled to receive unemployment benefits, if the unemployment benefit requirements concerning previous employment are less restrictive. Since the division of the work experience of the young is left-skewed and since work experience is of great importance for the distinction between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants, cf. tables 1 and 2, it is expected that the difference between the group of social assistance benefit claimants will be biggest in the countries with the strictest unemployment benefit requirements and the smallest in the countries with the most generous[5] unemployment benefit requirements.

A certain amount of work experience/membership of an unemployment insurance fund is a condition for receipt of unemployment benefits. Therefore young people, who have not gained the necessary work experience prior to their period of unemployment will not have the opportunity to receive unemployment benefits whether they are members of an unemployment insurance fund or not. It is therefore assumed that unemployment insurance benefit claimants compared to social assistance benefit claimants have a closer connection to the labour market. As work experience can be seen as a function of age, education, status of children, and gender, differences in work experience are expected to result in the fact that there also will be differences between the groups of unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants with regard to these variables.

[5] As work experience is expected to be correlated with age, education, children, gender, a left-skewed breakdown of the work experience would also affect the breakdown of the other variables, and that is in this respect age, education, children, and gender.

Age

It appears from tables 1 and 2 that the strictest requirements of previous work experience are in Denmark and Sweden and the minimum requirements are in Norway.

Table 5. Average age broken down by form of support and country. Year

Age	Denmark	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Unemployment insurance benefit claimants	22,6	21,9	21,8	21,9
Social assistance benefit claimants	20,8	20,5	21,0	20,8
Difference	1,8	1,4	0,8	0,9
Unemployment insurance benefit claimants are older than social assistance benefit claimants	>0,001	>0,001	0,02	>0,001
Significance				

Work experience depends positively on **age** and that is why unemployment insurance benefit claimants generally are expected to be older than social assistance benefit claimants.

As shown in table 5 the average age among unemployment insurance benefit claimants is higher than the corresponding average age among social assistance benefit claimants in Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden. In addition to this it appears that the difference in age is the highest in Denmark followed by Finland, Sweden, and Norway, a fact which in part corresponds with the difference in the requirement of previous work experience, since it was expected that the age difference between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants would be somewhat bigger than the one in Finland.

Owing to the requirement of the unemployment benefit system concerning previous employment the unemployment insurance benefit claimants are expected to have a more stable connection to the labour market, for which reason unemployment insurance benefit claimants compared to social assistance benefit claimants are assumed to have stayed **in their last job for a longer time**.

Table 6. Period of time in last job. Broken down by form of support and country. Month

Working hours (months)	Denmark	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Unemployment insurance benefit claimants	17,4	7,54	9,76	12,38
Social assistance benefit claimants	7,24	4,15	5,02	4,8
Unemployment insurance benefit claimants in proportion to social assistance benefit claimants	140%	82%	94%	158%
Significance	0,002	>0,001	>0,001	>0,001

Table 6 shows the tendency that unemployment insurance benefit claimants compared to social assistance benefit claimants have been in their last job for a longer period. The tendency is to be found in all of the countries. Furthermore, it appears that the difference in period of time in last job is biggest in Denmark and Sweden, which can be connected with the fact that the strictest requirements of work experience/membership of an unemployment insurance fund are to be found in these 2 countries.

Education

The connection between form of support and **education** must be seen in the light of the fact that education is an important factor concerning the unemployment of the young as well as the period of time on the labour market. On one hand education has a positive effect on job opportunities for the young, on the other hand education has a negative effect on the period of time in which young people are attached to the labour market. Therefore, the total effect of education on the work experience of young people is unclear, since the strength of the two effects will vary between the countries. Hence, it is not at first possible to say something reasonably about the aggregated net effect of the two effects.

Table 7 shows that there is a significant connection between education and form of support in Finland, Norway, and Sweden, while the

connection between form of support and education is not significant in Denmark[6].

Table 7. Average education. Broken down by form of support and country. Index

Education	Denmark	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Unemployment insurance benefit claimants	3,21	3,40	3,95	3,68
Social assistance benefit claimants	2,53	3,65	3,59	4,15
Unemployment insurance benefit claimants in relation to social assistance benefit claimants	27%	-7%	10%	-11%
Significance	0,235	0,009	0,023	>0,001

The educational courses are based on an index where the figure »1» is an expression of the shortest basic education (9 years of class teaching without exam) and »6» is an expression of the longest education (further education)

In addition it shows that the connection between education and insurance status is not without ambiguity as the social assistance benefit claimants, compared with the unemployment insurance benefit claimants, are the least educated people in Finland and Sweden, while the opposite tendency is the case in the Norwegian data. The figures are to be seen in connection with the ambiguous effect education has on the work experience of the young.

Parental status

The connection between form of support and **parental status** is to be seen in the light of the differences between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants with regard to age and education. The probability that a young person has a child depends in this way positively on the age of the young person, whereas education will have a negative effect on the probability of having children. It is not possible to determine the total effect of education and age where the tendencies are contradictory, that is among young people without an education and older people with an education.

[6] In Denmark they operate with a graduate rate.

It can be seen from table 8 that in Finland, Norway, and Sweden the share of young people with children tends to be higher among unemployment insurance benefit claimants than among social assistance benefit claimants, though it must be noted that the connection between form of support and parental status is very weak in Norway. The opposite tendency is the case in Denmark where unemployment insurance benefit claimants more seldom have children compared with social assistance benefit claimants.

Table 8. Children. Broken down by form of support and by country. Percentage share

Children	Denmark	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Unemployment insurance benefit claimants	9,3	16,5	35,6	23,6
Social assistance benefit claimants	27,0	8,3	31,8	10,5
Difference	-17,7	8,2	3,8	13,1
Unemployment insurance benefit claimants have more often children	-0,014	>0,001	0,417	>0,001
Significance				

Compared with table 7 the results in table 8 are not shocking as the connection between form of support and education is somewhat unclear. Compared with the social assistance benefit claimants the unemployment insurance benefit claimants have thus a longer education in Finland and in Sweden while the reverse tendency prevails in Denmark and Norway. Therefore, viewed in the light of the prior mentioned considerations regarding the connections between age, education, and parental status, it is not surprising that the connection between form of support and parental status is different in Denmark and Norway from the one in Finland and Sweden.

Gender

The connection between **gender** and form of support depends on the general unemployment situation in the individual countries, as the closest connection between gender and form of support is expected to be found in the countries where the biggest difference exists between unemployment of men and women, respectively.

Table 9. Gender. Broken down by form of support and country

Gender		Denmark	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Men	Unemployment insurance benefit claimants	48,9	26,4	84,5	64,7
	Social assistance benefit claimants	51,1	73,6	15,5	35,3
Women	Unemployment insurance benefit claimants	44,4	32,7	73,1	66,0
	Social assistance benefit claimants	55,6	67,3	26,9	34,0
Women are over-represented in the group of unemployment insurance benefit claimants		-0,64	0,01	>-0,001	0,56

Table 9 shows that there is a significant connection between gender and form of support in Finland and Norway, as there is a majority of women among the Finnish unemployment insurance benefit claimants while women are a minority among the group of Norwegian unemployment insurance benefit claimants. The reason why there is a majority of women among the Finnish unemployment insurance benefit claimants is because of the considerably low unemployment rate among Finnish men compared to the unemployment rate among Finnish women (cf. table 4). For this reason the women in Finland, compared to Finnish men, find it easier to meet the requirement of the unemployment benefit system for previous work experience. It is not possible to give a clear cut explanation of the observed connection between gender and form of support in Norway.

Health

Ahead of an unemployment period the employment requirement of the benefit system has the effect that young people, who are not able to work

owing to bad **health**, will not have the possibility of getting insured. Therefore it is to be expected that unemployment insurance benefit claimants generally have a better health than social assistance benefit claimants.

Table 10. The connection between form of support and health. Broken down by countries. Index

Assessment of health	Denmark	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Unemployment insurance benefit claimants	1,54	2,08	1,87	1,87
Social assistance benefit claimants	1,86	2,09	2,18	2,09
Unemployment insurance benefit claimants in relation to social assistance benefit claimants	-17%	0%	-14%	-11%
Significance	0,037	0,771	>0,001	>0,001

The figures are based on an index of the assessment regarding present state of health, where «1» is equal to «very good», «2» is equal to «good», «3» to «indifferent», and «4» to «poor»

The above table shows that in all of the countries except Finland there is a significant difference between the opinion of the unemployment insurance benefit claimants and the social assistance benefit claimants concerning their own present health, as the unemployment insurance benefit claimants generally evaluate their own present state of health most positively. Besides, it appears that the difference between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants in estimating their own health situation is largely the same in all of the countries. Therefore the differences in the unemployment benefit system do not seem to have any influence on the differences between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants regarding health.

Summary

The analyses in the first part of this working paper show that there are considerable differences between the group of unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants in the Nordic countries with regard to variables such as: age, links to the labour market, education, parental status, and gender.

The connection between form of support and the above-mentioned background variables is among other things to be seen in the light of the fact that for young people to be entitled to receive unemployment benefits previous to an unemployment spell they must have a certain period of work experience. Since there is a considerable co-variation between work experience and fundamental background variables such as age and education, the employment requirement of the unemployment benefit system leads indirectly to a number of differences in the composition of the groups into unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants respectively.

When looking at the concrete results of the analyses it appears that unemployment insurance benefit claimants compared with social assistance benefit claimants are generally older (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden), they have been in their latest job for a longer period of time (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden), and they have a more positive estimation of their own health (Denmark, Norway and Sweden).

Moreover, the analyses show that there is a connection between form of support and education (Finland, Norway and Sweden), parental status (Denmark, Finland, Sweden) and gender (Finland and Norway). In contrast to age, period of time in last job and health, the connections between form of support and education, parental status and health are ambiguous, which among other things is reflected in the fact that the Swedish unemployment insurance benefit claimants are better educated than the Swedish social assistance benefit claimants, while the opposite trend is to be found in the Norwegian data. The reasons for these ambiguous results may be that a variable such as education has two conflicting trends for the employment prospects of the young and that the net effect of these trends varies between the countries.

Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a number of differences between the group of unemployment insurance benefit claimants and the group of social assistance benefit claimants in the Nordic countries, since there is a considerable co-variation between the different types of differences. Concrete differences between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants of an individual country are therefore to be seen in the light of the unemployment benefit system of this country as well as in the light of the other differences which are to be found between the two groups in the country in question.

The Effect of Compensation Differences

The object of this chapter is to analyse whether there is a difference between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants regarding relations which originate from the differences in compensation level. The basis of the analysis is a thesis about the fact that differences in the compensation rate will be reflected in the job search activity of the young and the estimation of their own life situation. Thus the job search activity of the young is expected to depend negatively on the compensation rate, while the estimation of life situation of the young is assumed to depend positively on the compensation rate.

It is expected that the biggest differences between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants with regard to financial free scope, job search activity, and assessment of their own life situation are to be found in the countries with the biggest difference between payment of unemployment insurance benefits and payment of social assistance benefits. Thereby the differences are to be seen in connection with the differences between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants, which are further reflected in the requirements of the unemployment benefit systems concerning previous work experience.

Financial Free Scope

Unemployment benefit claimants are expected to have a larger **financial free scope** than that of the social assistance benefit claimants. The assumption is primarily due to differences in the compensation rates of the forms of support, but differences between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants especially with regard to age and education, are assumed to exert influence on the relation between income and form of support.

It appears from table 11 that there is a tendency towards unemployment insurance benefit claimants generally having a larger financial free scope compared to social assistance benefit claimants.

Table 11. Difference in monthly income after tax. Broken down by country

Income	Denmark	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Unemployment insurance benefit claimants in relation to social assistance benefit claimants	61%	30%	30%	35%
Significance	0,189	>0,001	>0,001	>0,001

The percentage income gap of average income concerning unemployment insurance benefit claimants. Regarding Denmark the income specifies the aggregated income for the person interviewed and common-law partner or husband/wife if any, which might explain the considerably greater variation in the Danish data

The tendency can be seen in all the countries, however, it is not significant in Denmark[7]. It can be seen that the income gap between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants is biggest in Denmark and Sweden and smallest in Sweden and Norway. Thus the income gap between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants is biggest in the countries where the compensation rate of the unemployment benefit system as well as the requirement of the unemployment benefit system are the highest.

Job Search Activity

The job search activity of the young may be expected to depend negatively on the compensation degree during unemployment, as a low compensation rate will affect the incentive to actively look for a job. In addition to this the connection between form of support and age/child status may also be expected to become important for the job search activity of the young, since "older" young people with children, owing to their bread winner burden, will have a greater incentive to look for a job.

Table 12 shows that unemployment insurance benefit claimants compared with social assistance benefit claimants more frequently seek employment in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden; the connection, however, is only significant at a 5% level in Denmark and Sweden.

[7] That the difference is not significant in Denmark is probably due to the limited data material.

Table 12. Job search frequency. Broken down by form of support and country. Percentage

Persons in search of a job	Denmark	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Unemployment insurance benefit claimants	67,3	49,0	53,3	57,8
Social assistance benefit claimants	42,9	45,1	47,1	48,4
Difference	24,4	3,9	6,2	9,4
Unemployment insurance benefit claimants more often seek a job	0,011	0,177	0,195	0,001
Significance				

If the table is compared with table 11 it is interesting to notice that the highest job search frequency is to be found in the group of young with the highest income – that is the unemployment insurance benefit claimants and that the greatest difference between the unemployment insurance benefit claimants and the social assistance benefit claimants regarding job search activity is in the countries where the biggest income gap is to be found between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants – that means in Denmark and Sweden.

The difference between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants with regard to job search activity may once again be seen in relation to the differences between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants which originate from the requirement of employment in the unemployment benefit system. Thus the biggest difference in job search activity is in the countries where generally the biggest difference is between unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants - that is in Denmark and Sweden.

Life Situation

Finally a study will be made to investigate whether there is any connection between form of support and change in **life situation** during unemployment The background for this analysis is a thesis that the change in the assessment of the social assistance benefit claimants regarding their own life situation in case of unemployment will be greater than the corresponding change for unemployment insurance benefit claimants, as the

social assistance benefit claimants to a higher degree must change their life style in case of unemployment, because of the relatively low compensation.

Table 13. The connection between unemployment and well-being. Broken down by form of support and country. Index

Well-being and unemployment		Finland	Norway	Sweden
Unemployed	Unemployment insurance benefit claimants	2,24	2,43	2,26
	Social assistance benefit claimants	2,34	2,62	2,52
Difference		-0,10	-0,19	-0,26
Not-unemployed	Unemployment insurance benefit claimants	2,00	2,24	2,00
	Social assistance benefit claimants	1,98	2,46	2,12
Difference		0,02	-0,22	-0,12
Change	Unemployment insurance benefit claimants	0,12	0,08	0,13
	Social assistance benefit claimants	0,18	0,07	0,19
Difference		0,06	-0,01	0,06

Young unemployed are young who primarily have indicated themselves as being unemployed in the previous year ahead of the survey, while not-unemployed consist of young people who have not assessed themselves as being not-unemployed in the year ahead of the survey. The figures are index figures and «1» is equal to the situation where a person regarding life situation is «very much contented», «2» is equal to «very contented», «3» to «somewhat discontented», and «4» to «discontented».

Additionally it is expected that the change in life situation will depend on the difference between the financial compensation which is provided to unemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants respectively. Therefore it is expected that the change in life situation will dominate in the countries where the difference in compensation degree is greatest and it will be minimal in the countries where the difference is the smallest.

Table 14. The connection between unemployment and well-being. Index

Change in well-being at unemployment in Denmark	Unemployment benefit claimants	Social benefit claimants
Much better	13	10
A little better	15	10
Neither better nor worse	46	47
A little worse	20	21
Much worse	6	13
Average	3,8	3,9

The figures in the table give the assessment of the change in their well-being after they have become unemployed of theunemployment insurance benefit claimants and social assistance benefit claimants respectively. In the calculation of the average »much better» is attached to the value of »1», »a little better» the value of »2», etc.

It appears from the figures that there is a tendency in Finland, Norway and Sweden that unemployed[8] unemployment insurance benefit claimants, compared to unemployed social assistance benefit claimants, assess their life situation as relatively positive. The tendency is to be found again among the not-unemployed in Norway and Sweden, whereas the tendency is contradictory for not-unemployed in Finland.

When we look at the effect of unemployment on the assessment of the young concerning their own life situation, it appears that unemployment negatively affects the assessment concerning life situation of the unemployment insurance benefit claimants as well as the social assistance benefit claimants in all of the countries, also in Denmark. The maximum effect of unemployment on life situation concerning unemployment insurance benefit claimants as well as social assistance benefit claimants is in Finland and in Sweden. Compared to table 1 it is interesting to note that the effect of unemployment on the life situation of unemployment insurance benefit claimants is greater in Sweden than in Norway. Additionally this is interesting when seen in the light of the fact that the compensation degree of the unemployment insurance benefit claimants is considerably higher in Sweden than in Norway. The outcome may be due to youth unemployment

[8] In the following the concept «unemployed» is used about young people with a high degree of unemployment and «not-unemployed» is used about young people with a limited degree of unemployment. See table 13.

being somewhat higher in Sweden and Norway for which reason the prospect of finding work is smaller for young people in Sweden and Norway in case of unemployment. In addition, it appears that there is no important difference between the connections in Finland and the other countries in spite of Finnish youth unemployment being considerably higher than youth unemployment in the other countries, for which reason the Finnish young unemployed will have a much harder time finding new work in case of unemployment.

Finally it should be noted that the effect of unemployment concerning the life situation of the young is greater on social assistance benefit claimants than on unemployment insurance benefit claimants in Denmark, Finland and Sweden, while there is no noteworthy connection between form of support and change in life situation in Norway. The fact that it is primarily the life situation of social assistance benefit claimants, which is changed because of unemployment, is a natural consequence of the fact that unemployment insurance benefit claimants receive a higher financial compensation than social assistance benefit claimants do.

Summary

In all Nordic countries the unemployment insurance benefit claimants generally have a tendency to have a greater financial free scope compared with the social assistance benefit claimants (the tendency is significant in Finland, Norway and Sweden).

In addition to this, the analyses show that the unemployment insurance benefit claimants compared to social assistance benefit claimants more frequently look for a job in Denmark and Sweden, and this is interesting seen in connection with the fact that the difference between the unemployment insurance benefit claimants and the social assistance benefit claimants concerning their financial free scope is biggest in these two countries.

As a last result it appears that the unemployment insurance benefit claimants when compared with the social assistance benefit claimants, generally have a more positive assessment of their own life situation during an unemployment spell (Finland and Sweden) and that the negative effect of unemployment on the life situation of the young is less among unemployment insurance benefit claimants than among social assistance benefit claimants (Finland, Sweden and Denmark).

Conclusions

In the Nordic countries there is a far-reaching social security system aimed at, among other things, securing people in case of unemployment. The security system distinguishes between two forms of financial support: unemployment insurance benefits and social assistance benefits, of which the payment of unemployment insurance benefits normally is somewhat higher than the payment of social assistance benefits. The form of unemployment benefit, a person is entitled to during unemployment, depends partly on insurance status, partly on work experience.

Even if the insurance status in several Nordic countries depends on the free choice of a person, the requirements of employment in the unemployment benefit system mean that only young people with a certain amount of work experience have the chance of achieving the right to unemployment benefits in case of unemployment. Young people without, or with limited, work experience are therefore cut off from receiving unemployment benefits during unemployment even if they wish for it, and for that reason the requirements of employment in the unemployment benefit system partly function as a selective mechanism, which cut off a group of young people from securing themselves against unemployment. This fact seen in relation to the connection between unemployment, financial free scope and psychological health can seem a bit problematic.

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Andy Furlong and Fred Cartmel

Does long-term youth unemployment lead to social and economic exclusion? Evidence from six European countries

Introduction

In many respects, a period of unemployment has become a normal part of youth transitions and in many European societies a majority of young people will now experience unemployment at some stage between leaving education and obtaining their first full-time jobs. For many, unemployment represents a temporary stage in an otherwise smooth and predictable trajectory. Yet it is clear that others find it extremely difficult to escape from unemployment and establish settled labour market positions. This paper draws on comparable data from six countries in order to describe the experiences of young adults who faced a recent period of unemployment of a duration of at least three months. Our objective is to identify patterns of labour market exclusion in societies with a range of different rates of overall unemployment and to explore the links between labour market trajectories and more subjective and social manifestations of unemployment which are often regarded as components of social exclusion.

We begin with a brief description of methodology, the characteristics of the sample and its variation between countries. This is followed by an analysis of structural differences in experiences of unemployment, highlighting routes out of unemployment and emerging patterns of exclusion. Finally we examine variations in subjective responses to unemployment and explore the significance of factors which mediate the relationship between structures of unemployment and subjective experiences and therefore serve to reduce the likelihood of social exclusion.

Although the term social exclusion has rapidly become a key sociological concept, its theoretical underpinnings are not always clear. For some, it is portrayed as a process, for others it is regarded as an outcome (see Berghman, 1997). Jordan (1996) regards social exclusion as a process in which dominant groups exclude outsiders so as to protect their own position. Room, on the other hand, links exclusion to a lack of resources which results in 'inadequate social participation, lack of social protection, lack of social integration and

lack of power' (1995: 105). As Silver (1995) acknowledges, social exclusion is an 'essentially contested concept', it involves economic position as well as cultures and value systems which are linked to life chances. Exclusion is not simply linked to a prevailing situation of an individual or group, but is also linked to future prospects and draws on past experience. As Atkinson argues, 'people are excluded not just because they are currently without a job or income, but because they have few prospects for the future' (1998: 6). In this sense, exclusion is also related to past labour market experiences which may leave 'people feeling that they lack control of their lives' (O'Brien, 1986). In other words, the concept of social exclusion is used to highlight dynamic linkages between material situations and attitudes and values which may be seen as reinforcing a situation of disadvantage. It underlines the ways in which disadvantage in one dimension of life can result in a new and more debilitating set of disadvantages.

In addressing issues of social exclusion among young people, it is necessary to acknowledge that paid work has traditionally been regarded as central to the process of social integration (Levitas, 1998). At the same time, it is also necessary to recognise that there are a range of subjective factors (such as attitudes, values) which are not simply outcomes of labour market processes, but which can themselves mediate patterns of exclusion. Long-term unemployment, for example, may in some circumstances lead to social exclusion, yet high levels of social or financial support may reduce the chances of exclusion. In terms of young people's experiences, the model below (Figure 1) highlights ideal types of exclusion and integration. While neither position necessarily involves all of the factors listed, there is an extent to which objective and subjective factors can be regarded as mutually reinforcing. The proposition developed in this paper is that this deterministic approach currently lacks an adequate empirical grounding.

Figure 1

Social Integration	Social Exclusion
Employment/sporadic unemployment	Long-term unemployment
High employment commitment	Low employment commitment
Financial security	Financial insecurity
Optimism	Pessimism
Life satisfaction	Life dissatisfaction
High social support	Low social support
Active life style	Passive life style

The sample

The analysis is based on an achieved sample of 8,654 18-24 year-olds from Scotland, Iceland, Norway, Finland, Sweden and Denmark, all of whom had recent experience of unemployment of at least a three months duration. Postal questionnaires were completed six months after sampling at which time some young people had found jobs, entered schemes or returned to education, while others remained unemployed or were experiencing a further spell of unemployment. Retrospective data was collected on labour market histories through specific questions on jobs and unemployment as well as through a diary question which sought information on main destinations over a six year period at six month intervals.

In the Nordic countries, the sample was collected through the unemployment registers, while in Scotland interviewers were placed in a representative range of unemployment benefit offices throughout the country. Achieved sample sizes vary from 2,534 in Sweden to 817 in Scotland and response rates range from 79 per cent in Denmark to 55 per cent in Scotland (Table 1).

Table 1. Achieved sample sizes and response rates

	Achieved sample (n)	Response rate (%)
Finland	1,736	73
Iceland	1,290	60
Norway	1,106	56
Sweden	2,534	63
Denmark	1,171	79
Scotland	817	55

Full details of the sample are provided in Julkunen and Carle (1988), but it is necessary to highlight some significant differences in the samples which affect interpretation. First, the Danish sample is composed solely of young people who qualify for insurance based benefits through having participated in paid employment. While the average age of members of the sample in most countries is around 21 years, on average the Danish sample is slightly older given that only insured young people were included. For the same reason, it should also be noted that there are no 18 or 19 year-olds in the Danish sample. Second, given the low numbers of unemployed young people in Iceland, the qualifying period of unemployment for sample eligibility was reduced from three months to two months. Third, the differences

in achieved samples of males and females in the Nordic countries reflects differential response rates while in Scotland it reflects the proportions of males and females experiencing unemployment. These different approaches are reflected in the age and gender characteristics of the sample (Table 2). In all countries except Denmark the male sample is larger, but in Scotland these differences are particularly pronounced, reflecting the national situation.

Table 2. Sample characteristics: mean age by gender

	% Males	% Females	Mean age
Finland	57	43	20.9
Iceland	51	49	20.9
Norway	57	43	21.5
Sweden	51	49	21.4
Denmark	48	52	22.2
Scotland	64	35	20.6
All	54	46	21.3

Patterns of unemployment: national variations

Levels of all-age unemployment in the six countries in 1995 show that Finland (17%), followed by Sweden (8.7%) and the UK (8.6%) had the highest rates, while the lowest rates were recorded in Norway (4.7%) followed by Iceland (5%) and Denmark (7%). As would be expected, experience of unemployment among the sample of young people is affected by the overall levels of unemployment within each of the countries, although it has been noted that in the EU rates of youth unemployment tend to be around twice as high as among the adult population (EC, 1997).

Table 3. Cumulative unemployed since leaving school, by country (months)

	Males (mean)	Males (st dev)	Females (mean)	Females (st dev)
Finland	24.28	14.77	19.89	11.75
Iceland	12.42	12.29	11.86	9.87
Norway	19.55	14.81	20.33	15.40
Sweden	17.58	13.25	16.23	12.64
Denmark	13.13	10.76	15.73	11.99
Scotland	23.83	18.83	18.42	16.23

Anova f=107.436 p=.000

Overall, males in Finland and Scotland and females in Norway and Finland had the greatest cumulative experience of unemployment. Although in most countries total male unemployment was greater than total female unemployment (Table 3), in Denmark and Norway total experience of unemployment was higher for females. However, given differences in the average length of time which young people had spent in the labour market (reflecting the average age of the samples and the patterns of post-compulsory education within the different countries) cumulative unemployment which is undifferentiated by age and stage of leaving education provides only a rough indication of prospects.

Measuring the longest period of time for which young people had been continuously unemployed provides an alternative measure, but again suffers from a similar short-coming to the cumulative measure. However, it does provide an indication of those countries in which long-term youth unemployment is most common: these being Scotland, Finland and Norway (Table 4). It also shows that males tended to have longer continuous periods of unemployment in Finland, Scotland and Sweden, but females experienced longer continuous periods in Iceland, Norway and Denmark.

Table 4. Longest continuous period of unemployment, by country (mean months)

	All	Male	Female
Finland	13.8	14.6	12.8
Iceland	7.5	7.0	8.0
Norway	12.7	12.0	13.6
Sweden	9.4	9.6	9.2
Denmark	9.2	8.1	10.3
Scotland	15.5	16.4	13.7
All	11.0	11.3	10.8

Anova f=108.463 p=.000

Given that both total unemployment and the longest continuous period of unemployment is affected by time spent in the labour market (which varies between samples), a ratio of time spent unemployed to time spent in the labour market was derived (Table 5). Among males and females, the highest ratio of employment to unemployment was found in Denmark and Iceland and the lowest in Finland. The improved position of Scotland on this measure reflects the compensation which it provides for earlier labour market entry among that sample.

Table 5. Ratio of employment to unemployment, by country

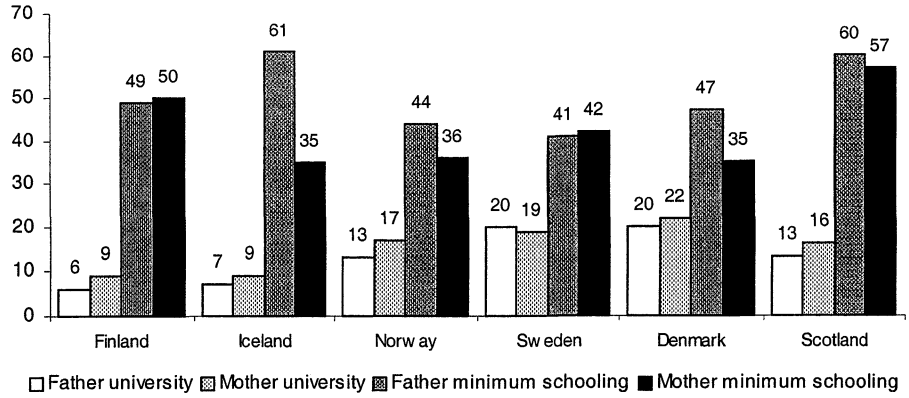
	Males	Females
Finland	1:45	1:50
Iceland	2:52	2:53
Norway	1:87	1:95
Sweden	1:97	2:04
Denmark	2:59	2:49
Scotland	1:88	1:95
All	1:99	2:07

Anova f=427.369 p=.000

Patterns of unemployment: Accounting for personal and family characteristics

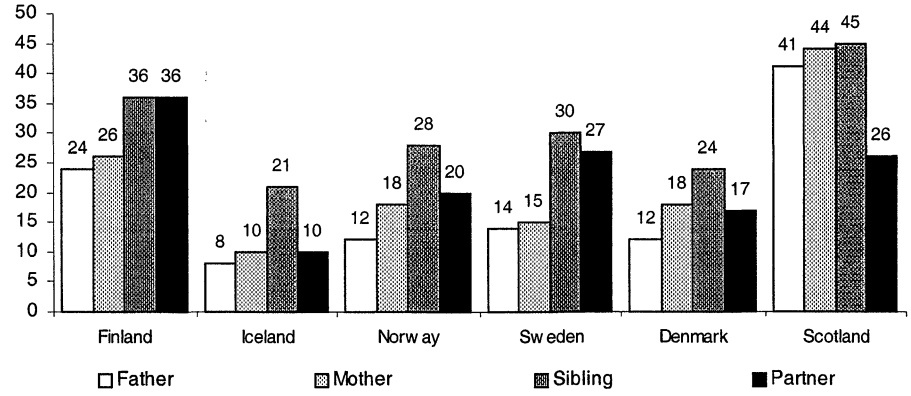
National differences in the unemployment experiences of young people are affected by personal and social characteristics. In a highly educated and culturally homogenous society, unemployment may be widely distributed between social groups whereas in a society characterised by strong inequalities, unemployment may be heavily concentrated among the least advantaged. Sociologically, it would have been interesting to compare the impact of social class on patterns of unemployment in the different countries, but unfortunately the Nordic data does not contain information about parents social class. Among the full sample, the best available proxy for social class is parental education and here there are quite large variations between the countries. Young people in Denmark and Sweden were most likely to have parents educated to university level, while the Scots were most likely to have parents who had received no post-compulsory education. In Denmark, for example, 20 per cent of the sample had fathers educated to university level and 22 per cent had mothers with university degrees. The figures for Sweden were similar (20% and 19% respectively). In Finland and Iceland fewer parents had received a university education (6% of fathers in Finland and 7% in Iceland and 9% of mothers in the two countries). In Iceland and Scotland, a majority of young people had fathers who had left education at the minimum age (61% in Iceland and 60% in Scotland), but fewer had mothers who had left at the minimum age (35% and 57% respectively) (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Levels of parental education



While parental education provides some indication of cultural capital, family experience of unemployment (especially long-term unemployment) provides a better indication of economic hardship within the family and may also reflect low levels of opportunity in the local labour market. If we look at the proportions of young people who have parents who have been unemployed for six months or more out of the last twelve months (Figure 3), two countries stand out as having high levels of inter-generational unemployment: Scotland and Finland. Levels of long-term sibling unemployment were also high in Scotland and Finland, suggesting that in these countries a substantial proportion of the sample came from families in which unemployment was common. In other words, Finland and Scotland appear to be characterised by persistent socio-economic inequalities.

Figure 3. Long term unemployment, by country

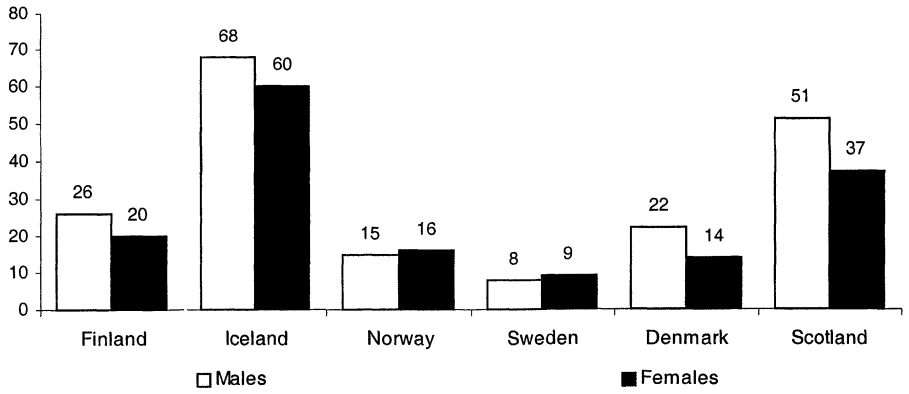


Significant numbers of those living with partners reported that their partners had experienced recent long-term unemployment: this was particularly noticeable in Finland, Sweden and Scotland. In these circumstances, partners are unlikely to be able to provide a cushion against the financial effects of unemployment. Given that in some of the countries (especially in Scotland) many of the sample were still living with their parents or with close relatives, family unemployment is likely to have a more direct financial impact on these young people. However, in some of the countries (most notably Denmark) the vast majority had moved away from the family home and therefore partner unemployment may be more significant.

In Britain, single parents often encounter severe economic hardship and being brought up within a single parent family is frequently associated with low educational attainments and subsequent unemployment. However, the more generous welfare regimes characteristic of the Scandinavian countries, together with greater provision of childcare facilities, may suggest a weaker link between single parenthood and poverty. Among this sample, around one in four young people in Iceland and Sweden (25 and 24 per cent respectively) spent most of their childhood's in single parent families, compared to 14 per cent in Finland and 16 per cent in both Denmark and Scotland.

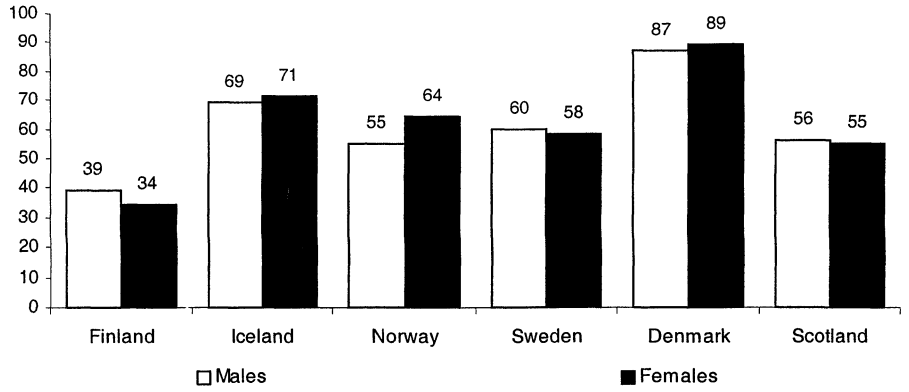
With the sample being drawn from those who have recently experienced unemployment, we would expect the qualification profile of the group to be somewhat below that of the age range in general. Educational attainments are difficult to compare, but if we take those who have not been educated beyond the level of compulsory schooling, some sharp differences emerge (Figure 4). Notably, young people from Iceland and Scotland (especially the males) tend to be far less qualified than those from other countries. However, a different picture emerges when we compare those who have completed university. The highest proportion of graduates are found in Denmark (16%), Scotland (12%) Norway (10%) and Sweden (7%), while there are very few graduates in Finland or Iceland (2% in both countries). In part, these differences reflect institutional structures and sampling procedures: the high number of Scottish graduates, for example, is a partly a consequence of a relatively short degree course, while the Danish figures reflect the higher average age profile of the sample.

Figure 4. Young people not educated beyond the compulsory stage



Past employment experience is also likely to help protect young people from long term unemployment. Again there are strong national variations in the proportions of young people who have substantial work experience. Given that the Danish sample all qualified for insurance based benefits, the vast majority had more than a year's experience of employment (87 per cent of males and 89 per cent of females). Around seven in ten young people from Iceland had worked for over a year while less than four in ten Finns had worked for this length of time (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Young people having worked for over 12 months



In order to assess the relative impact of personal and social characteristics on the unemployment, logistic regression was used to predict the chances of a young person having been unemployed continuously for as period of over a year (overall, 23 per cent of the sample had been continuously unemployed for over a year, ranging from 39 per cent in Finland to 12 per

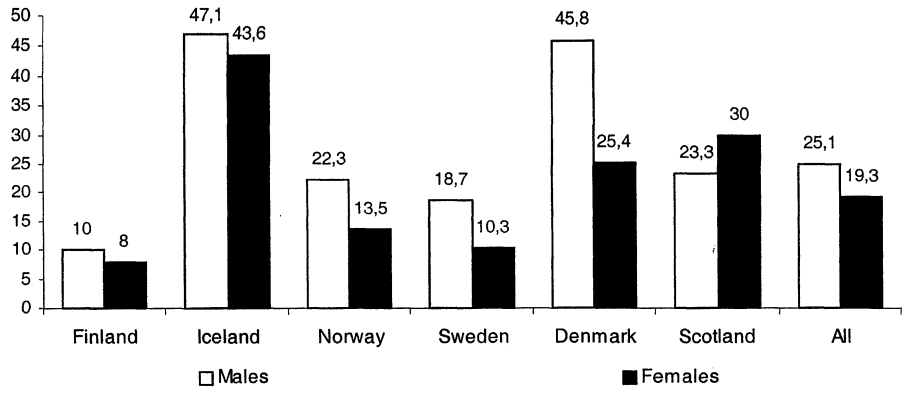
cent in Iceland). In terms of family characteristics, having a single parent was associated with an increased likelihood of long-term unemployment in Sweden and Iceland, while coming from an immigrant family increased the chances of unemployment in Finland, Sweden and Scotland. Having a father with recent experience of unemployment of over a year increased the chances of personal unemployment in Norway, as did having a brother or sister who had experienced unemployment in Denmark.

In terms of personal characteristics, increased age was associated with greater chances of long term unemployment in all countries, while being female increased chances in Norway and Denmark. Low levels of educational attainment was associated with long term unemployment in Finland, Denmark and Scotland. Personal work experience of over a years duration reduced the chances of long term unemployment in Scotland (Appendix 1).

Unemployment and labour market exclusion

With some young people having ended their spell of unemployment between the sample date and interview, it is necessary to put the discussion of processes of labour market exclusion into perspective by looking at patterns of integration. In each country, among both males and females, it was a minority of young people who had managed to obtain permanent full-time employment six months after a period of unemployment (22 per cent overall). For both males and females, the Finns had been least successful while young people from Iceland had been most successful (Figure 6). In all countries except Scotland, males were most likely to have obtained stable employment with differences in patterns of job entry between males and females being particularly marked in Denmark.

Figure 6. Young Having gained permanent employment



Analysis of unemployment outflows across ten consecutive six monthly time periods highlights the variation of routes out of unemployment and the degree to which unemployment careers become entrenched (Appendix 2 to 7). As these figures are drawn from a diary question which asks for information on respondents main activity during a series of six month periods, entry into short term-jobs, training, or further brief spells of unemploment within these periods are hidden. Nevertheless, the outflow diagrams show clearly that a large proportion of those who were mainly unemployed in any one six monthly period remained unemployment in the next period.

Continuity in unemployment was greatest in Scotland where an average of 72 per cent remained unemployed from one time period to the next. Finland and Norway also had high levels of unemployment continuity (47% and 45% respectively). Lower average levels of unemployment continuity were found in Denmark (36%), Sweden (47%) and Iceland (40%). Differentiation by gender is unreliable due to low cell sizes, nevertheless more detailed analysis suggests that unemployment continuity is slightly higher among males except in Iceland and Denmark. Levels of unemployment continuity are particularly significant given that researchers in a number of countries have shown that long-term unemployment tends to be associated with a decline in the chances of finding paid employment, partly due to a process of stigmatisation (Jensen, 1987).

Average levels of outflow from unemployment to employment between the time periods were relatively high in Iceland and Denmark (both 40%), but lower in Scotland and Norway (both 20%), Finland (21%) and Sweden (26%). Again, levels of job entry appeared to be slightly higher among males, except in Iceland and Denmark. However, it is important to recognise that the quality of jobs entered and the security of these jobs is also likely to vary strongly between countries and between genders. We are unable to address this issue from existing data.

Relatively few young people moved between unemployment and education and the route map shows the ways in which movement is restricted by courses which have yearly intakes. Routes between unemployment and education were weak in all of the countries studied. In terms of movement from unemployment into education, Scotland has a particularly poor track record. The average proportion of young people moving from unemployment to education across the time periods ranged from 15 per cent in Finland to 3 per cent in Scotland. Sweden, Iceland, Denmark and Norway

all had similar average rates of educational entry (12% in the former three countries and 11% in Norway). Average rates of movement between unemployment and education tended to be somewhat higher for females, especially in Finland. Training routes also tend to be under-developed and relatively few young people end their unemployment through training. While an average of 15 percent of young people in Sweden moved from unemployment to training, in all other countries the average proportion was under 10% (ranging from 8% in Norway to 3% in Iceland).

For comparative purposes, the analysis of unemployment outflows takes us one step beyond simple counts of unemployment experience and duration. However, to move beyond this and develop a model of exclusion, it is necessary to recognise that movement into a job, education or a training period does not necessarily remove vulnerability. Using information on unemployment history together with details of current status, it is possible to arrive at a typology of levels of integration. To develop this typology we used information on the extent to which labour market experience had been dominated by unemployment (constructed as a simple three way division of ratio of time unemployed to time employed together with details of current position). Four positions were identified:

- Settled: currently in full-time permanent employment (23% of sample);
- Vulnerable: average or low unemployment duration and currently not in full time permanent employment (49% of sample);
- Marginalised: above average unemployment duration and currently not in full time permanent employment (15% of sample);
- Excluded: above average duration of unemployment and currently unemployed (14% of sample).

Clearly, with different overall levels of youth unemployment, patterns of integration vary by country. Few males or females in Iceland or Denmark could be described as marginalised or excluded whereas in Finland levels of marginalisation and exclusion were high and very few young people were in settled positions. Levels of exclusion were also relatively high among Scottish males (Table 6).

Table 6. Typology of integration, by gender and country

	Settled	Vulnerable	Marginalised	Excluded
Males				
Finland	10	29	27	33
Iceland	47	46	4	3
Norway	22	47	16	15
Sweden	19	53	15	14
Denmark	46	48	3	3
Scotland	23	43	11	22
All	25	45	14	16
X^2	p=.000			
Females				
Finland	8	34	32	25
Iceland	44	51	3	3
Norway	13	54	20	13
Sweden	10	63	16	10
Denmark	24	65	5	5
Scotland	30	46	13	11
All	19	54	15	11
X^2	p=.000			

Subjective dimensions

The analysis of patterns of youth unemployment within the six countries provides some indication of the extent to which young people face the risk of labour market marginalisation and exclusion. However, it is important to recognise that young people's interpretation of their own situations may be at odds with patterns which are viewed from a structural perspective. Du Bois Reymond (1998), for example, draws attention to what she refers to as the 'trend-setters' who move constantly between unemployment and temporary, part-time or low skill service jobs as part of a process of self-actualisation and exploration. For du Bois Reymond, the process of modernisation is seen as linked to the emergence of 'choice biographies' in which unemployment may no longer be linked to processes of pessimism and despair. However, in many respects, the concepts of biography and choice biography have emerged from the more affluent European societies in which levels of unemployment have been relatively low.

In this section we examine the links between labour market exclusion and the subjective responses of young people living within societies characterised by different opportunity structures, cultures and support net-

works. While patterns of unemployment may be largely determined by overall structures of opportunity in a society, it is not clear that subjective responses are simply reflections of these underlying structures. The experience of unemployment may be conditioned by the perceived chances of finding work rapidly, but other factors, such as levels of financial security, supportive social networks and strength of work commitment within a culture are also likely to be significant.

To investigate these trends, we first looked at overall satisfaction with life which was strongly associated with labour market position. Among those in settled positions, just 13 per cent of males and 10 per cent of females said that they were very or fairly dissatisfied with life in general. In contrast, among the excluded, 45 per cent of males and 43 per cent of females indicated a general dissatisfaction. More than six in ten young men classified as excluded tended to be satisfied with their lives in Iceland, Finland, Sweden and Denmark as did females in Denmark, Iceland and Norway. In contrast, a majority of excluded males in Scotland and Norway and females in Scotland, and Sweden expressed overall dissatisfaction (Table 7). While these figures clearly highlight the negative impact of unemployment on life satisfaction, it is important to note that even among the excluded a majority express general satisfaction with their lives.

Table 7.General dissatisfaction with life, by labour market position

	Settled	Excluded	Difference
Males			
Finland	11.1	36.9	25.8
Iceland	17.3	33.3	16.0
Norway	9.4	51.6	42.2
Sweden	7.4	42.6	35.2
Denmark	6.7	40.0	33.3
Scotland	29.3	66.7	37.4
p=.000			
Females			
Finland	5.1	35.6	30.5
Iceland	11.3	35.3	24.0
Norway	3.2	39.7	36.5
Sweden	8.4	50.8	42.4
Denmark	6.4	31.0	24.6
Scotland	24.1	71.9	47.8
p=.000			

On a country level, two factors are particularly striking. First, the extremely low level of life satisfaction which was evident among Scottish young people (which we would predict from an analysis of opportunities). Second, the relatively small differences in life satisfaction of the excluded compared to the settled in among males and females in Iceland and among Danish females.

The experience of unemployment can lead to general dissatisfaction with life as a result of strong commitments to work as an area of achievement and a source of identity, as well as a consequence of a deterioration in financial circumstances. Protracted unemployment, though, can lead to a deterioration in levels of work commitment which in turn can reinforce patterns of disadvantage. Levels of work commitment were measured through a scale developed by Warr (1979) using six items which were scored from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree).[1] The distribution of scores (Table 8) shows, firstly, that in each country, for males and females, those in excluded positions had lower levels of work commitment than those in settled positions. Second, irrespective of labour market position, the Danes had the lowest levels of work commitment. Third, among those in excluded positions, relatively low levels of work commitment were found in Scotland (males and females) and among Finnish males and Icelandic females. Obviously the cross-sectional design prevents us from distinguishing cause and effect.

Table 8. Mean scores on the work commitment scale, by labour market position

	Settled Males	Excluded males	Settled females	Excluded females
Finland	25.10	21.75	25.26	22.99
Iceland	26.39	25.33	26.41	22.82
Norway	25.60	25.23	26.09	23.18
Sweden	24.12	23.44	25.45	24.61
Denmark	22.95	18.57	23.58	18.92
Scotland	24.03	22.70	23.77	22.46
All	24.73	22.78	25.27	23.17

Anova f=116.007 p=.000

[1] The work commitment scale was constructed from the following questions: It is very important for me to have a job; If I won lots of money I would still want to work; I hate being unemployed; I feel restless if I do not have a job; Work is one of the most important things in my life and; I would prefer to work even if unemployment benefits were generous.

To assess the extent to which young people felt able to cope with periods of unemployment, a scale was constructed from responses to six items (Table 9) to which young people were asked how strongly they agreed (1) or disagreed (5) (Table 9).[2] Although the results were not statistically significant, those in excluded labour market positions appeared less able to cope than those in settled positions. However, among the excluded, young people from Denmark seemed much more able to cope than those in any other country. In contrast, males in Scotland and females in Iceland seemed least able to cope.

Table 9. Mean scores on the coping with unemployment scale, by labour market position

	Settled Males	Excluded males	Settled females	Excluded females
Finland	18.42	19.19	18.31	19.05
Iceland	18.19	17.47	18.40	16.68
Norway	16.61	17.12	16.63	18.20
Sweden	18.10	18.19	17.17	17.38
Denmark	21.21	22.53	21.22	21.25
Scotland	16.31	16.89	17.36	17.46
All	18.48	18.34	18.50	18.38

Anova n.s

Given the country specific differences in levels of benefit, economic factors may help explain these pronounced differences in life satisfaction, work commitment and ability to cope among the unemployed. While there are sharp differences in the cost of living in the different countries, clearly some countries provide reasonably adequate levels of support while others barely provide for subsistence. The income received by unemployed members of the sample in the previous month varied from a low of 270 Euro's in Scotland to a high of 869 Euro's in Denmark. Average monthly salaries also varied significantly: in their last or most recent job, average income varied from 823 Euro's in Scotland to 1,853 in Denmark. In most of the countries, young people who were unemployed received an income of the

[2] The 'coping with unemployment scale was developed from the following items: when I am unemployed ....I have more time for my family and friends; I do not accomplish anything; I have problems planning for the future; I am financially dependent on others; I can use my time as I please; I feel that my health deteriorates; I have more time for my hobbies; I no longer have childcare problems.

equivalent of between 44 and 49 per cent of an employed person of the same age. Only two countries deviated significantly from this income replacement rate: Scotland where the unemployed received an income equivalent of around 33 per cent of an employed person and Iceland where they received more than three quarters of an average wage (76%). These figures provide a partial explanation for the small differences between the overall life satisfaction of the excluded and settled in Iceland and perhaps also an explanation for the extremely low levels of life satisfaction among the Scots.

To provide further elaboration of these apparent trends, young people were also asked about things which they had had to give up in the last 12 months due to a lack of money (Table 10). While economic hardship was manifest in different ways and at different levels in each of the countries, the main trend which stands out is that the Danes were consistently less likely than those from any other country to have had to give anything up due to financial hardship whereas the Scots tended to have given more things up than those in other countries.

Table 10. Respondents who over the last 12 months have often or sometimes had to give up one of the following items due to lack of money (%)

	Fin	Ice	Nor	Swe	Den	Sco
Warm meals	30	27	37	23	13	19
Essential clothes	69	55	64	68	39	58
Paying rent or bills on time	48	51	46	29	21	48
Cinema, theatre or concerts	67	65	59	66	47	73
Inviting friends home	21	25	28	36	17	36
Visiting friends or relatives in other towns	61	48	61	60	41	69
Buying birthday or Christmas presents	65	56	56	57	29	68
Holidays	74	59	68	72	59	79
Newspapers	69	36	42	56	25	41
Hobbies or recreational activities	59	59	48	51	30	70
Visiting pubs or restaurants	68	69	67	69	50	80

These trends are confirmed through an economic hardship scale produced through responses to the above question (Table 11). In each country, for males and females, levels of economic hardship were poorer among the excluded as compared to the settled. However, Denmark stands out as the country where levels of economic hardship among the excluded are least pronounced while young people in Scotland are most affected by their change in status.

Table 11. Mean scores on the economic hardship scale, by labour market position

	Settled Males	Excluded males	Settled females	Excluded females
Finland	22.65	21.13	21.71	20.82
Iceland	22.20	19.59	21.04	18.98
Norway	22.13	19.32	21.60	18.68
Sweden	22.73	20.19	21.08	19.59
Denmark	24.90	24.06	24.19	21.37
Scotland	20.20	18.03	20.35	18.07
All	22.61	20.23	21.70	19.88

Anova p=.000

While generous benefit systems can have an impact on the overall experience of unemployment, it is also important to recognise that social exclusion is linked not only to economic factors, but also to social involvement. Information was collected on peer and family support networks, but there was little variation either between country or between different status groups. However, a sociability scale was developed using information on the frequency of participation in a range of social activities. Seven activities were included, for each of which young people were asked to say if in a normal week they undertook these activities never, less than once a week, once a week, several times a week or daily.[3]

Table 12. Mean scores on the sociability index, by labour market position

	Settled males	Excluded males	Settled females	Excluded females
Finland	18.01	18.22	18.60	18.36
Iceland	21.25	21.66	20.71	18.90
Norway	20.09	19.00	20.11	17.83
Sweden	19.61	19.63	19.15	18.80
Denmark	19.31	16.85	19.48	19.66
Scotland	19.54	17.16	20.12	17.75
All	19.81	18.33	19.92	18.44

Anova f=80.070 p=.000

[3] The sociability scale included the following activities: helping friends and relatives; doing voluntary work in the community; going to the pub, restaurant or dancing; going to the cinema, theatre or a concert; with the family; with friends; with a boyfriend or girlfriend.

Analysis of responses (Table 13) shows that in most countries, labour market exclusion is associated with reduced participation in sociable activities: the exceptions being increases in sociability which were found among males in Iceland and females in Denmark. Particularly sharp reductions in sociability between the settled and excluded were evident among males and females in Scotland and among Danish males and Norwegian females.

Conclusion

In this paper we set out to analyse the links between labour market exclusion and patterns of economic and social exclusion. Given the extremely high levels of youth unemployment in Finland compared to the other countries, we had expected to find correspondingly high levels of economic and social exclusion. This was not the case, it was Scotland (where overall levels of youth unemployment are not especially high) in which young people appeared to suffer most from the experience of unemployment. Indeed, while unemployment can lead to social exclusion, it's impact can be mediated by a number of different factors. First, it is not overall levels of unemployment which we should focus on, but long-term unemployment and particularly history dependence. In this context we noted that rates of youth unemployment are higher in Finland than Scotland, but that in Scotland routes out of unemployment are much more constrained. Second, material factors provide an important mediating link and where benefit levels are high, the subjective experience of unemployment tends not to be so negative. While generous benefit levels have sometimes been regarded by politicians as something which may lower the commitment to finding paid work, we suggest that inadequate benefits can be counterproductive in that they may reinforce social exclusion. Third, social activity can also provide some protection against social exclusion. While the ability to participate in a wide range of social activities is often affected by economic factors (especially benefit levels), this is not always the case: the increase in sociability among excluded Danish females and the decrease among males being a good example. The significance of these dimensions in the six countries examined are summarised in broad terms below (Figure 7 and 8).

Figure 7. Summary of opportunities and subjective responses: males

	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden	Denmark	Scotland
Structural exclusion	High	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	High
Material exclusion	Low	High	High	Low	Low	High
Social activity	Med (+)	High (+)	Med (-)	High (-)	Low (-)	Low (-)
Life dis-satisfaction	Low	Low	High	Medium	Medium	V.High

Figure 8. Summary of opportunities and subjective responses: females

	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden	Denmark	Scotland
Structural exclusion	High	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	High
Material exclusion	Low	High	High	Low	Low	High
Social activity	Med (-)	Med (-)	Low (-)	Med (-)	High (+)	Low (-)
Life dis-satisfaction	Low	Low	High	Medium	Medium	V.High

In sum, the ability to maintain high levels of life satisfaction despite enduring prolonged unemployment would seem to be dependent on an equilibrium between the different dimensions of the unemployment experience. High levels of labour market exclusion may be tolerable subjectively if, for example, adequate recompense is provided or if the range of opportunities available mean that unemployment is not perceived as a dead-end street. Conversely, high levels of labour market exclusion combined with inadequate income and low levels of social activity mean that the experience of unemployment is likely to lead to despondency and a sense of no future: factors which are central to the process of social exclusion.

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Appendix 1. Unemployment Outflows: figures in brackets show percentage outflows across a six month period (S=Spring, A=Autumn)

Norway

	A 89		S 90		A 90		S 91		A 91		S 92		A 92		S 93		A 93		S 94		A 94
		(65)		(54)		(59)		(56)		(50)		(43)		(50)		(47)		(39)		(40)	
Unemp	8		7		9		9		14		12		15		15		30		23		25
		(14)		(22)		(17)		(25)		(13)		(19)		(21)		(18)		(21)		(32)	
Job	15		14		19		18		22		21		24		23		25		23		29
		(0)		(6)		(3)		(5)		(9)		(12)		(13)		(16)		(5)		(11)	
Training	3		2		5		3		6		6		8		8		10		7		10
		(18)		(10)		(14)		(5)		(17)		(7)		(10)		(6)		(15)		(12)	
Educat	66		73		58		62		46		50		33		38		11		19		17
		(2)		(8)		(6)		(8)		(11)		(19)		(6)		(13)		(20)		(6)	
Other	7		5		9		7		12		9		20		15		24		28		19
(n)	728		718		734		728		738		734		739		736		742		740		1030

Appendix 2

Denmark

	A 89		S 90		A 90		S 91		A 91		S 92		A 92		S 93		A 93		S 94		A 94
		(49)		(41)		(34)		(25)		(40)		(27)		(50)		(27)		(32)		(33)	
Unemp	4		5		7		5		8		9		11		13		12		14		29
		(19)		(33)		(30)		(49)		(33)		(59)		(33)		(45)		(46)		(52)	
Job	34		31		40		38		45		42		49		46		52		50		48
		(10)		(6)		(9)		(9)		(5)		(1)		(2)		(3)		(2)		(3)	
Training	3		3		2		3		4		3		3		3		2		2		4
		(17)		(13)		(18)		(9)		(18)		(6)		(10)		(7)		(12)		(7)	
Educat	55		59		46		49		37		40		27		30		16		20		12
		(5)		(6)		(9)		(7)		(5)		(8)		(6)		(19)		(8)		(5)	
Other	4		1		5		5		7		6		11		8		18		14		7
(n)	1092		1052		1047		1078		1101		1083		1086		1089		1014		1092		1078

Appendix 3

Iceland

	A 89		S 90		A 90		S 91		A 91		S 92		A 92		S 93		A 93		S 94		A 94
		(64)		(45)		(48)		(32)		(47)		(33)		(42)		(35)		(34)		(24)	
Unemp	4		4		4		4		6		7		11		13		18		19		16
		(23)		(36)		(39)		(44)		(33)		(46)		(37)		(45)		(44)		(49)	
Job	31		29		38		35		42		40		48		44		44		45		52
		(0)		(0)		(2)		(4)		(1)		(3)		(3)		(7)		(3)		(7)	
Training	<		<		<		<		1		<		2		1		4		3		4
		(14)		(14)		(9)		(14)		(15)		(5)		(14)		(8)		(13)		(14)	
Educat	59		66		51		54		41		45		29		33		19		21		17
		(0)		(4)		(2)		(6)		(4)		(13)		(4)		(5)		(6)		(6)	
Other	5		1		6		6		9		7		9		8		15		11		11
(n)	1211		1162		1208		1199		1207		1199		1211		1195		1221		1205		1209

Appendix 4

Sweden

	A 89		S 90		A 90		S 91		A 91		S 92		A 92		S 93		A 93		S 94		A 94
		(53)		(35)		(35)		(36)		(37)		(33)		(36)		(35)		(32)		(39)	
Unemp	4		4		7		5		11		9		17		15		24		21		30
		(25)		(33)		(29)		(23)		(25)		(26)		(21)		(29)		(25)		(27)	
Job	28		24		30		28		29		27		27		26		31		26		33
		(2)		(11)		(10)		(22)		(13)		(19)		(16)		(22)		(18)		(17)	
Training	2		2		4		3		8		6		11		10		16		13		12
		(16)		(10)		(15)		(9)		(16)		(7)		(16)		(6)		(14)		(11)	
Educat	61		68		50		57		42		48		29		35		15		22		15
		(3)		(11)		(10)		(10)		(9)		(13)		(11)		(8)		(11)		(6)	
Other	6		2		7		5		10		10		16		12		14		18		10
(n)	2174		2130		2189		2180		2188		2191		2199		2203		2207		2208		2221

Appendix 5

Finland

	A 89		S 90		A 90		S 91		A 91		S 92		A 92		S 93		A 93		S 94		A 94
		(54)		(38)		(39)		(43)		(41)		(54)		(46)		(57)		(48)		(51)	
Unemp	6		6		10		9		18		16		33		27		45		39		41
		(18)		(22)		(22)		(29)		(21)		(17)		(18)		(21)		(21)		(21)	
Job	17		14		16		17		20		18		20		18		23		19		24
		(5)		(14)		(4)		(6)		(6)		(7)		(4)		(6)		(5)		(10)	
Training	1		1		2		1		2		2		3		3		5		4		11
		(21)		(10)		(23)		(8)		(23)		(8)		(23)		(3)		(18)		(12)	
Educat	69		74		63		66		50		55		30		40		12		20		16
		(1)		(15)		(12)		(13)		(9)		(14)		(8)		(12)		(8)		(7)	
Other	6		4		6		6		7		7		11		10		13		14		6
(n)	1590		1555		1590		1589		1591		1596		1609		1613		1623		1631		1665

Appendix 6

Scotland

	A 91		S 92		A 92		S 93		A 93		S 94		A 94		S 95		A 95		S 96		A 96
		(82)		(74)		(77)		(77)		(73)		(59)		(72)		(64)		(71)		(69)	
Unemp	11		12		13		14		18		21		19		21		25		32		50
		(11)		(20)		(14)		(12)		(19)		(24)		(21)		(26)		(21)		(24)	
Job	14		15		21		22		24		25		32		32		37		34		35
		(5)		(2)		(6)		(7)		(5)		(9)		(6)		(2)		(6)		(5)	
Training	6		7		7		7		7		7		7		7		7		7		9
		(2)		(2)		(2)		(4)		(1)		(7)		(1)		(6)		(1)		(<)	
Educat	68		65		58		55		49		45		39		31		27		22		1
		(0)		(1)		(1)		(0)		(1)		(1)		(1)		(2)		(2)		(1)	
Other	2		1		2		2		2		2		2		2		5		5		4
(n)	748		749		754		756		761		760		765		787		783		784		778

Helen Russell and Philip J. O'Connell

Getting a Job in Europe: The Transition from Unemployment to Employment among Young People in Nine European Countries

Introduction

Unemployment among young people is a particularly severe problem in most industrial societies. In Europe, unemployment rates among those aged under 25 have exceeded 20% for most of the decade of the nineties, and in most years are twice the rate for those aged over 25. The persistence of high youth unemployment occurs despite a long-term decline in young people's participation in the labour market, due in part to a long-term trend towards an increasing proportion of young people remaining longer in education.

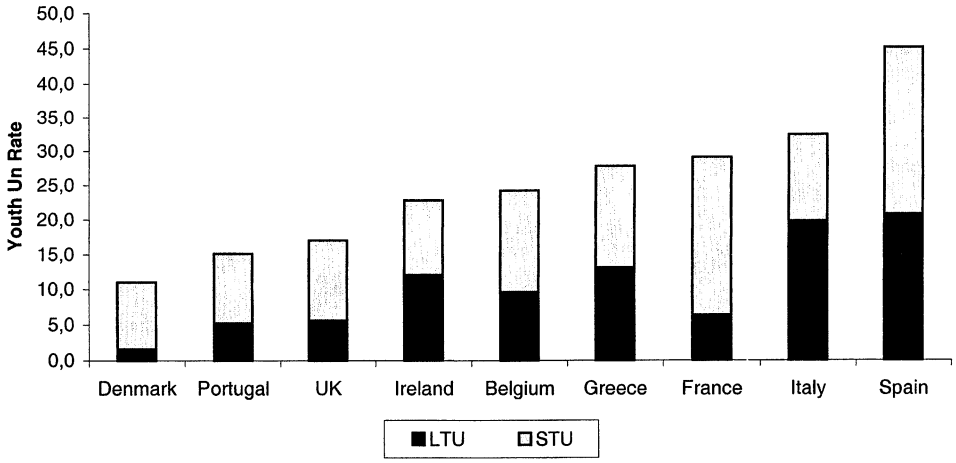
These general trends notwithstanding, however, the rate of unemployment among young people varies widely between European countries, even more so than the overall rate. In 1996, youth unemployment ranged from under 10% in Germany, the only country where the youth rate was similar to the adult rate, to about 30% in Greece and Italy, to over 40% in Spain (European Commission, 1997). These differences must be interpreted with some caution, however, since in many countries, the proportion of people under 25 actually participating in the labour force is very low, since the majority is still engaged in full-time education. Youth unemployment is particularly sensitive to fluctuations in labour market conditions, and the damaging effects of labour market slack can be particularly severe for young labour market participants with low levels of educational attainment. The rates of youth unemployment and of long term unemployment among the young for each country in the study are presented in Figure 1.

In recent years, much of the comparative literature on unemployment has focused on how institutional differences between countries influence the distribution of employment and unemployment. Thus, for example, Müller and Shavit (1998) show that institutional characteristics of national education systems affect labour force outcomes for new entrants to the labour force. Other institutional factors held to influence employment prospects include

labour market regulations (Grubb and Wells, 1993) as well as the incentive structure created by tax and welfare systems, and active labour market policies directed at the unemployed (OECD, 1998).

In this paper we focus on the process of getting a job, using event history data to analyse the transition from unemployment to employment among young people in nine European countries. This allows us to compare across different countries, and therefore between differing institutional settings, how the employment prospects of young unemployed people are affected by their personal characteristics such as age, gender and educational attainment, as well as by previous employment experience and unemployment duration.

Figure 1. Youth Unemployment in 9 Countries



Note: LTU = Unemployed for 12 months or more; STU= Unemployed for less than 1 year
Source: European Labour Force Survey 1994

Data and Methodology

The study is based on analyses of the first two waves of the European Community Household Panel (ECHP). Each wave of the ECHP collects month by month information on respondents' activities during the preceding calendar year. From this we can build up a picture of individuals' labour market activity over a two year period from January 1993 to December 1994. These 'diaries' form the basis of the current analysis. We

included in the analysis all those who were aged under 25 at the first interview and who completed interviews in both waves of the survey. The Netherlands was excluded because activity diaries were not collected and Luxembourg was excluded because of the small number in the relevant age group. Germany was excluded from the analysis at a later stage because of data problems. This left us with a sample of 14,600 young people who could be followed over a 24 month period.

The young people in our nine country sample are found to make numerous transitions between activity statuses within the two years considered. For example, 1853 transitions between education and employment are recorded (representing .13 transitions per person), 1939 transitions from employment to unemployment (.13 transitions per person) and 2472 transitions from unemployment to employment (.17 transitions per person). The current study is concerned with this last set of transitions.

Since we are interested in unemployment we are only concerned with those who spent at least some of the 24 month period in the labour market. Table 1 summarises the experience of unemployment among these individuals. These figures provide a more detailed picture of youth unemployment than cross-sectional unemployment rates and suggest that for young people at the start of their careers, a spell of unemployment is extremely common. In all countries over 27% of this group had experienced at least one month of unemployment in the two years, with the proportions rising to over 50% in Italy, Greece and Spain.

Table 1. Activity Status 1993-94 Among Young People in the Labour Market[1]

	Denmark	Belgium	France	UK	Ireland	Italy	Greece	Spain	Portugal
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Continuously Employed	25.2	23.6	2 0.1	41.5	27.8	25.4	25.5	13.9	45.2
Continuously Unemployed	1.1	4.5	1.4	2.3	6.3	15.1	6.3	8.5	1.0
Any Unemp.	38.7	39.5	38.2	28.2	37.3	58.4	50.3	59.2	28.0
	(561)	(425)	(1037)	(728)	(1052)	(1509)	(725)	(1516)	(1218)

[1] *Excludes those continuously outside the labour market, however includes those with spells of education/ inactivity combined with spells of economic activity. Weighted.*

[2] *Row 2 is a subset of row 3.*

The unemployment to work transitions are analysed using discrete-time event history models (Allison, 1984). These model the length of time to a

particular event, in this case the time it takes to make the transition from unemployment to employment. The approach is to model the conditional probability of moving out of unemployment given that exit has not already occurred and depending on the values of selected covariates. Discrete time models divide respondents' work histories into independent observations for each unit of time (in this analysis one month). At each month we record the response variable (employment status) and the values of time-constant variables such as sex and time-varying covariates such as age. Time since the start of the spell is recorded using a monthly 'clock' which allows us to measure duration dependency. Effectively, the unit of analysis becomes the month rather than the individual. In our sample 4155 young people experienced at least one spell of unemployment and this produced just over 75,500 person-months of unemployment to analyse, if an individual experiences more than one spell of unemployment all spells are included in the model.

Discrete-time models are particularly suited to our analysis because of the relatively short observation period involved and the fact that our response variable is already in a discrete monthly format. One advantage of discrete-time compared to continuous-time models is that once the data has been restructured, straight-forward models such as logistic regression can be applied. The model also allows easy and direct handling of time-varying covariates. Five of our explanatory variables vary over time, only sex and country do not change over the period observed. Length of time unemployed is fundamental to the model and for each month the number of months unemployed so far is counted. Clearly age also changes over time, therefore the age of the individual at the starting month of unemployment is calculated and an additional month is added to this age for every continuing month of unemployment. The third time-varying variable is presence of children. Respondents were asked at both interviews whether or not they had a child, however it is important to establish whether the child was born before, after or during the unemployment spell, this was calculated using the date of birth of the child. Whether or not a person has any work experience can also change over the period of observation, although it cannot change *during* the spell of unemployment itself like age or child. The variable is therefore spell-specific. The same is true of educational level. Using the age people said they completed their highest level of education we established whether this was before or after the unemploy-

ment spell. If the education was completed after the unemployment spell, the educational qualification for that spell was reduced by one level.[1]

The ECHP education variable is not very detailed. Education levels are grouped into three categories. Category one is third level education (ISCED 5-7), category two is second stage of secondary level education (ISCED 3-4) and category three contains all those with less than second stage of secondary level (ISCED 0-2).

A significant minority of the unemployment spells (about 36%) in the sample are left censored i.e. unemployment was recorded in the first month of our observation period (January 1993) but we do not know when the spell started. If we assume that January 1993 is the first month of unemployment when in reality the individual has already been unemployed for some time, we are likely to under-estimate the effect of unemployment duration on exits to employment. The ECHP did not directly collect information on when the spell began, therefore we used a number of different questions to proxy this information. Firstly, those who were employed at the wave 1 interview were asked if they had been unemployed immediately before they got their job and if so, for how long.[2] Secondly, the end date of respondents' last job was used as a proxy for the start date of unemployment for those who had worked before. Thirdly, for those with no work experience the date of completing education was used as the start date of unemployment.[3] Using these sources of information we can establish a starting date for 70 per cent of left censored cases. The remaining cases, which account for about 17% of all unemployment spells, are likely to be individuals that have made frequent transitions between activity statuses and consequently are likely to have short spells of unemployment. Leaving this group out might cause a bias towards longer

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[1] Respondents supplied information on the age at which they completed the highest level of education. Using this information and individual's birth date we calculated the year of completion. For those who completed this education before 1993, our best guess for month of completion was June. For those who completed their highest education in 1993 or 1994 activity diaries were used to establish the month of completion. The data on completion of education and month of birth are missing for Germany so it could not be included.

[2] This can only work for those who had only 1 spell of unemployment between Jan. 1993 and the first interview.

[3] The end date of education was bottom coded so that no months under age of 15 were counted as unemployment. This coding effects very few cases.

spells of unemployment, so we left this group in the model with a start date of January 1993, but also included in the models a dummy variable representing these cases.

Results

Differences in the labour market conditions, welfare regimes and educational systems across the nine countries suggest that the chances of exiting unemployment and the factors that influences this transition are likely to vary substantially between countries. National differences in rates of unemployment and long term unemployment among the young suggest that the likelihood of making the transition from unemployment to employment in any month should be greatest in Denmark, Portugal and the UK where unemployment rates and long term unemployment (LTU) among the young are low (see figure 1). Exit rates should also be high in France because the low incidence of LTU means that even if a high proportion of young people experience unemployment they should find jobs relatively quickly. Transitions to employment should be lowest in Spain and Italy where high youth unemployment rates indicate severe competition for vacancies and long-term unemployment rates suggest that the average duration of unemployment is long. These patterns are well reflected in the results of our first model, which does not include any controls for individual characteristics (Table 2, Model 1). The conditional probability of exiting unemployment to a job in any month is highest in Denmark, France, the UK and Portugal. Belgium and Ireland (the reference category) form a middle group, while Spain, Greece and particularly Italy have low exit rates.

These country differences can be presented graphically using the survival rates. The survival rates represent the proportion of individuals who remain unemployed at the end of each time interval within the spell.[4] In figure one we present the survival curves for all nine of the study countries together and the curves for Denmark and Italy, which represent the two extremes in terms of exiting from unemployment. The horizontal axis is the month within the spell of unemployment and the vertical axis is

[4] In calculating the hazard and survival rates spells that are (right) censored either because the observation period stopped or because an event other than continued unemployment or employment occurred, are given a special weighting (see Blossfeld & Rohwer 1995).

the proportion of respondents who remain unemployed in each month, this starts at 1 (or 100%) in month one. From the graph we can see that many of the unemployment spells are relatively short. Looking at all 9 countries together, 20% of young people starting a spell of unemployment had left within four months, and by month ten 40% had left. After month 12 the curve flattens out considerably with a lower and lower proportion of those still unemployed leaving in each month.

The contrasting position of Italy and Denmark emerges very clearly from the graph. In Denmark the curve falls steeply in the first 12 months whereas in Italy the graph is much flatter. For example, by month six only 15% of the Italian sample had exited unemployment compared to more than half of the Danes. By month 18 only 18% of the Danes remain unemployed compared to 74% of the Italians. These survival curves represent the inverse of the transition data that we model in the remainder of the paper.

Figure 2. Survival Curves for Youth Unemployment 1-36 Months

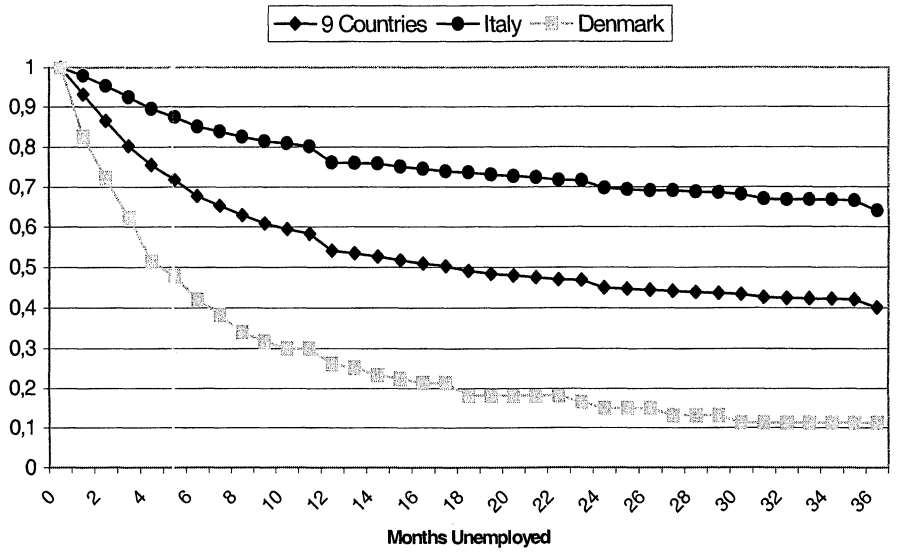

Table 2. Logit Models of the Transition from Unemployment to Employment. All Countries Combined

	Model 1 Coefficient	Model 2 Coefficient	Model 3 Coefficient
Age (months)		0.01***	0.01***
Sex		-0.19***	-0.21***
Child		-0.27**	-0.43***
Unemployment (months)		-0.03***	-0.02***
3rd Level Education		0.58***	0.55***
Upper Second Education		0.29***	0.31***
Work Experience		1.14***	0.97***
Missing status pre-'93		0.49***	0.52***
***Country** (Ref.: Ireland)*			
Denmark	1.02***		0.46***
Belgium	.09		-0.15
France	.67***		0.21**
UK	.27**		0.03
Italy	-1.13***		-0.69***
Greece	-.26***		-0.28**
Spain	-.10***		-0.23**
Portugal	.17*		0.28**
Constant	-3.17	-6.38***	-6.01***
N of cases	75533	74657	74657
-2LL	20962.00	19154.14	18921.58

** P<.05; * P < .005; *** p<.0005*

The next step in the analysis is to identify individual characteristics that might influence the underlying probability of making a transition from unemployment to employment *in any given month.* The crucial difference between hazard models and other model types is that they take into account the time dimension, in this case the number of months that elapse before a transition to employment occurs.

Taking all nine countries together (without any country weighting), respondents' age and sex were found to have a significant influence on the

probability of exit to employment. Being female prolonged the period before the transition, while increasing age reduced the time to the transition.

As expected the individual's highest level of education had a significant influence on the duration of the unemployment spell. In any given month those with third level education or those with upper secondary level education are significantly more likely to find a job than those with only lower secondary level schooling or less, who constitute the reference category. The second human capital variable included in the model relates to whether or not the respondent has had any work experience before the current spell of unemployment. Having prior work experience significantly increased the probability of getting a job and therefore reduced the duration of the unemployment spell.

It is likely that at a national level there will be some trade-off between the two human capital variables. In countries where the correspondence between education qualifications and the skill-needs of employers is weak we might expect work experience to have a stronger influence on employment chances than educational level. Where the connection between the education system and industry is stronger, education level is expected to have a more powerful influence on the transition from unemployment to work.

Next we consider the time-varying variable that counts the month within the spell of unemployment. The model shows that each additional month of unemployment makes it more difficult for the individual to find employment. This is known as duration or state dependency. It is possible that length of unemployment is used by employers as a signal for the 'quality' of the employee, which makes it harder for those with longer spells to find jobs. The extent to which employers discriminate against those with longer unemployment spells is likely to vary cross-nationally. In countries where the levels of youth unemployment are very high, a long period of unemployment could be less stigmatising for the job seeker because it is seen as a collective rather than an individual problem. National differences in duration dependency could also result from variation in active labour market policy aimed at reintegrating the longer-term unemployed. Country differences will be examined later in the individual country models.

The model also includes a dummy variable that identifies spells of unemployment that are left censored, for whom we are uncertain if the duration is correct. The variable is found to be significant and positive

which is expected because we believe this is a group likely to make numerous transitions (see above). More importantly, the inclusion of this dummy did not significantly effect the parameter estimates or significance levels of the other explanatory variables including length of unemployment spell, which suggests that the model is not distorted by the inclusion of this group. Moreover, the interaction between time unemployed and the dummy variable was insignificant, which means that the month of unemployment within the spell has the same impact on this group as it has on non-censored cases. We also ran additional tests to check that the inclusion of repeated spells did not unduly effect our results: the tests show that the coefficients are not significantly altered by controls for the event number (see appendix 1).

Finally, we included one measure of the family status of the respondent: whether or not he/she had any children in each month of the unemployment spell. Taking all countries together, having a child (children) significantly reduces the chances of making the transition to employment in any given month. Interestingly, the interaction between child and sex was insignificant, which means that the negative influence of children applies to young men as well as young women.

Two additional variables on household characteristics could not be included in the model because of the absence of time specific information, but were tested in logistic regression models of changes in employment status between the 1994 and 1995 interviews (results not presented). The first of these household variables was whether or not a young person was living with their parents. It was thought that those living in the parental home might have access to financial and non-material support which would allow them to engage in longer job search, however living in was found to have no effect on the probability of finding employment between surveys in all nine countries.[5] We were also prevented from including partnership status in the duration models, due to the absence of dates for changes in cohabitation. We tested whether living with a partner influenced employment chances in a logistic model of change in employment status between surveys, and found no effect in any of the countries (results not

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[5] The biggest effect occurred in Belgium where the coefficient was +2.17 and p=.09. Which suggests that controlling for other factors (age, unemployment duration, education, etc.) young Belgians living with their parents were more likely to have found a job by the next interview.

presented). These results suggest that the exclusion of these two family characteristics from our current models are unlikely to influence our results, nor bias the estimated model parameters.

In model 3 (Table 2) we include both the individual level characteristics and the country dummies. Controlling for individual characteristics substantially reduces the differences between countries: the size of the country parameters in model 3 are much smaller than those in model 1. This change means that some of the original country differences were due to the composition of the unemployed in each country. However, the pattern of country effects does not differ very much from that described earlier. The chances of exiting unemployment to employment in any month is still highest in Denmark and lowest in Italy, Greece and Spain. However, the relative position of Portugal, France and the UK change. Portugal now has a higher exit rate than France and the UK, while the UK now falls into the middle group with Belgium and Ireland.

The change in individual level factors when country is controlled is extremely marginal. This suggests that the average effect of these variables across countries was not overly distorted by the influence of some individual countries, it does not mean that the effect of these factors is the same in each country. Cross-national differences in the factors that effect the transition from unemployment to employment should be examined by means of individual country models.

National Models

Our next set of models examines the influence of our six personal characteristics on the transition from unemployment to work on a country by country basis (see Table 3). We shall consider first demographic variables such as sex, parental status and age and then move on to the labour market variables: educational level, work experience and unemployment duration.

Despite its strong influence in the joint country model, sex is insignificant in all countries except Spain and Portugal. In both of these countries, controlling for other personal characteristics, unemployed women take a longer time to make the transition to employment than men. In the UK the effect is in the opposite direction, which is consistent with British labour force survey figures which show that female unemployment rates are lower than male unemployment rates.

Age has a uniform effect in six of the nine countries studied. In all countries except Belgium, Denmark and the UK, the chances of exiting unemployment to employment in any month increases with the age of the individual. This is somewhat surprising given that our analysis is already confined to a fairly restricted age group (17-24). Perhaps older job-seeker's advantage comes from greater accumulated work experience, which is not captured in our binary variable of whether the respondent has ever worked before.

The strong negative impact of having children on the rate of leaving unemployment found in the joint country model only emerges as significant in three of the study countries: Denmark, France and the UK. This combination of countries does not make sense in terms of social policies that enable the combination of work and childcare. Although the UK is noted as one of the EU countries that lacks supportive policies for working mothers the same is cannot be said for Denmark and France, which have the most extensive childcare and parental leave arrangements in the EU (Gornick et al. 1997). Both Denmark and the UK also have large part-time employment sectors. It is possible that in the other countries where female participation is lower, young women who have children are more likely to withdraw from the labour market and therefore will not appear in our data-set or will exit unemployment to inactivity and therefore be censored. Given that the negative effect of children applies to both unemployed men and women in all three countries[6] the effect might be due to increased reservation wages or to the structure of the benefit system rather than childcare per se.

[6] The interaction between sex and parental status was statistically insignificant in all three countries.

Table 3. Logit Model of the transition from Unemployment to Employment. Separate Country Equations

	Coefficient	Std. Error	Coefficient	Std. Error	Coefficient	Std. Error
	Belgium		**Denmark**		**Greece**	
Age (months)	0.01*	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01**	0.00
Sex	-0.18	0.21	-0.01	0.17	-0.19	0.15
Child	-0.60	0.37	-0.75**	0.27	0.39	0.27
Months Unemp.	-0.04**	0.02	-0.07***	0.02	0.00	0.01
3rd Level Educ	1.71***	0.34	0.07	0.35	-0.10	0.23
Upper Second Ed.	0.59**	0.27	0.17	0.18	-0.15	0.16
Work Experience	0.99***	0.26	0.17	0.27	1.63***	0.18
Missing pre-'93	0.97***	0.24	0.03	0.19	0.71***	0.14
Constant	-6.80***	1.45	-2.80***	0.93	-6.41***	0.72
N of cases	2499		1602		8165	
-2 Log Likelihood	772.62		1082.14		2024.88	
	Spain		**France**		**Ireland**	
Age (months)	0.01***	0.00	0.01***	0.00	0.01**	0.00
Sex	-0.44***	0.09	-0.13	0.13	-0.17	0.14
Child	-0.31	0.20	-0.54**	0.26	0.02	0.48
Months Unemp.	-0.02***	0.00	-0.05***	0.01	-0.06***	0.01
3rd Level Educ	0.22	0.14	0.44***	0.20	1.40***	0.23
Upper Second Ed.	0.14	0.11	0.42**	0.15	0.78***	0.16
Work Experience	0.82***	0.12	0.65***	0.17	0.52***	0.16
Missing pre-'93	0.74***	0.09	0.40***	0.13	0.38**	0.16
Constant	-6.93***	0.43	-6.40***	0.84	-5.57***	0.78
N of cases	16488		4171		6570	
-2 Log Likelihood	4677		2001.86		1865.62	
	Italy		**Portugal**		**United Kingdom**	
Age (months)	0.01***	0.00	0.01**	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sex	-0.01	0.11	-0.26*	0.14	0.29	0.21
Child	-0.20	0.52	-0.16	0.28	-1.00**	0.48
Months Unemp	-0.01**	0.00	-0.02***	0.01	-0.11***	0.02
3rd Level Educ	0.89**	0.39	1.11	0.79	0.70*	0.38
Upper Second Ed.	0.53***	0.12	0.30	0.21	0.33	0.22
Work Experience	1.26***	0.13	1.05***	0.17	0.82***	0.27
Missing pre-'93	0.72***	0.12	0.22	0.16	0.03	0.24
Constant	-7.66***	0.56	-4.62***	0.61	-3.22***	1.03
N of cases	28225		4823		2114	
-2 Log Likelihood	365.29		1725.98		773.89	

** < .10 ** < .05 *** < .005*

We turn next to the three human capital type variables: education, employment experience and unemployment duration. Duration dependency is hypothesised to be lower in countries where youth unemployment is very high and a queuing system operates, whereby all those entering the labour market have to wait a considerable period of time before getting a job. It was also hypothesised that duration dependency will be low in countries that invest in active labour market policies. These policies should have the effect of redistributing employment opportunities across different durations of unemployment. The models show that duration of the unemployment spell has a consistently negative effect on transitions to work in eight of the nine countries examined. Only in Greece is duration insignificant. Duration dependency is also low in the other Southern European countries. The negative impact of duration is by far the highest in the UK, with Denmark, Ireland, France and Belgium falling between the two extremes.

The results on education and work experience provide some support for the hypothesis that in countries where qualifications are not a good signifier of the quality of the employee, employers will be more likely to use work experience as a signal. The effect of work experience is strongest in Greece, Portugal and Italy, where educational level has little effect on the chances of leaving unemployment in any given month (except for third level education in Italy). In contrast, the influence of work experience is weaker in Ireland and France where the positive effect of education is strong. Exceptions to this pattern occur in Denmark where both education and work experience are insignificant, and in Belgium where both factors have a strong impact on transitions. The extensive active labour market policies in Denmark (see Appendix Table) may be responsible for the lack of education and work experience effects since government programmes can help to compensate for labour market and educational disadvantage. The sources of these country differences in the relationship between unemployment to work transitions and education, unemployment duration and employment experience will be explored in greater detail through an analysis of the probabilities produced by these models.

Employment Probabilities

Another way of exploring the results of our hazard analyses is by looking at the predicted probabilities of leaving unemployment in the next month.

We focus here on the results relating to unemployment duration, education and work experience as these have been central to sociological and economic discussions of young people's labour market experiences. For the purposes of this presentation we have grouped the duration variable into three categories: less than six months; six to twelve months; and over twelve months. The predicted probabilities can vary within these categories, so we present the mean probability for each group. The differences in the predicted probabilities between the three duration groups reflect the coefficients in the original models: the differences are wide in the more northern European countries and much narrower in the South (especially in Italy and Greece). A cross-national comparison of the predicted exit probabilities for the long term unemployed show something that is not revealed in the original coefficients: with the exception of Denmark and possibly France, the probability of getting a job if you are LTU is similarly low in all countries.

Table 4. Mean Predicted Probabilities of Leaving Unemployment in Next Month

	Denmark	Belgium	France	UK	Ireland	Italy	Greece	Spain	Portugal
Unemployment duration:									
LT 6 months	.14	.07	.10	.09	.08	.02	.05	.06	.07
6-12 Months	.09	.05	.07	.05	.05	.02	.03	.04	.05
Over 12 months	.05	.02	.03	.01	.01	.01	.02	.02	.02
Education:									
3rd Level	.13	.15	.12	.10	.18	.03	.04	.05	.11
2nd Stage of 2nd Level	.13	.04	.10	.07	.06	.02	.03	.05	.06
1st stage of 2nd Level	.10	.02	.04	.04	.02	.01	.04	.03	.05
or Less									
Work experience	.11	.07	.10	.07	.06	.04	.08	.06	.08
No Work Experience	.09	.02	.03	.02	.02	.01	.01	.01	.02
All	.11	.04	.07	.05	.04	.01	.03	.04	.05
3rd level + lt 6mon + work experience	.16	.24	.16	.20	.22	.07	.08	.09	.24
low ed + ltu + no work experience	.03	.01	.01	.01	.01	.01	.01	.01	.02

The probability scores also provide an interesting perspective on the education and work experience effects. Ireland represents one extreme of the impact of education on the transition from unemployment to work. Here, those who have not completed the upper cycle of secondary school have a mean predicted probability of getting a job in the next month of less than 2%, whereas for those with third level education the probability rises to 18%. At the other extreme unemployed Greek graduates have no advantage compared to their less educated counterparts.

As shown by the national models (Table 3) the effect of having no employment experience is worst in the Southern European countries. In Spain and Greece the mean predicted probability of exiting unemployment to a job in any given month is only 1 per cent for those seeking their first job and in Italy it is .8 per cent, while those with work experience are between five and eight times more likely to exit.

The second last row of Table 4 shows the predicted probabilities of getting a job for unemployed individuals who occupy an advantaged position on all three variables i.e. they are graduates, with some previous work experience who are in the first five months of an unemployment spell. The last row reports the predicted probabilities for those who are disadvantaged on all three variables. The gap between the chances of these two groups are particularly wide in Belgium, the UK, Ireland and Portugal, while the gap is substantially narrower in Italy, Greece, Spain and Denmark. In the three Southern countries this is because the mean probabilities of getting a job are relatively low even for the most advantaged group. In Denmark the gap is reduced by improved chances for the most disadvantaged group. Denmark is the highest spender on active labour market policies (see appendix) and therefore the better chances for the most disadvantaged may be attributable to government intervention. In the remainder of the countries the predicted probabilities of making the transition to work for those with low education levels and no work experience who are in their 13th or subsequent month of unemployment are consistently and alarmingly low. It seems that this group of young people suffer extreme exclusion from the labour market across most of the EU.

Explaining Cross-National Variation in Employment Chances: Long- *versus* Short-term Unemployment

One of the enduring concerns in the study of unemployment is the problem of state dependence, which suggests that the longer an individual is unemployed, the lower is the probability that that individual will escape from unemployment and re-enter work (Heckman and Borjas, 1980). Our country models confirm this general pattern. In 7 countries the escape probability from long- term unemployment is .02 or lower. In every country, the predicted employment probabilities of escaping to employment in respect of those unemployment spells exceeding 12 months are substantially lower than the probability of escaping from an unemployment spell of less than six months duration (Table 4, rows 1 and 3).

This cross-national regularity notwithstanding, however, there are marked international differences in the employment probability differential between the short and the long-term unemployed. In Denmark, unemployment spells of 6 months or less have a .14 probability of ending in employment in the next month, compared to a .05 employment probability for unemployment spells exceeding 12 months. In Italy, the corresponding employment probabilities are .02 in respect of short-term unemployment and .01 in respect of long-term unemployment. There are thus substantial differences in the relative impact of short versus long-term unemployment across countries. The ratio of employment probabilities for short *versus* long-term unemployment varies between 2 in Italy to over 8 in the United Kingdom.

How can we account for these national differences in the relative impact of unemployment duration on the probability of escaping from unemployment to work? Are they due to supply and demand conditions or to institutional characteristics of the differing labour markets? To help us address this question, we conducted a simple OLS regression analysis of the ratio of the estimated employment probabilities associated with spells of short versus long-term unemployment across the nine countries in the analysis. Given the limited degrees if freedom available with only nine cases, we estimated very simple equations, specifying one, or at most, two, independent variables. The values of the dependent and independent variables used in the analysis are presented in Appendix Table 1.

In Equation 1 we estimated the effect of national unemployment rates in the 15-25 year age group on the ratio of employment probabilities to examine whether within-country differences in the short-versus long-term escape probabilities from unemployment are due to aggregate unemployment levels among youth. The effect is non-significant. We also investigated the effects of total unemployment, long-term unemployment and average growth rates in total employment over the years 1993-95 in order to capture alternative dimensions of supply and demand in both the overall and youth labour markets in the nine countries (results not presented). We found no evidence to suggest any systematic relationship between relative employment probabilities between short- and long-term unemployment spells and national differences in aggregate labour market conditions.

Table 5. Cross-National Regression of the Ratio of Employment Probabilities for Short- versus Long-term Unemployment Spells (N = 9)

	Coefficient	T-ratio
Equation 1		
Constant	5.55	2.99
Youth Unemployment Rate	-0.06	-0.92
Adjusted R^2	-0.02	
Equation 2		
Constant	2.81	2.85
Incidence of Unemployment Benefits	0.03	1.50
Adjusted R^2	0.13	
Equation 3		
Constant	6.70	6.70
Employment Protection	-0.54	-3.10
Adjusted R^2	0.52	
Equation 4		
Constant	9.35	7.32
Employment Protection	-0.74	-4.86
ALMP/Unemployment	-0.16	-2.54
Adjusted R^2	0.73	

We turn next to institutional features of labour markets. We look first at the influence of unemployment benefits. Orthodox labour market economists hold that generous welfare benefits generate work disincentives which may prolong job-search and unemployment. If this process were operative among young unemployed people in Europe, we would expect that unemployment compensation should reduce the differential employment probabilities of short- versus long-term employment spells. Unfortunately, we lack a measure of benefit replacement rates specific to young people aged under 25 years across the nine countries. We can, however, measure the incidence of receipt of unemployment compensation payments among the sample of young unemployed people in the ECHP. For each country we average the proportion of unemployed people who received unemployment compensation payments in 1993 and 1994. Equation 2 shows the effects of cross-national variation in unemployment compensation on short-versus long-term escape probabilities. The coefficient is negative, as anticipated, but non-significant.

Equation 3 looks at the influence of employment regulation. Our measure of employment regulation is the rank ordering of countries according to the strictness of their regulations governing dismissal from employment, derived from Grubb and Wells (1993). The negative and significant effect of the strength of employment protection legislation suggests that in countries characterised by strict dismissal regulations, the employment probability differential between short and long-term unemployment spells are lower than in countries with more liberal employment regulations. This effect should be interpreted with some caution, since in countries with strict dismissal regulations, we would expect employers to be more reluctant to recruit from among the long-term unemployed. The negative effect of employment protection may reflect an insider-outsider process, whereby in countries where job incumbents are relatively well protected there is less labour mobility and, consequently, young people generally encounter greater difficulties in entering employment. This would have the effect of reducing the employment probability ratio between short and long-term unemployment spells by lowering the escape probabilities for short-term unemployment, rather than raising the probabilities associated with long-term unemployment. We investigated this by estimating separate models for the effect of employment protection on the escape probabilities of unemployment spells of less than 6 months and over 12 months respectively. The effect was negative and significant in respect of

short-term unemployment, as anticipated, and non-significant in respect of long-term unemployment, providing support for our insider-outsider interpretation.

Finally, in Equation 4, we added a measure of the cross-national variation in provision of active labour market programmes (ALMPs). Our measure of ALMPs is aggregate national public expenditures on active labour market programmes in 1994 divided by national unemployment rates in order to take account of country differences in unemployment levels. ALMPs should redistribute employment chances in favour of those relatively disadvantaged in the labour market, so we would expect ALMPs to reduce the employment probability differential between short- and long-term unemployment. The effects are negative, as anticipated, and significant, and the negative effect of employment protection is also maintained in this equation.

Our use of estimated probabilities from the country-specific equations as dependent variables in the cross-national equations is somewhat experimental, although analogous procedures have been applied before in the analysis of pooled cross-section and time series data on welfare state development (Griffin, Walters, O'Connell and Moor, 1986). Moreover, given the limited number of cases available for this analysis, we must interpret the effects with some caution. The analysis does help to make sense of the national diversity in the relative employment probabilities associated with short- versus long-term unemployment. The findings suggest that national differences in the relative employment probabilities of short-term *versus* long-term unemployment spells have little to do with macro-level supply and demand conditions, but are responsive to institutional characteristics of labour markets, including both employment protection as well as state provision of active labour market policies.

Conclusion

Our study of young people's transitions from unemployment to work in nine European countries has revealed a number of findings that could not be deduced from cross-sectional or single country studies. By examining respondents' labour market situation over a period of two years it is possible to capture some of the instability in young people's activity status that is missed by static measures of unemployment. The activity diaries of young people show that unemployment is a more common experience than

youth unemployment rates would lead us to believe. Unemployment affected at least three in every ten young people at some time between January 1993 and December 1994 in each country studied. In Italy and Spain the numbers concerned rose to three in every five.

The cross-national comparisons show that not only do the patterns of transitions vary very substantially across countries but so do the factors that influence the transition. International differences in the rate and speed of the exit from unemployment to work are clearly structured by levels of demand in the national labour markets. The transition is most prolonged in Italy, Greece and Spain, where youth unemployment rates are very high and strict labour market regulation inhibits hiring. Transitions into employment are most rapid in Denmark, France, the UK and Portugal.

At the individual level, the type of human capital in which the unemployed person needs to invest to improve his or her chances of finding a job varies between countries. Investment in educational credentials is most beneficial in Belgium, Ireland, France and Germany. In the UK and the Southern European countries accumulating work experience has a much stronger positive effect on employment probabilities than education. This is not to say that educational level will not effect the type of job eventually found in these countries. It seems likely that these results for education and work experience are linked to the structure of national educational and training systems. Further research is needed to shed light on this link.

Our comparison between countries shows that differences in labour demand cannot explain the cross-national variation in the relationship between transition rates and the personal characteristics of the unemployed. For example, our analysis of duration dependency showed that the national differences in the gap between the employment probabilities of the long and short-term unemployed could not be explained by aggregate growth rates or unemployment rates. Institutional factors, namely the level of employment regulation and spending on active labour market policies were found to be more important in explaining national differences. Regulation reduced differences by equalising everybody's employment probabilities at a low level, while active labour market spending worked by improving the chances of the most disadvantaged. Therefore, at the country level the latter appears to be the more sensible policy option.

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Appendix 1: Testing the Inclusion of Repeated Events in the Hazard Model

Including repeated events in event history analyses can lead to a violation of the assumption of independence between cases. In order to test if including repeated events has affected the estimates produced by our models we re-ran them including the event number, which notes whether the spell of unemployment being analysed is the individual's first, second, third etc. in the observation period. In the vast majority of cases (93%) the event is the first spell of unemployment within the two year calendar. The models show that even with these additional controls the coefficients remain very close to those produced in Table 2 above (model 3). Therefore including repeated events has not altered our substantive conclusions. The coefficients for the two control variables suggest that those with prior experience of unemployment, either within the last 2 or 5 years, have a greater probability of exiting to employment in any month. A history of recurrent short spells of unemployment suggests an ability to re-enter the job market quickly but into unstable jobs.

Appendix Table 1. Hazard Model Including Event Number & Number of Previous Events

	Model 1 Coefficient	Model 2 Coefficient
Age (months)	0.01***	0.01***
Sex	-0.20***	-0.21***
Child	-0.02***	-0.02**
Unemployment (months)	0.56***	0.57***
3rd Level Education	0.32***	0.32***
Upper Second Education	-0.43***	-0.44***
Work Experience	0.94***	0.93***
Missing status pre-'93	0.45***	0.49***
Country *(Ref.: Ireland)*		
Denmark	0.46***	0.46***
Belgium	-0.14	-0.14
France	0.20*	0.19*
UK	0.03	0.02
Italy	-0.68***	-0.70***
Greece	-0.28**	-0.28**
Spain	-0.24**	-0.25**
Portugal	0.29**	0.30**
Event Number	0.22***	
No Previous Un Spells in last 5yrs		0.08***
Constant	-6.08	-5.96***
N of cases	74657	74657
-2LL	18892.28	18906.65

** P<.05; * P < .005; *** p<.0005*

Appendix Table 2. Main Variables Used in the Cross-National Analysis

	Ratio of Emp. Probabilities of Short- *versus* Long-term Unemp.[1]	Unemployment Rate, 15-25 yr Age Group[2]	Incidence of Unemployment Compensation, Under 25, 1993-4[3]	Employment Protection Ranking[4]	% GNP on ALMP/ Unemployment Rate[5]
Belgium	4.76	24.2	74.34	4	.14
Denmark	3.08	11.0	87.59	2	.25
France	3.64	29.0	36.81	5	.10
Greece	2.25	27.7	6.69	6	.03
Ireland	6.14	22.8	78.37	3	.11
Italy	2.10	32.3	1.90	7	.08
Portugal	2.72	15.1	8.54	8.5	.10
Spain	2.92	45.0	17.98	8.5	.02
UK	8.02	17.0	40.60	1	.06

Notes:

1. Employment probabilities for short-term unemployment refer to the average probability of spells of less than 6 months being followed by a transition to employment in the following month.

Employment probabilities for long-term unemployment refer to the corresponding probability for unemployment spells of over 12 months duration.

2. Source: European Commission, (1997), Employment in Europe. *Luxembourg: European Commission.*

3. Incidence of unemployment compensation is drawn from the 1994 and 1995 waves of the ECHP, and refers to the proportion of those unemployed and aged under 25 who reported receipt of unemployment compensation in the previous year – the measure is an average for the years 1993 and 1994.

4. The country ranking is drawn from Grubb and Wells (1993) and is based on the number of procedural inconveniences applying to individual dismissal, such as written warnings, notice period, amount of severance pay, grounds for dismissal, trial period before unfair dismissal, and possibility of reinstatement.

5. The percentage of GNP spent on Active labour Market Policies in 1994 is taken from OECD 1998. It is divided by the 1994 national unemployment rate to adjust for the numbers of unemployed.

Anne Hammarström

Is unemployment correlated with ill health and drug use? A comparative analysis between six north European countries

Introduction

Unemployment is a long-standing problem in most Western industrialised countries. Even though the problem is common for many countries, most studies of unemployment have been done from an economic point of view. But unemployment is also – to a large extent- a public health issue with devastating effects on somatic and psychological health (Winefield 1995, Janlert 1991, Hammarström 1994b). Among young people unemployement has also been shown to lead to deteriorated health behaviour such as increased tobacco and alcohol consumption, as well as drug use (Janlert & Hammarström 1992, Hammarström 1994b). and in the public health field have been restricted to studies within a single country at a time.

Few studies have compared the situation between different countries and looked at the extent to which differences in labour market policy as well as different social and cultural background could play a role. The exceptions are some ecological analyses and some studies regarding suicide (Brenner 1987, Boor 1980, Crombie 1990, Pritchard 1990, Pritchard 1992).

In our earlier comparative Nordic study of youth unemployment we found that active labour market policy (like in Sweden) is positively related to work return compared with a less active policies in e.g. Finland (Julkunen & Carle 1998). A positive relation was also found between active labour market efforts and the health and to some extent also alcohol consumption and drug abuse (Hammarström & Olofsson 1998).

The aim of this study is to compare the relationship between unemployment and ill health as well as drug use in the Nordic countries and Scotland with reference to the labour market policies as well as the economic policies. The results will be discussed from a theoretical perspective.

Theoretical background

Relatively few of the studies being carried out within the area of unemployment and health are based on theoretical discussion. The theories which are most often used could be classified as *economic deprivation models*, *stress-related models* and some more specific *psychological and sociological models* (Hammarström 1994a).

Economic deprivation models assume that unemployment leads to poverty and other forms of disadvantages, which we know are associated with poor health. This theory was predominant during the 1930s. Society's most significant reaction was the employment programme (work of the Unemployment Commission), which provided some economic compensation. However, the problems with ill health remained and the theory appeared inadequate. The multivariate models developed by Brenner (1983) could also be used to illustrate the connections between economic development and health conditions. In short, his work shows that increasing unemployment in the USA correlates with increasing mortality as a result of cardiovascular diseases, suicide and homicide, and infant mortality. However, this model does not include the aetiology, nor does it cover what happens to the unemployed. It only covers what happens in society in general.

According to stress theory, unemployment and uncertainty about one's future work situation may act as a stressor (Kagan & Levi 1975). This theory has been confirmed in earlier studies on unemployment among adults, both men (Cobb & Kasl 1977) and women (Arnetz et al 1987). One extension of the stress model within the framework of job stress points at the synergistic effects of high work demand and low decision latitude (Karasek & Theorell 1990). For any given demand level, the stress level will rise if the decision latitude is lowered.

Social psychological models have their basis in more or less empirically tested theories. One model developed by Marie Jahoda (1979) is based on the needs, besides the economic needs, a job should fulfil if it is a good one. She called these needs "latent functions", and explains them in the following way:

* employment imposes a time structure on the day

*employment implies regularly shared experiences and contacts with others

*employment links an individual to goals and purposes that transcend her/his own

*employment defines aspects of personal status and identity

*employment enforces activity

Jahoda's model can thus be used to understand the consequences of unemployment, and to analyse different employment situations. However, most jobs do not satisfactorily fulfil these functions.

A British study (Miles 1983) showed that people who could largely fulfil these needs in spite of the fact that they were unemployed had fewer psychological problems than those who could not. Obviously, all jobs do not fulfil all the needs, in other words, the meaning of work varies according to its type and content, and to the different relationships in the working environment.

People who want to work but cannot get a job are missing an essential element of control over their situation. This lack of control may be accompanied by passivity, negative feelings about oneself, bad self confidence and depression, according to the theory of learned helplessness (Seligman 1975; Abramson et al. 1978). Other aspects such as class and gender, even in young people, have a significant impact on how this lack of control is perceived, as well as on the health consequences it causes. The positive impact of control on somatic and psychological health, as well as on alcohol consumption, in young men and women has been demonstrated in unemployment research (Hammarström 1986; Hammarström 1996).

Another concept of control, internal versus external control (locus of control), has often been referred to (Tiggemann & Winefield 1984; Feather 1983). Internal control means that unemployed see themselves as partly responsible for becoming unemployed, whereas external control means that they feel that the unemployment was caused entirely by external factors. Those considering themselves responsible for their unemployment are expected to feel better because they are likely to achieve better control over their situation than those who blame society.

Theories of social network/social support are rapidly gaining ground in research in which human relations are regarded as fundamental needs (Östergren 1991). Relationships can have direct effects on health, or buffer effects in protecting against stressful life events such as unemployment (Cohen & Wills 1985). Several studies have shown how social support

from the family, friends and community services can decrease the negative effects of unemployment (Atkinson et al. 1986). Being unemployed in areas with high unemployment may imply increased access to social support and a decreased risk of being blamed by others in the same area.

Theories and research on unemployment have often not taken women's perspectives into account. Different researchers, including some of the few female researchers within the field, have claimed that unemployment is not as destructive for women as for men. The supposed explanation is that women can compensate for the negative effects of unemployment by returning to their positions as housewives. It has thus been the belief that housework can satisfactorily provide compensation for paid work (Jahoda 1982; Ovesen 1978). However, studies focusing on women show that their health is also greatly affected by unemployment (Davies & Esseveld 1988). Furthermore, these effects are as serious as for men (Iversen et al. 1987; Hammarström 1994b; Hammarström & Janlert 1997), given that the same criteria are used to define unemployment (Leeflang et al. 1992). This suggests that unemployment is as serious a problem for women as for men.

A gender perspective can be applied to unemployment research in two steps. The first step is to visualise women's conditions, which in the case of unemployment research means that women are also included in the studies, and that differences due to gender are highlighted. The next step is to apply a gender theoretical framework in order to analyse the importance of relations between men and women, as well as the constructions of masculinities and femininities in different contexts of unemployment. From a structural point of view, relationships between men and women can be characterised by male dominance, the preferential right of interpretation and power. Even if gender is a basic organisational principle in all societies, is it not a homogenous category. Women (just like men) are different in age, and in social and ethnic background, and these factors are added to gender when determining dominance. Common to them all is that lack of control and self-determination contribute to the uneven distribution of health in society (Hammarström et al. 1996).

Method

The measure of unemployment used in this study was derived from a question about the labour-market position at the time of the inquiry. The

measure differentiated between those who were *unemployed* on one hand and all others (*not unemployed*) on the other hand.

Health was measured using one question about health status. Somatic ill health was measured using questions about backache, reduction in weight, gastritis and breathlessness. These questions have been used previously in unemployment research (Hammarström 1986; Hammarström 1996). The well validated "Johns Hopkins symptom checklist (SCL-90R)" (Derogatis 1977; Kinney et al. 1991) was used to measure psychological ill health. This scale contains 10 questions about nervous and depressive symptoms during the previous two weeks. Somatic and psychological indices were constructed and dichotomised into dummy variables, where 1 consisted of the third with most symptoms. Alcohol use was measured using two questions: one was about frequency of drinking during the previous year, and the other was about intoxication. The questions were dichotomised so that 1 represented those who usually drank alcohol once a week or more often, and respectively, those who drank to become intoxicated once a week or more often. The use of narcotics was measured using two questions: one was about their own use and the other about use among persons they knew. The questions were dichotomised so that 1 represented those who had used narcotics once or more, and respectively, those who knew users.

The relationships between ill health and the use of alcohol and narcotics on the one hand, and labour market position on the other, were analysed by comparing the frequencies among the men and the women in the different countries.

The following independent variables were used in the logistic regression: poverty (an index consisting of eleven different questions about how often they had to give up certain things e.g. vacation), immigrant (born in Sweden, second generation immigrants, first generation immigrants), unemployment (total length of unemployment), own education and age.

Results and Reflections

Unemployment, health status and ill health

Our main findings regarding health status and ill health were as follows. The unemployed experienced worst health compared to the not unemployed in all countries and for both men and women (see Table 1). The

results were significant, except for Denmark and for women in Norway. The unemployed in Sweden, Iceland and Norway (women only) had worse somatic health compared to the not unemployed (see Table 2). For psychological symptoms we found significant differences between the unemployed and the not unemployed in Iceland, Sweden and Scotland as well as among men in Finland and Norway (see Table 3). These findings were in accordance with international unemployment research results (Warr 1987; Winefield 1995; Hammarström & Janlert 1997), in which unemployment has been shown to lead to deteriorating health. The pattern was most commonly found among young men and women in Iceland and Sweden, followed by Scotland and Finland. The results were mostly nonsignificant for Norway and Denmark; the Norwegian results could well be explained by the high internal non-response due to methodological reasons. The Danish results could possibly be explained by their biased selection of only insured unemployed young people. This is probably also the explanation to the fact that the Danish young people had better health, compared to the other countries.

Unemployment and drug use

The negative effects of youth unemployment on health behaviour have been comprehensively documented (Hammarström & Janlert 1994, Hammer 1991, Janlert & Hammarström 1992, Layne & Whitehead 1985, Power & Estaugh 1990, Montgomery et al 1998), in terms of increased alcohol use and tobacco consumption. In this study we found no clear associations between the unemployment and alcohol consumption in the different countries, except for unemployed young men and women in Finland (see Table 4 and 5). On the contrary, the frequency of alcohol consumption was lowest among the unemployed in Denmark. The highest frequency of weekly alcohol consumption was found among men in Scotland (58 per cent) and Denmark (52 per cent) compared to about 30 per cent among men in the other countries. The corresponding figures among women were 50 per cent in Scotland, compared to 22 per cent or less in the other countries. Except for in Scotland, where the gender differences were very small, there were twice as many alcohol consumers among men compared to women.

With regard to alcohol intoxication Scotland had highest frequency of weekly intoxication among young men (37 per cent) and women (25 per

cent) in Scotland. These figures could be compared to intoxication in the other countries; between 20 and 28 per cent of the men and around five per cent of the women. Again, unemployed young people in Finland only were significantly more often intoxicated every week compared to those who were not unemployed.

Between 3 to 5 times more men reported being intoxicated in the different countries, with Scotland being the only exception. This higher alcohol consumption could be explained by the way gender is constructed in our societies. Masculinity is assumed to encompass achievement orientation, where alcohol consumption is accepted (Sabo & Gordon 1995). The importance of gender constructions has also been shown in studies on alcohol consumption and child-bearing – when young women become mothers they sharply diminish their alcohol consumption, while the consumption is unchanged among young fathers (Janlert & Hammarström 1992).

With two exceptions (men in Finland and women in Sweden) no clear relationship was found between unemployment and drug use (see Table 6 and 7). This may be interpreted as if such a relationship did not exist, but there could also be other explanations. The validity and reliability of responses in regard to questions about drug use may be doubtful. Since the use of drugs is considered criminal in most of the Nordic countries, less than totally accurate reportage is to be expected, which is reflected in the large internal non-response apparent in all the countries except Denmark. Denmark is different from the other Nordic countries in that there is less restrictive legislation on narcotics use. However, because the Danish sample population only included unemployed people who were insured, we cannot for Denmark either draw any reliable conclusions about the relationship between unemployment and drug use among young people.

Approximately half as many women as men reported drug use. In Scotland the gender differences were smaller. The figures for Norway are insecure because of a large non-response rate. In the Nordic countries less than 10 per cent of the women and between 10 and 27 per cent of the men were weekly users of narcotics. In Scotland, the figures were 35 per cent among the women and 53 per cent among the men. The same country pattern was found in relation to young people who knew of anyone who used narcotics weekly, but the figures were much higher. Young people in Denmark, and to a lesser extent in Sweden had the lowest figures in relations to contact with narcotic users. In most cases unemployment seemed

to have no impact on the use of or contact with persons who used narcotics. The only exception was Finnish men and Swedish women.

Which structural factors were related to health status?

The relationship between unemployment and ill health in the different countries was in a logistic regression analysed for the following structurally determined possible confounders: poverty, total length of unemployment, father and/or mother being an immigrant, high education and age (18 to 25 years) (see Table 8-10). Poverty was the most dominating determinant for ill health in all countries. Unemployment was related to ill health in Finland and Denmark, and to a lesser extent in Iceland, Sweden and Norway even after control was made for poverty and other possible confounders. High education turned out to be a protective factor against somatic ill health, especially in Scotland. Young age was a much weaker risk-factor for ill health.

Thus, our results suggest that poor finances in particular but also, to a certain degree unemployment, young age and low education can bring about health problems amongst young people. Our results fit some of the theoretical models that have been used in unemployment research (Hammarström 1994a). The importance of the financial situation is consistent with deprivation theory, which assumes that unemployment leads to poverty and other forms of disadvantage, which we know are associated with poor health. Besides, unemployment hits those who already have the socially most disadvantaged situation and therefore also worst health (Hammarström 1996).

Which factors are related to alcohol consumption and drug use?

In the logistical regressions unemployment was not correlated with alcohol consumption (neither the frequency of drinking nor the intoxication rate, see Table 11 –12). The lack of correlation between length of unemployment and alcohol consumption could be explained by the method used – the questions about alcohol habits covered the previous year, while those about unemployment length stretched five years back in time. Other explanations could be adjustment to the situation of being long-term unemployed as well as worse financial circumstances resulting in less opportunity to buy alcohol. However, poverty did not show any correlation with alcohol consumption. Besides, earlier research points away from a de-

crease in alcohol consumption as the duration of unemployment increases (Janlert & Hammarström 1992). On the contrary, it appears to increase, especially amongst young men.

Is it possible that the validity of the questions used here is lower than in earlier investigations? The questions about frequency of alcohol consumption and intoxication do not say anything about the total amount of alcohol consumed, which might be a better indicator of alcohol-related health effects. There is also a need for further investigations in order to analyse the differences between the countries, as well as between men and women. One explanation might be that the tendency to report alcohol consumption and intoxication possibly varies according to gender, as well as to social and cultural norms.

Living in a big city had some explanatory power, especially among young people in Sweden as well as among young men in Norway. Young age was a risk factor especially in Denmark, while low education had importance for alcohol consumption among women only in Sweden, Finland and Denmark.

As far as the use of narcotics was concerned, poverty as well as living in a large city were the most powerful explanatory factors for both drug use among friends and own drug use, in all countries except for Scotland (see Table 13-14). Besides, low age showed just as many correlations, except for Denmark and Finland. Unemployment played a less important role for drug use, mostly among men.

Thus, access to narcotics (that is to live in a big city and drug use among friends) seemed consequently to be of significance in terms of drug use. Even these factors can be put into a theoretical frame of reference, with the starting point in unemployment and economic deprivation. It may be considered surprising that poor finances were related to drug use, although this is an important part of a social, partly marginalised risk situation.

Living in a large city means having greater access to alcohol and especially to drugs compared to living in smaller cities or in the rural area. Our results confirm earlier studies, which indicate the possible negative impact of an extensive social network on health behaviour (Iversen & Klausen 1986).

Summary and conclusion

Overall, unemployed young people had worst health compared to those not unemployed. With regard to alcohol consumption, no clear associations between the unemployment and alcohol consumption were found except for in Finland. With two exceptions (men in Finland and women in Sweden) no clear relationship was found between unemployment and drug use. Compared to the other countries, Scotland had the highest number of alcohol consumers as well as drug abusers. Large gender differences were found with worse health among women and most alcohol and drug use among men.

Our results suggest that poor finances in particular but also, to a certain degree unemployment, young age and low education can bring about health problems amongst young people. The correlations between unemployment and alcohol consumption were less convincing. On the contrary, many correlations were found between drug use and the dependent variables such as living in a large city, poverty, young age and to a lesser extent unemployment.

The conclusion from our study is that unemployment seems have a negative influence on the health of young people and to a lesser extent the same trend could be seen for drug use, even after control for possible confounders. Overall, no consistent effects of unemployment on alcohol consumption were found, which may be an effect of the methods used. Poverty was the single most important factor for ill health, while poverty together with living in a large city and young age were the most important factors for drug use.

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Table 1. Per cent young women and men in the Nordic countries and Scotland who experienced the state of their health as average or poor

	Finland		**Iceland**		**Norway**		**Sweden**		**Denmark**		**Scotland**	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	*Women*	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Unemployed	32,4	32,0	34,5	42,7	23,3	29,5	34,6	25,9	11,7	11,4	33,9	24,4
Not unemployed	22,8	24,6	23,1	22,3	20,6	19,5	26,1	16,1	10,8	10,2	19,9	16,4
p	0,005	0,010	0,011	<0,001	0,529	0,006	0,002	<0,001	0,712	0,668	0,008	0,025

Table 2. Somatic ill-health (index) distributed on land and gender in relation to the labour market situation (x=Mean value, s=standard deviation)

Women

	Finland		Iceland		Norway		Sweden		Denmark		Scotland	
	X	s	x	s	x	s	x	s	*x*	*s*	*x*	*s*
Unemployed	5,5	1,4	6,1	1,6	5,7	1,5	5,8	1,5	5,3	1,4	5,1	1,2
Not unemployed	5,3	1,2	5,7	1,4	5,1	1,3	5,4	1,4	5,2	1,2	5,3	1,4
p	0,132		0,004		0,001		<0,001		0,690		0,423	

Men

	Finland		Iceland		Norway		Sweden		Denmark		Scotland	
	X	s	x	s	*x*	*s*	x	s	x	s	x	s
Unemployed	5,4	1,3	6,1	1,8	*5,3*	*1,5*	5,3	1,4	5,2	1,4	5,1	1,3
Not unemployed	5,3	1,2	5,5	1,5	*5,2*	*1,3*	5,0	1,2	5,1	1,4	5,0	1,4
p	0,790		0,001		*0,410*		<0,001		0,694		0,208	

Table 3. Psychological ill-health (index) distributed on land and gender in relation to the labour market situation (x=Mean value, s=standard deviation)

Women

	Finland		Iceland		Norway		Sweden		Denmark		Scotland	
	X	s	x	s	x	s	x	s	x	s	x	s
Unemployed	17,2	5,9	18,6	6,1	17,7	5,8	18,0	6,7	15,9	5,1	19,1	8,0
Not unemployed	16,5	5,7	16,7	5,9	16,6	6,1	16,8	5,9	15,6	5,0	16,6	6,7
p	0,107		0,002		0,113		0,002		0,428		0,005	

Men

	Finland		Iceland		Norway		Sweden		Denmark		Scotland	
	X	s	x	s	x	s	x	s	x	s	x	s
Unemployed	15,0	5,2	17,7	6,2	16,3	6,1	14,9	5,1	13,9	3,9	15,7	6,0
Not unemployed	14,4	4,6	15,0	4,9	14,5	4,7	14,3	4,6	13,3	3,4	14,7	5,4
p	0,045		<0,001		0,001		0,034		0,076		0,040	

Table 4. Per cent young women and men in the Nordic countries and Scotland who have consumed alcohol once a week or more during the last twelve months

	Finland		Iceland		Norway		Sweden		Denmark		Scotland	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Unemployed	19,6	39,7	8,8	29,5	9,6	30,6	13,7	30,5	16,7	45,8	47,5	54,5
Not unemployed	17,6	33,3	7,1	28,9	9,4	33,6	14,8	31,2	26,0	54,8	53,4	61,7
p	0,522	0,036	0,527	0,909	0,972	0,512	0,615	0,828	0,007	0,048	0,347	0,099

Table 5. Per cent young women and men in the Nordic countries and Scotland who have been intoxicated once a week or more during the last twelve months

	Finland		Iceland		Norway		Sweden		Denmark		Scotland	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Unemployed	12,8	31,2	4,5	24,1	5,3	22,9	7,9	20,7	4,7	28,2	24,5	36,1
Not unemployed	6,3	24,6	4,4	19,4	6,7	26,2	5,7	21,9	4,6	20,8	24,9	37,7
p	0,003	0,023	0,952	0,263	0,634	0,454	0,173	0,640	0,966	0,053	0,946	0,714

Table 6. Per cent young women and men in the Nordic countries and Scotland who know of anyone using narcotics (cannabis, speed/amphetamine) once a week or more often)

	Finland		Iceland		Norway		Sweden		Denmark		Scotland	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Unemployed	39,7	53,9	50,0	66,7	51,4	57,4	34,7	37,5	14,6	33,0	68,9	76,6
Not unemployed	37,7	45,0	46,3	65,2	42,3	54,7	27,1	35,8	20,1	29,3	72,6	81,9
p	0,621	0,012	0,504	0,787	0,184	0,645	0,023	0,617	0,086	0,375	0,509	0,137

Table 7. Per cent young women and men in the Nordic countries and Scotland who have been using narcotics (cannabis, speed/amphetamine) once a week or more often during the last twelve months

	Finland		Iceland		Norway		Sweden		Denmark		Scotland	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Unemployed	6,9	22,0	8,2	32,7	8,3	21,7	6,1	11,8	5,1	30,2	36,6	53,6
Not unemployed	4,1	9,6	9,1	23,8	8,7	19,2	2,2	9,7	8,3	24,8	33,1	50,2
p	0,139	<0,001	0,783	0,067	0,925	0,597	0,002	0,319	0,125	0,181	0,556	0,444

Table 8. Logistic regression. Odds ratios (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) for poor health

	Finland				Iceland				Norway			
	Women n=721		Men n=939		Women n=579		Men n=590		Women n=446		Men n=573	
	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)
poverty	1.06	1.03-1.09	1.07	1.04-1.10	1.08	1.04-1.12	1.08	1.04-1.12	1.10	1.06-1.15	1.09	1.05-1.13
immigrant	1.42	0.94-2.15	0.67	0.41-1.09	1.21	0.74-1.98	1.05	0.58-1.91	0.65	0.40-1.06	1.20	0.72-2.02
unemployment	1.01	0.99-1.02	1.02	1.01-1.03	1.02	0.99-1.03	1.03	1.02-1.04	1.00	0.99-1.01	1.00	0.99-1.01
education	0.92	0.83-1.02	0.89	0.79-0.99	0.89	0.25-3.18	0.91	0.79-1.05	0.95	0.82-1.11	0.91	0.79-1.05
age	0.92	0.84-1.01	0.98	0.90-1.07	0.94	0.85-1.04	0.94	0.85-1.04	0.91	0.79-1.04	0.87	0.77-0.98

	Sweden				Denmark				Scotland			
	Women n=1089		Men n=1111		Women n=555		Men n=515		Women n=213		Men n=370	
	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)
poverty	1.10	1.07-1.13	1.11	1.08-1.14	1.11	1.06-1.17	1.08	1.02-1.14	1.12	1.05-1.20	1.06	1.01-1.11
immigrant	0.83	0.63-1.09	0.99	0.74-1.32	1.07	0.49-2.34	1.37	0.77-2.44	1.66	1.08-2.55	0.87	0.49-1.25
unemployment	1.02	1.01-1.03	1.01	0.99-1.02	1.01	0.99-1.03	1.03	1.01-1.05	1.02	0.99-1.05	1.01	0.99-1.02
education	1.03	0.94-1.12	0.97	0.88-1.07	0.79	0.63-0.99	0.93	0.75-1.15	0.72	0.55-0.94	0.85	0.70-0.84
age	0.87	0.80-0.95	1.01	0.92-1.11	0.96	0.77-1.19	0.87	0.69-1.09	0.94	0.77-1.15	0.96	0.84-1.10

Table 9. Logistic regression. Odds ratios (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) for somatic symptoms

	Finland				**Iceland**				**Norway**			
	Women n=716		Men n=928		Women n=557		Men n=567		Women n=311		Men n=404	
	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)
poverty	1.10	1.07-1.13	1.08	1.05-1.11	1.10	1.06-1.14	1.11	1.07-1.15	1.10	1.05-1.15	1.09	1.05-1.13
unemployment	1.02	1.01-1.03	1.01	0.99-1.02	1.02	0.99-1.05	1.00	0.99-1.02	1.00	0.98-1.02	1.01	0.99-1.03
education	0.94	0.85-1.04	0.93	0.83-1.04	1.01	0.88-1.15	0.87	0.77-0.99	0.95	0.81-1.11	0.90	0.78-1.04
age	1.04	0.95-1.14	1.03	0.94-1.12	0.88	0.78-0.99	1.09	0.98-1.21	0.96	0.83-1.10	0.88	0.77-0.99

	Sweden				**Denmark**				**Scotland**			
	Women n=1060		Men n=1088		Women n=523		Men n=498		Women n=201		Men n=350	
	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)
poverty	1.08	1.05-1.11	1.09	1.07-1.11	1.12	1.06-1.18	1.06	1.01-1.11	1.05	0.99-1.11	1.09	1.05-1.14
unemployment	1.00	0.99-1.02	1.00	0.99-1.01	1.02	1.00-1.04	1.03	1.01-1.05	0.98	0.96-1.00	1.00	0.99-1.01
education	1.01	0.92-1.10	0.94	0.99-1.03	1.02	0.87-1.09	0.91	0.80-1.04	0.69	0.55-0.86	0.85	0.69-0.99
age	0.99	0.91-1.08	0.99	0.91-1.07	0.85	0.73-0.99	0.99	0.86-1.14	1.15	0.97-1.34	0.98	0.87-1.11

Table 10. Logistic regression. Odds ratios (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) for psychical symptoms

	Finland				Iceland				Norway			
	Women n=722		Men n=731		Women n=573		Men n=586		Women n=325		Men n=416	
	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)
poverty	1.15	1.11-1.19	1.16	1.13-1.20	1.03	0.82-1.17	1.15	0.82-1.60	1.14	1.09-1.09	1.11	1.07-1.15
immigrant	1.13	0.75-1.70	0.75	0.46-1.23	0.96	0.91-1.02	1.26	0.71-2.24	0.91	0.59-1.41	0.79	0.46-1.36
unemployment	1.02	1.01-1.03	1.00	0.99-1.01	1.02	1.00-1.04	1.01	0.99-1.02	1.02	1.00-1.04	1.00	0.99-1.01
age	0.92	0.84-1.01	0.98	0.89-1.08	0.80	0.73-0.88	0.96	0.87-1.06	0.90	0.78-1.03	0.95	0.83-1.09
atgtot	0.99	0.97-1.01	1.02	0.99-1.04	1.04	0.97-1.11	1.01	0.73-1.40	1.00	0.98-1.02	1.03	1.00-1.06

	Sweden				Denmark				Scotland			
	Women n=1082		Men n=1114		Women n=547		Men n=510		Women n=223		Men n=396	
	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)
poverty	1.13	1.10-1.16	1.12	1.09-1.15	1.14	1.10-1.18	1.15	1.10-1.21	1.14	1.08-1.20	1.11	1.07-1.16
immigrant	0.90	0.70-1.16	0.94	0.72-1.23	0.73	0.40-1.33	1.48	0.87-2.51	0.91	0.64-1.29	0.82	0.55-1.22
unemployment	1.00	0.99-1.01	1.01	0.99-1.02	1.01	0.99-1.03	1.00	0.98-1.02	1.00	0.98-1.02	1.01	0.99-1.02
age	0.88	0.81-0.95	1.02	0.93-1.12	0.84	0.72-0.97	0.88	0.73-1.06	0.99	0.86-1.14	1.02	0.91-1.15
atgtot	1.00	0.98-1.21	0.99	0.97-1.01	1.03	0.99-1.07	1.00	0.96-1.04	1.02	0.98-1.06	1.00	0.97-1.03

Table 11. Logistic regression. Odds ratios (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) for alcohol habits

	Finland				Iceland				Norway			
	Women n=707		Men n=934		Women n=556		Men n=566		Women n=315		Men n=409	
	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)
urban/rural	1.09	0.95-1.25	1.14	1.05-1.23	0.89	0.68-1.17	0.97	0.83-1.13	1.23	0.93-1.62	1.20	1.05-1.38
poverty	1.01	0.97-1.05	1.02	0.99-1.04	0.98	0.92-1.04	0.99	0.95-1.03	1.09	1.02-1.17	1.00	0.97-1.04
unemployment	1.00	0.98-1.02	1.01	0.99-1.02	1.00	0.96-1.04	1.00	0.99-1.01	1.00	0.98-1.03	1.00	0.99-1.01
education	0.88	0.75-0.99	0.95	0.86-1.02	0.99	0.81-1.20	1.00	0.89-1.12	1.10	0.87-1.40	0.97	0.82-1.13

	Sweden				Denmark				Scotland			
	Women n=1055		Men n=1093		Women n=545		Men n=515		Women n=203		Men n=356	
	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)
urban/rural	1.37	1.17-1.60	1.15	1.12-1.37	1.15	0.99-1.33	0.92	0.82-1.03	1.19	0.98-1.45	1.04	0.89-1.22
poverty	1.00	0.97-1.03	0.99	0.97-1.01	0.99	0.95-1.03	1.02	0.98-1.06	1.02	0.97-1.08	0.97	0.93-1.01
unemployment	1.00	0.99-1.01	1.00	0.99-1.01	0.99	0.97-1.01	1.00	0.98-1.02	0.99	0.97-1.01	1.00	0.99-1.01
education	1.12	1.01-1.25	1.52	0.93-1.11	1.52	1.26-1.83	1.09	0.90-1.31	1.18	0.98-1.42	0.92	0.79-1.07

Table 12. Logistic regression. Odds ratios (OR)and 95% confidence intervals (CI) for alcohol intoxication at least once in a week

	Finland				Iceland				Norway			
	Women n=706		Men n=931		Women n=543		Men n=562		Women n=321		Men n=408	
	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)
urban/rural	1.03	0.86-1.23	1.14	1.04-1.25	0.83	0.59-1.16	0.85	0.71-1.01	1.34	0.95-1.90	1.17	1.01-1.39
poverty	1.02	0.96-1.08	1.02	0.96-1.09	0.99	0.92-1.07	1.00	0.96-1.04	1.07	0.99-1.16	1.03	0.99-1.07
unemployment	0.01	0.99-1.03	1.00	0.99-1.01	0.96	0.91-1.02	0.99	0.97-1.01	1.02	0.99-1.05	1.00	0.99-1.01
education	0.80	0.69-0.96	0.93	0.83-1.05	0.91	0.68-1.22	0.93	0.80-1.08	1.07	0.80-1.43	0.90	0.78-1.09
age	0.93	0.80-1.08	0.94	0.85-1.04	0.95	0.75-1.20	0.96	0.85-1.08	099	0.75-1.30	0.89	0.87-1.02

	Sweden				Denmark				Scotland			
	Women n=1045		Men n=1078		Women n=534		Men n=513		Women n=201		Men n=355	
	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)
urban/rural	1.32	1.15-1.66	1.28	1.14-1.44	2.41	2.10-2.76	1.07	0.93-1.23	1.20	0.94-1.54	1.04	0.89-1.22
poverty	1.02	0.98-1.17	1.00	0.97-1.03	1.08	0.99-1.17	1.05	1.01-1.09	1.03	0.97-1.10	0.97	0.93-1.01
unemployment	1.01	0.99-1.03	1.01	0.99-1.02	1.00	0.95-1.05	1.01	0.99-1.03	1.00	0.97-1.03	1.01	0.99-1.02
education	0.92	0.77-1.09	1.08	0.98-1.19	1.39	0.90-2.16	1.04	0.89-1.22	1.04	0.81-1.34	0.94	0.80-1.10
age	0.85	0.72-0.99	0.84	0.76-0.93	0.48	0.32-0.72	0.84	0.72-0.98	0.80	0.66-0.97	0.95	0.84-1.07

Table 13. Logistic regression. Odds ratios (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) for friends who use narcotics

	Finland				**Iceland**				**Norway**			
	Women n=622		Men n=768		Women n=470		Men n=488		Women n=253		Men n=312	
	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)
urban/rural	1.13	1.01-1.26	1.42	1.28-1.57	1.16	0.99-1.39	1.22	1.04-1.43	1.34	1.12-1.60	1.22	1.05-1.41
poverty	1.06	1.03-1.09	1.06	1.03-1.09	1.06	1.03-1.10	1.12	1.08-1.16	1.08	1.03-1.13	1.07	1.03-1.11
unemployment	1.00	0.99-1.01	1.10	1.09-1.11	0.99	0.97-1.01	0.99	0.98-1.01	1.00	0.98-1.02	1.00	0.99-1.01
age	0.88	0.80-0.96	0.88	0.80-0.96	0.87	0.79-0.96	0.85	0.76-0.94	0.85	0.73-0.99	0.79	0.68-0.91

	Sweden				**Denmark**				**Scotland**			
	Women n=847		Men n=848		Women n=548		Men n=518		Women n=220		Men n=387	
	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)
urban/rural	1.27	1.12-1.44	1.45	1.28-1.64	1.55	1.33-1.81	1.07	0.95-1.21	1.09	0.89-1.33	1.05	0.86-1.28
poverty	1.07	1.04-1.10	1.05	1.02-1.08	1.08	1.04-1.13	1.04	0.99-1.08	1.04	0.98-1.10	1.01	0.96-1.06
unemployment	1.01	1.00-1.02	1.01	0.99-1.02	1.01	0.99-1.03	1.02	1.00-1.04	1.00	0.98-1.02	1.00	0.99-1.02
age	0.86	0.78-0.95	0.88	0.80-0.97	0.88	0.24-3.27	0.91	0.79-1.15	0.98	0.84-1.15	1.26	1.07-1.48

Table14. Logistic regression. Odds ratios (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) for narcotics misuse

	Finland				Iceland				Norway			
	Women n=620		Men n=768		Women n=470		Men n=490		Women n=254		Men n=307	
	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)
urban/rural	1.31	0.99-1.74	1.12	1.21-1.66	1.02	0.78-1.34	1.31	1.07-1.60	2.38	1.43-3.95	1.25	1.02-1.53
poverty	1.04	0.97-1.11	1.08	1.04-1.12	1.09	1.03-1.16	1.08	1.04-1.12	1.02	0.94-1.11	1.07	1.02-1.12
unemployment	1.01	0.98-1.04	1.03	1.02-1.04	1.00	0.97-1.04	1.00	0.99-1.01	1.01	0.98-1.04	1.00	0.99-1.01
age	0.80	0.64-0.99	0.80	0.70-0.91	0.73	0.61-0.88	0.87	0.78-0.97	0.75	0.57-0.99	0.81	0.68-0.97

	Sweden				Denmark				Scotland			
	Women n=841		Men n=844		Women n=547		Men n=514		Women n=217		Men n=	
	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)	OR	CI (95%)
urban/rural	1.26	0.92-1.73	1.61	1.28-2.02	1.56	1.15-2.12	1.19	1.04-1.36	1.08	0.88-1.14	0.99	0.86-1.14
poverty	1.07	0.99-1.15	1.05	1.01-1.09	1.03	0.96-1.10	1.03	0.99-1.07	1.09	1.00-1.08	1.04	1.00-1.08
unemployment	1.03	1.00-1.06	1.01	0.99-1.03	1.00	0.97-1.03	1.02	1.00-1.04	0.99	0.97-1.01	1.01	1.00-1.02
age	0.83	0.64-1.07	0.84	0.73-0.97	0.88	0.67-1.15	0.97	0.83-1.13	0.97	0.84-1.12	1.01	0.90-1.13

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