

9.1. Youth on Volatile Labor Markets – Reconstructing Trends and Political Responses

EXPANSION OF TERTIARY EDUCATION: HOW DOES IT AFFECT RETURNS TO EDUCATION?

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ABSTRACT

While great efforts and progress have been made with respect to the analysis of the impact of education expansion, differentiation, and marketization on the social inequality patterns in the access to higher education (Arum *et al.*, 2007), far less is known about their consequences for the labour market integration of tertiary graduates. Previous school-to-work transition research has mainly focused on the labour market outcomes of secondary education depending on institutional setup and paid less attention to stratification within higher education (Müller and Gangl, 2003; Shavit and Müller, 1998). In recent decades, there has been a dramatic increase in higher education participation among young people in many industrialized countries (Schofer and Meyer, 2005). This prominent development has been accompanied by increased differentiation and marketization of higher education (Arum *et al.*, 2007). In this respect, the experience of Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries is unique. With the transition from socialism to capitalism and the accompanying liberalization of educational policy, post-secondary education expanded and diversified in these countries to the levels hardly observed in Western European countries (Kogan, 2008). Thus, the tremendous change in the higher education landscape calls for thorough empirical investigation. **The question arises how the expansion of tertiary education influences the returns to education not only for tertiary graduates but for others too? Do country-specific magnitudes of expansion lead to different patterns of labour market integration of tertiary graduates and less educated?**

IN ORDER TO ASSESS THE CONSEQUENCES OF EDUCATION EXPANSION, WE WILL ANALYSE THE LM OUTCOMES (UNEMPLOYMENT, ISEI, LOW-SKILLED EMPLOYMENT, PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT) OF TERTIARY GRADUATES AND LESS EDUCATED IN EUROPE USING EUROPEAN UNION LABOUR FORCE SURVEY 2004-2007. PAPER STARTS WITH A BRIEF DESCRIPTIVE OVERVIEW OF THE RELATION BETWEEN EDUCATION AND TRANSITION OUTCOMES IN EUROPE. THEREAFTER, WE WILL CONCENTRATE ON THE CEE COUNTRIES, APPLY MULTILEVEL MODELING TECHNIQUES TO INCORPORATE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS (EDUCATION, GENDER) AND MACRO-LEVEL INDICATORS FOR COUNTRIES AS THE ECONOMIC SITUATION, RATIO BETWEEN ADULT AND YOUTH POPULATION, OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE AND EXPANSION OF TERTIARY EDUCATION.

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