

SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME  
THEME SSH-2007-3.2.1  
Youth and social exclusion

**YOUNEX**  
[www.younex.ch](http://www.younex.ch)

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## INDICATORS OF POLITICAL OPPORTUNITIES

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**YOUNEX WP1**

**Indicators of political opportunities**

## INDICATORS OF POLITICAL OPPORTUNITIES

WP1 identifies a series of indicators that aim to grasp the impact of the political context on the political integration and well-being of precarious workers and the unemployed. Our proposal is to develop five main dimensions of this political context, translating them into a systematic series of indicators that can be appraised along the continuum between +1 and -1 in line with previous work on indicators of conceptions of citizenship (see MERCI and LOCALMULTIDEM projects). The five dimensions are 1) context of the unemployment 2) context of the labour market, 3) the general political opportunity structure, 4) the specific opportunity structure for the unemployed, and 5) context of related issue-fields. In particular, the first dimension refers to the *continuum* inclusion/exclusion (with +1 being inclusion and -1 exclusion). The second dimension refers to the *continuum* flexibility/rigidity (with +1 being flexibility and -1 rigidity). The third, fourth, and fifth dimensions refer to the *continuum* open/closed in terms of general political context, specific political context, and relevant issue-fields (with +1 being open context and -1 being closed context).

Although the general basis of our analysis is the city level, we need to gather systematic information at other levels when this is a relevant level of policy-making. In particular, each indicator will be assessed with a quantitative scoring (+1/0/-1): this score will be assessed always at the level of our cities, or otherwise at the national level only if information for the city is unavailable. As regards qualitative analysis, we need to collect systematic information both at the national and any other relevant sub-national level every time the latter differ substantially from city level. Thus, national, regional and other intermediary levels will be taken into consideration whenever relevant to describe the indicators. The final report will comport an analysis of both national and sub-national contexts, whose precise mixture will change across cities. That is, we acknowledge the existence of a multi-level exogenous political context that is grounded on national and sub-national bases, even if our quantitative analysis is only based, as a rule, on local scores. We thus assume that the unemployed are placed under the political influence of a specific context made of (first of all) local impacts, as well as impacts being exercised from successive levels. As regards the time frame, we code data for 2008, or alternatively, for the most recent year where information is available. When relevant, analysis should also deal with 'diachronic' trends. Ultimately, we aim to produce a series of documents (the national reports) that will help each team to obtain a full understanding of the situation of the unemployed in all countries of our research.

There are two main steps for analysis: 1) collecting information to describe each city across the selected indicators; 2) standardising information along the continuum -1 to +1 for comparative purposes. The first step is qualitative in its nature, providing the kind of strong basis on which the second quantitative step is grounded. In particular, the narrative needs to be focused on the information precisely demanded for each indicator. Description of this information should be contained in ca. 500 words. Qualitative treatment of indicators allows for translating them into an interval measure along the 3-point scales. Scoring is in the hands each national team, but the French team retains the option of modifying these scores once overall data is produced so as to guarantee full comparability across different cases. As regards the normative dimension that may be built into the operationalisation of indicators, this can be translated into hypotheses to be tested empirically: for example, our data will tell us whether part timing is actually beneficial to the integration and well-being of the unemployed. Beside a large volume of 'institutional' indicators (usually referring to

legislation and public policies), we have also included some indicators that target 'informal' aspects for each of our five dimensions of opportunities. The main aim is to unveil the effect of hidden constraints or facilitations that may be operating behind the façade of laws and public decisions. For example, the number of people that receive sanctions for abusing the benefit system will give us an indication of the true application of the formal provision: a strong 'force of sanction' in the rhetoric of law may well be counterbalanced by its weak implementation. The fact that indicators are allocated along one of the five dimensions does not mean that they cannot be reshuffled in different terms. Take for example 'gender', its effects could be isolated through gathering of relevant indicators under the same heading.

Each report starts with a "national scenario" of ca. 3,000 words (5/6 pages). This national scenario consists of five main components. After a brief introduction accounting for the selection of the city, the first component deals with the "political context". Teams here provide information on the political and party system at the national and sub-national levels, including a) the analysis of balance of power in terms of executive vs. legislative and b) the analysis electoral systems in terms of majoritarian vs. proportional. The second component focuses on the "model of welfare state in relation to unemployment"; this treatment draws upon a same theoretical background with the aim to identify the model which is the best fit the city. The third component deals with "model of industrial relations". In this case, we need to look at ongoing balances between different types of conflict management across work and capital in our cities, taking into account most recent changes and debates. The fourth component focuses on "youth unemployment politics", accounting for various features such as regional and local diversities, diffusion across age categories, ethnicity, gender and disabilities. We also provide more extensive information on main responsibilities (state-centred vs. co-managed with social partners). Lastly, the fifth component focuses on the "role of the family" vis-à-vis young (unemployed) people, thus tackling questions of dependence vs. autonomy. Here analysis can also deal with diachronic changes as regards young people leaving with their parents.

## I. THE UNEMPLOYMENT

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Information to be found</i>	<i>Final Data</i>
1	<p>Formal pre-requisites for obtaining social provisions</p> <p><i>(conditions to obtain insurance compensations)</i></p>	<p>Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale</p> <p><i>(-1=FT workers only with long periods of contributions; 0= Inclusive with benefits linked to contributions but open to mothers, students, etc.; +1=Universal with no requirements)</i></p>
2	<p>Level of coverage</p> <p><i>(amount compared to the minimum/average salary + duration)</i></p>	<p>Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale</p> <p><i>(-1=little amount and little duration; 0= little amount combined with long duration or vice versa; +1=substantial amount for a long duration)</i></p>
3	<p>Extension of coverage</p> <p><i>(who is insured or compensated)</i></p>	<p>Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale</p> <p><i>(-1=insiders workers in a 'male breadwinner fashion'; 0= open to outsiders but with restrictions; +1=completely open to non-standardized workers, youth and women returning to the labour market)</i></p>
4	<p>Shifting to Social Aid</p> <p><i>(means-testing and amount)</i></p>	<p>Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale</p> <p><i>(-1=uneasy shift, means-tested and poor benefits; 0= combinations means tested/rich amount or universal/poor amount; +1=easy shifting with rich amounts)</i></p>
5	<p>Role played by private and public employment agencies</p> <p><i>(combinations of number of people using these services and duration of their unemployment)</i></p>	<p>Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale</p> <p><i>(number/duration/collaboration try to combine the three elements: -1= 0= +1=)</i></p>

6	<p>'Counter-provisions' and sanctions</p> <p><i>(length, intensity)</i></p>	<p>Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale</p> <p><i>(-1=strong and long sanctions; 0=combination of strength without length and vice versa; +1= short and light sanctions)</i></p>
7	<p>People receiving unemployment benefits</p>	<p>Absolute figure + Percentage on the total number of registered unemployed</p> <p><i>(-1=less than...; 0=between...; +1=more than...)</i></p>
8	<p>People receiving sanctions for 'abusing' the benefits' system</p>	<p>Absolute figure + Percentage on the total number of abusing cases</p> <p><i>(-1=less than...; 0=between...; +1=more than...)</i></p>

## II. THE LABOUR MARKET

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Information to be found</i>	<i>Final Data</i>
9	<p>Regulations for dismissals</p> <p><i>(focusing on combinations of conditions and compensations)</i></p>	<p>Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale</p> <p><i>(-1=easy conditions and low compensations relative to salary; 0= easy conditions and high compensations relative to salary, or alternatively hard conditions and low compensations relative to salary; +1=hard conditions and high compensations)</i></p>
10	<p>Temporary Work</p>	<p>Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale</p> <p><i>(-1=very limited; 0= some role; +1=well developed)</i></p>
11	<p>Parental leave</p>	<p>Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale</p> <p><i>(-1=min. EU standards; 0= longer allowances or stronger job protection than EU min. standards; +1=longer allowances and stronger job protection than min. standards)</i></p>
12	<p>Role of unions in the benefit system</p>	<p>Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale</p> <p><i>(-1=no role; 0= some co-sharing responsibilities with other actors; +1=extensive responsibilities)</i></p>
13	<p>Unions protection of workers</p>	<p>Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale</p> <p><i>(-1=scarce protection for full-time workers; 0= extensive protection of full-time workers; +1=protection all workers, both insiders and outsiders)</i></p>

14	'Flexible' workers	Absolute figure + Percentage of fixed term contracts on total contracts and by age <i>(-1=less than...; 0=between...; +1=more than...)</i>
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### III. GENERAL POS

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Information to be found</i>	<i>Final Data</i>
15	Referenda at the local level	Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale  <i>(-1= no possibility of referendum; 0= only consultative referendum; +1=binding referendum)</i>
16	Number of (consultative or binding) referenda held over the past 5 years  <i>(Local level)</i>	Absolute figure
17	Citizen assemblies	Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale  <i>(-1= none; 0= only consultative; +1=powers of decision-making)</i>
18	Degree of state decentralization	Lijphart's score  <i>(available or to be computed)</i>
19	Decentralization at the local level: sub-local public structures with political powers  <i>(District level, neighbourhood level)</i>	Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale  <i>(-1= none; 0= limited powers, low budget, only a role of implementation and no role in the definition of local policies; +1= greater powers, specifically in charge of some sectors of public policies (definition and implementation), involvement in the definition of the whole city 's local policies)</i>

#### IV. UNEMPLOYED-SPECIFIC OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Information to be found</i>	<i>Final Data</i>
20	Power of city in terms of unemployment policy elaboration and implementation	Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale <i>(-1= all power at the national level; 0= some powers, budget, and role; +1= balance of powers between national and local governments)</i>
21	Local spending for passive and active measures per unemployed	Figure in Euro <i>(-1=less than...; 0=between...; +1=more than...)</i>
22	Public information and support services for the unemployed	Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale <i>(-1=none; 0= little developed; +1=well-developed)</i>
23	Inclusion of organisations of the unemployed in unemployment policies	Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale <i>(-1= no role for unemployed organisations; 0= consultative functions in phase of formulation and/or implementation; +1=clear role of decision-making and/or strong discretion during implementation)</i>
24	Inclusion of other civil society organisations in unemployment policies	Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale <i>(-1= no role for unemployed organisations; 0= consultative functions in phase of formulation and/or implementation; +1=clear role of decision-making and/or strong discretion during implementation)</i>

## V. OPPORTUNITIES: RELATED ISSUE-FIELDS

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Information to be found</i>	<i>Final Data</i>
25	Adaptation of education offer to the labour market situation	Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale <i>(-1= no adaptation since the early 1990s; 0= some limited ad hoc adaptation; +1=regular adaptations)</i>
26	Public support for elderly services	Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale <i>(-1= none; 0= limited; +1=generous)</i>
27	Public support for young people to leave alone <i>(combinations of amounts and addressees)</i>	Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale <i>(-1= none; 0= good financial support addressed to the family, or alternatively low individual financial support; +1=generous individual financial support)</i>
28	Child support <i>(combinations of length and amounts)</i>	Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale <i>(-1= low amounts and time; 0= low amounts with high length and vice versa; +1=high amounts until the end of studies)</i>
29	Externalisation of child-care	Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale <i>(-1= incentives for women who stay home with their children; 0= limited signs of externalisation; +1=fully developed and financed public child-care)</i>

30	<p>Measures tackling recruitment discrimination of ethnic and geographical forms</p>	<p>Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale</p> <p><i>(-1= no measures; 0= some limited ad hoc measure based on private business choice; +1=public and extensive interventions to fight against recruitment discrimination)</i></p>
31	<p>Unemployment: mismatch between autochthonous and main minority group in the city</p> <p><i>(take most migrant populated area in the city if ethnic statistics are missing)</i></p>	<p>Percentage of mismatch ratio, possibly by age</p> <p><i>(-1=less than...; 0=between...; +1=more than...)</i></p>
32	<p>Establishment of measures tackling recruitment discrimination based on disabilities</p> <p><i>(looking at public work and private business)</i></p>	<p>Max. one-page report + comparatively 3-points scale</p> <p><i>(-1=weak or no interventions; 0= some interventions in public and/or private work; +1=stronger interventions applied to both public work and private business)</i></p>
33	<p>Employment rate of the disabled</p>	<p>Percentage</p> <p><i>(-1=less than...; 0=between...; +1=more than...)</i></p>