

European Socio-Demographic Profile: The Lives of Young Adults in Austria, Czech Republic, England, Germany, Scotland, Slovakia, and Spain

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Each of the research teams have produced a Socio-Demographic Report (Work package 1) on their country/area:

- Socio-Demographic Background: Austria by Reingard Spannring
- Socio-Demographic Background: Germany by Daniel Fuss, Klaus Boehnke, Bernard Nauk
- Socio-Demographic Background: Spain by Hector Grad and Maria Ros with the collaboration of Miryam Rodriguez & Gema Garcia
- Socio-Demographic Background: UK by Sue Grundy & Lynn Jamieson
- Youth in Slovakia and European Identity by Ladislav Machacek
- Integration of Slovakia into the European Union by Ladislav Machacek & Peter Horvath

These papers are available on our project website:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/sociol/youth/research.html>

and are referred to throughout this paper by author without repeating the website or full title.

This paper pulls together their findings to represent a coherent whole, and will at times be supplemented with other data. The exercise is fraught with difficulties of finding up-to-date data, whether in comparing data from different countries we are comparing different ways of collecting data, different meanings and thresholds (i.e. what does unemployment mean, how is it measured, who is not included (those who are not registered for state benefits, homeless etc). This means that when compiling tables, attempts have been made to find whole tables based on European research and supplement them with individual country information from our colleagues.

The following headings will be explored:

1. Population
2. Marriage & Cohabitation
3. Leaving Home
4. Education
5. Employment
6. Unemployment

There are a number of similarities in demographic trends across Europe reflecting wide spread changes such as the general aging of the European population. With respect to the 18-24 year old age group, there is both common ground and difference across the countries of our study with respect to a range of issues relevant to their lives such as social or state support and opportunities for work or education. Expectations concerning the appropriate age for making the life-course transitions of leaving home, establishing an independent household and marriage are rather different in the 'northern' and 'southern' Europe (Iacovou, 1998), and this is

exemplified in our study by differences between Spain the other countries. Iacovou contrasts as 'northern' pattern exemplified by Denmark, the Netherlands, the UK, France, Belgium and Luxembourg with the 'southern' pattern of the more traditional, family oriented and predominantly Catholic countries of Italy, Spain, Portugal, Ireland but also Greece.

There are different levels of wealth distribution, standards of living and norms throughout Europe. For instance, the UK is one of the more prosperous countries in the EU but it also has the widest spread of income distribution in the western world (Benson & Payne, 1997), which means there are people who are very wealthy and people who are very poor. While some countries, such as those in Scandinavia, have implemented strong policies to ensure the virtual eradication of child poverty, figures in the UK suggest that almost a third of all children are in some form of poverty (Scott, 1999).

1 Population

The overall population of Europe is around 728 million people (United Nations, 1995, <http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/migration/europe.pdf>) of which over 377 million people live in countries within the European Union (Eurostat, 2002). In the European Union (EU), 15-24 year olds make up 12.5% of the population (figures based on 2000). This figure is set to decrease in the next decades particularly in the Southern Mediterranean countries (EC, 2001) following the slowing birth rate. Orban-Ferauge (2001) suggests that the numbers of people making up the 20-29 age group in Europe will decline by about 10 million people over the next decade lessening the current youth unemployment problem and placing a new emphasis onto geographical mobility.

The Czech Republic and Slovakia have a higher proportion of young people in the population than the other countries. (See Table 1: note that care is needed in reading the table because of the different age ranges that have necessarily been used.)

People now live longer in the European Union than they did in previous decades. The average life expectancy is 78.1 years, slightly higher for women who live until 81.2 years than for men who live to 74.9 years (Eurostat, 2000).

Table 1 Population of research countries

	POPULATION	NUMBER OF 18-24 YEAR OLDS	YOUNG ADULTS IN POPULATION (%)
Austria	8,128,300 ¹	921,000 ²	11.6% ³
Czech Republic	10,299,100 ⁴	1,559,835 ⁵	15.3%
England	49,997,000	6,006,000	12%
Germany	82,441,000 ⁶	9,159,500 ⁷	11.1 ⁸
Scotland	5,115,000 ⁹	641,000 ¹⁰	12.5% ¹¹
Slovakia	5,387,600 ¹²	913,240 ¹³	17%
Spain	40,499,791 ¹⁴	5,151,300 ¹⁵	12.9% ¹⁶

Our research sites were chosen as locations with contrasting but related histories that offer young people rather different backdrops of social and cultural orientations to Europe. Our sites are pairs of cities (or in the case of Austria, a city and a region) that are linked to each through national histories of economic and political dominance and subordination (Vienna and the Vorarlberg region of Austria; Manchester England and Edinburgh Scotland in the UK, Madrid and Bilbao, Euskadi [Basque Country], in Spain; Bielefeld West Germany and Chemnitz, East Germany; the capitals Prague and Bratislava of the Czech Republic and Slovakia). Young people living in these paired sites have rather different economic and cultural circumstances including different repertoires of nationalism and orientations to Europe. (Jamieson et al, 2000). The selection of sites also deliberately includes two EU applicant nations, the Czech Republic and Slovakia is timely and provides us with an early appreciation of young people's views in these countries. As Table 2 shows, our research sites have a range of population sizes, from Chemnitz, Germany, with 265,000 inhabitants to just under 3 million for Madrid, Spain.

¹ 2001, http://www.statistik.at/statistische_uebersichten/englisch/pdf/c14a_1.pdf

² Aged 15-24, 1998, from Spannring

³ Aged 15-24, 1998, from Spannring

⁴ 2001, <http://www.czso.cz/eng/angl.htm>

⁵ 1998 data <http://www.coe.fr/dase/pop/>

⁶ 2002, <http://www.destatis.de/indicators/e/vgr910ae.htm>

⁷ Figures for 15-24 year olds in 1999 from <http://www.statistik-bund.de>

⁸ Figures for 15-24 year olds in 1999 from <http://www.statistik-bund.de>

⁹ 2001, Office of National Statistics

¹⁰ 2001, Office of National Statistics

¹¹ 2001, Office of National Statistics

¹² Census 2001) <http://slovakia.eunet.sk/slovakia/polit.asp>

¹³ 1998 data, <http://www.coe.fr/dase/pop/> <http://www.coe.fr/dase/pop/>

¹⁴ 2000, <http://www.ine.es/esp/cif/esp/cifin/pobl01in.pdf>

¹⁵ 16-19 years old 2001 figure from Grad & Ros

¹⁶ 16-19 years old 2001 figure from Grad & Ros

Table 2 Population of Research Areas

	POPULATION (YEAR/SOURCE)
Bilbao, Spain	354,271 (2000/ http://www.geohive.com/cd/sp.php)
Bratislava, Slovak Republic	448,000 (estimate for 2002)
Bremen, Germany	533,000 (http://www.fwi.com/fwmc/bremen.html)
Chemnitz, Germany	265,000 (http://www.tuchernitz.de/tu/sprachen/engl/index.php)
Edinburgh, Scotland	453,430 (GRO, www.gro-scotland.gov.uk)
Greater Manchester, England	2,585,800 (2000, ONS)
Madrid, Spain	2,882,860 (2000/ http://www.geohive.com/cd/sp.php)
Prague, Czech Republic	1,160,118 (2002/ http://www.czso.cz/eng/angl.htm)
Vienna, Austria	1,614,900 population (2001)
Vorarlberg, Austria	351,300 population (2001)

2 Marriage & Cohabitation

The majority of young people aged 20-24 have never married and are childless but as Iacovou (1998) notes, this is more overwhelmingly so in the southern European countries and the minority who do not fit this pattern is rather large among the 'northern' countries. 88% of Spanish women and 53% of UK young women in the 18-24 age group are single (neither married nor cohabiting) and childless (Iacovou, 1998). The differences among 18-24 year old young men are less dramatic, (in both countries men tend to be older than their partners) with 96% of men in Spain and 82% of men in the UK still single and childless. Table 3 shows the slightly earlier marriage of women in the UK.

In the 'northern' countries, there has been an overall increase in the proportion of young people who live together without marriage and a decrease in marriage (Iacovou & Berthoud, 2001). It should be noted, however, that cohabitation, nevertheless, often leads onto marriage. Across the whole of Europe, first marriages are happening later with the average age in the EU rising from 26.7 years old for men and 24.1 years old for women in 1961 to 29.6 for men and 27.3 for women in 1998 (Eurostat). The rises in age of first marriage is partly a consequence of the tendency to cohabit prior to marriage a pattern that is more marked in 'northern' countries (e.g. Germany, UK and Austria among our research countries). There are also important differences within countries reflecting different economic and cultural circumstances. Fuss (see papers on our website, listed above) notes a number of differences between people living in the former West and East Germany. Young people from the former 'west' tend to marry later (average age 31.1/28.3 years men/women) than their counterparts in East Germany (average age 28.4/27.7 years men/women) but they are more likely to live alone prior to marriage and less likely to cohabit. Grad & Ros (see the papers on our website listed above) note that in the Basque Country there is a tendency for women to marry four years before their males peers, whereas for much of Europe the same pattern is reflected in only a two years age difference.

Table 3 Mean Age at Marriage and Number of 15-19 and 24 year old people married.

Country (year of survey)	MEN			WOMEN		
	Mean Age at Marriage	Percentage ever married		Mean Age at Marriage	Percentage ever married	
		15-19	20-24		15-19	20-24
Austria (1991)	28.9	0.6	11.5	26.1	2.7	25.7
Czech Republic (1994)	26	0.8	26	23	4.2	51.5
Germany (1999) From Fuss	31	0.1	5.2	28.3	1.2	14.8
Slovakia (1991)	25.5	1.4	29.8	22.6	7	59.4
Spain (2001)	30	0.7	8.9	28	2.3	22.2
UK (1991)	28.4	0.5	12	26.4	1.7	24.9

With the exception of Germany and Spain (mean age of marriage figures), data from United Nations Dept of Economic and Social Affairs. World marriage patterns: 2000, www.un.org/esa/population/publications/worldmarriage/worldmarriage.htm

The European Household Panel Survey shows that cohabitation is now common in parts of Europe (Iacovou and Berthoud, 2001). Cohabitation is often a prelude to marriage but also results in relationship which remain unmarried in the long-term or dissolve in the short-term. However, it cannot be presumed that the shift to cohabitation reflects a reduced commitment to long term relationships (Jamieson et al, 2002). Cohabitation is more common in the ‘northern’ than the ‘southern’ countries where people are more likely to stay in the family home until marriage. Grad and Ros (see papers listed on our website above) note that in Spain, there is still a strong cultural emphasis on marriage and that young people like their families typically continue to anticipate marriage rather than cohabitation. Rothebnbacher (1995) suggests a three-fold classification separating those countries with very high rates of cohabitation where it has become culturally common place (Sweden, Denmark, Iceland); those where it is becoming more common (including Austria, UK, Germany) but is not yet fully accepted as equivalent of marriage and finally those countries where little cohabitation occurs (Ireland, Mediterranean countries). European social attitude surveys suggest that in general across Europe there is more acceptance of cohabitation amongst younger than older age group.

Table 4 Percentage of Cohabitation amongst 20-24 year olds

	ALL 20-24	MEN	WOMEN
Austria	5.5	1	10
Czech Republic	N/A	N/A	N/A
West Germany	15.5	15	16
East Germany	12	11	13
Slovak Republic	N/A	N/A	N/A
Spain	2	1	3
UK	12	11	13
EU	11	9	14

From Eurobarometer No 44 (1996) See Kiernan (1999)

3 Independent Living

The majority of European young people (20-24) who are without children and single are still living in their parental home (Iacovou, 1998). This is particularly so in ‘southern’ European countries. In Spain for instance of those who were single without child, only 2% of men and 2% of women had left home either to live with others or to

live alone. This compares with 24% of women and 16% of men of the same status in the UK.

Leaving the parental home has in the past been a definite marker of the social transition to adulthood. However, this transition is no longer as straightforward as it was previously in many countries because global economic changes have changed local labour markets often increasing the insecurity of employment and inflating the need for qualifications. The experience of young people in the UK of increased periods of reliance on family financial support leading to longer stays in the parental home as well as people returning home to live with their parents (Jones, 2002) is a trend in a number of parts of Europe. In the ‘northern’ countries such as the UK, with a history of young people leaving home to live independently at earlier ages than ‘southern’ countries, there is now a tendency for young people to stay at home longer than in the recent past and, for there to be more movement back and forth between the parental home and independent living because of the increased difficulty of the later. Young people’s opportunities to leave and return are shaped by the socio-economic status of parents. Not all parents are economically able to provide prolonged financial support to their children and not all parents and children have a quality of relationships conducive to sustaining prolonged support in the family household. Fuss notes that in East Germany young people tend to leave home earlier at an average age of 24 for men and 20 for women in comparison to 26 for men and 21 for women in the west of the country (Figures from 1996). Spannring (see the papers on our website listed above) suggests that in Austria, young people (20-24) are less likely to leave the parental home for independent living than in the past because of longer periods in education, starting work at an older age, and the lack of affordable housing. Spannring also notes that being at home longer is not necessarily regarded by young people as a bad thing. Grad & Ros note that the long period that young Spanish adults stay in the parental home is a common pattern to ‘southern’/Catholic countries and typically viewed positively. They also note that young Spanish people are in education for longer periods and face increased barriers to becoming financially independent, such as high unemployment.

Table 5 Age at which 50% of young people are living away from home

	ALL	MEN	WOMEN
Austria	25.3	27.2	23.4
Czech Republic	N/A	N/A	N/A
Germany	23.2	24.8	21.6
Slovakia	N/A	N/A	N/A
Spain	27.5	28.4	26.6
UK	22.3	23.5	21.2

From ECHP, used in Iacovou (2002) quoted in Iacovou (2001)

Eurobarometer research undertaken for the European Commission (1997) found that the most common reason that young people (aged 15-24) still lived with their parents was because they could not afford to live independently (74.2% in EU). While this was the most significant reason for all of the countries, there were variations in other reasons chosen for staying at home. For Austrians and also for Spanish women, the second most commonly quoted reason was because there was not enough housing available for the young. The second most common reason for German women and for Spanish men was the later formation of partnerships, for German men it was that they found parents no longer acted as strict authoritarians.

Both men and women from the UK said that they preferred the standard of living they received at home while not having to take on the responsibility of keeping their own home.

Leaving home also links into how young adults receive financial support. The Eurobarometer 47.2 found differences across Europe as to the sources of financial support. Variances occurred also between those who had jobs, were students, and were neither studying nor working. This was partly a function of the availability of state support to young adults for education and unemployment. On average, the majority of young people in the EU receive most of their funding from their parents (45%) or from working (41.5%). Those who are in paid employment are predominantly supporting themselves (85.9%); those who study or are unemployed are more likely to get funding from their parents (79.9% and 41.4% respectively). For example, in Austria, people mostly get money from a regular job (45.5%), especially if they are working (82.6%). Students are most likely to get financial support from their parents (77.5%). Those without a job who are not studying receive most of their money from the state (44.7%). In Germany and the United Kingdom, the same pattern occurs. In Spain the pattern is similar except for who are not working or studying: they mostly receive support from their parents (60.4%) rather than the state (8.2%). Grad & Ros note that even when young people are working it does not typically mean setting up an independent home. For many young Spaniards such a move is not made until marriage or sometimes by moving in with a partner with the intention of subsequent marriage.

4 Education

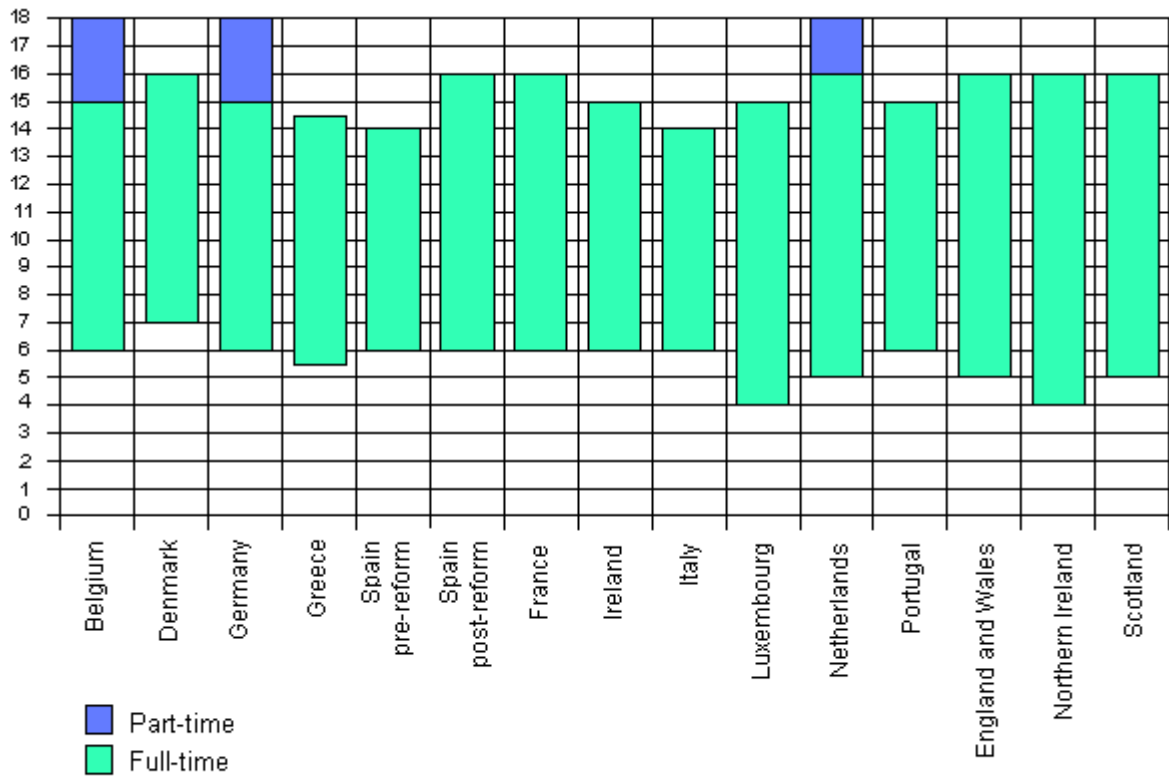
Compulsory schooling in Europe tends to last between 8 and 11 years in duration, commencing when young people are between the ages of 4-7 years old.

Table 6 Age of Cessation of Compulsory Education

	STARTING AGE OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION	AGE OF CESSATION OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION
Austria	6	15 full time, then if leave at 15 then part-time vocational training until 17
Czech Republic*	6	15
Germany	6	15 full time, then if leave at 15 then part-time vocational training until 18
Slovak Republic*	6	15
Spain	6	16
UK	5	16

From Eurostat (1995) Education Across the European Union
 Except * from <http://www.bibl.u-szeged.hu/oseas/comped.html>

Graph 1: DURATION OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION



From http://www.eurydice.org/documents/preschool_n_primary/en/c11p1en.htm

Table 7 Participation rates in Education at certain ages in several European Countries. (ONS, 1998)

	% IN EDUCATION AT AGE					16-20
	16	17	18	19	20	
Spain	88	79	66	58	54	69%
Germany	96	92	86	66	48	77.6%
United Kingdom	81	68	49	47	43	57.6
Austria	88	86	68	41	29	62.4

While many young people enter tertiary education to gain skills and qualifications some are ‘discouraged workers’ who would prefer an earlier entry into employment but stay in education because of little opportunity for secure and/or well paid work. A growing professionalisation of many forms of work mean that some jobs now need qualifications that they once didn’t require. In some countries, qualifications are obtained prior to starting work rather than learnt on the job as was once the norm in other countries there is a more integrated vocational training. Fuss notes that in 2000 there were 1855000 apprenticeships, 212000 technical college diplomas, 21000 higher technical college diplomas, 11000 university degrees had been granted to those aged 18-24. In Austria, about 27.5% of the age group were in higher education.

Table 8 Students in Tertiary Education (1999)

	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
Austria	253,000
Czech Republic*	26%
Figures for Former West Germany (1990)	2,087,000
Slovak Republic*	22.5%
Spain	1,787,000
UK	2,081,000
EU	12,525,000

Figures from EUROSTAT (2002)

* Figures from UNICEF (Percentage of higher ed enrollment

Czech Republic 1999 = 26% of all 19-23 year olds in population

Slovak Rep - 22.5% of all 18-22. Counts those in full-time tertiary education only

The table below shows the proportions of those who do not become well qualified and have finished training. In Spain, and the UK in particular, young adults who have few qualifications are very likely to be out of work.

Table 9 Percentage of 18-24 year olds who are not in education and are poorly qualified.

	ALL	MEN	WOMEN
Austria	11.5	9.7	13.1
Czech Republic	N/A	N/A	N/A
Figures for Former West Germany (1990)	15.1	14.4	15.8
Slovak Republic	N/A	N/A	N/A
Spain	28.9	34.7	23
UK	19.7	20.1	19.3
EU	20.5	22.6	18.5

Figures from EUROSTAT (2001).

Non-Academic Routes into Employment

As was noted in the section on education, there are different ages at which compulsory schooling ends throughout the countries participating in the project. In Spain and the UK the earliest you can leave is 16; in the Czech Republic and Slovakia it is 15.

In Austria and Germany you can leave school at 15. In Austria, students who do not go into an apprenticeship or continue education have to complete a training course in a polytechnic for one year. In both Austria and Germany, young workers typically spend two/three years doing vocational studies part-time while working. At the end of the training, Austrian youngsters receive a Journeyman's Certificate and the possibility of taking an exam to gain access into further education; in Germany they will receive a Diploma. While they are training, apprentices receive some pay although this is always lower than that of 'adult' workers.

In Spain and the UK there are few vocational training/apprenticeships in comparison to Austria and Germany. The apprenticeship system, once common in the UK fell into decline but has been updated in recent years to become the Modern Apprenticeship. Undertaking this training takes 3 years and leads to a National Vocational

Qualification (NVQ) at a qualification level comparable with academic Advanced Level examinations. Bowers et al (2000) note that there were 117,000 people in the UK training through apprenticeships in 1998. There are also shorter vocational training courses in the UK which take only 2 years to complete and lead to a basic level of qualification (equivalent to an Ordinary level examination). In Spain, there are few apprenticeships and low take up of vocational training despite a relatively high proportion of young people leaving education with few qualifications. The take up of vocational training is greater in the Basque Country (10%) than in Madrid (7%). In Spain, vocational training is generally seen negatively as a 'second class' education. This is also true of some vocational courses in the UK.

In all the study countries, the apprenticeships system is predominantly associated with gender segregated occupations, most of which are predominantly male but some of which are predominantly female.

Bowers et al (2000) have conducted a review of opportunities for young people who have left school at 15-18 and with low or no qualifications in a number of European countries. They note that in the Czech Republic, small innovative schemes like 'the Bridge Project' have helped young adults through a mixture of training, work experience and providing advice and key skills. (Of 169 trainees passing through the 'Bridges Project', 143 completed the course and 106 subsequently gained employment). In Spain, they highlight 'Practice Contracts' and 'Training Contracts' to help young people into work. These programs last 2 years and offer the benefit of paying lower contributions to social security. The Training Contracts are aimed at poorly qualified young people under the age of 21 while the Practice Contracts are for people under 30 who have been out of formal education for up to 2 years. Practice contracts were taken up by just 2% of those under the age of 30 while 10% of those aged less than 25 were undertaking 'Training Contracts'.

Other sources of assistance into work operate in Austria and Germany specifically aimed at young people who are deemed to be 'at-risk' or who are particularly disadvantaged. In Austria there is a programme called 'Aktion 8000' which provides paid work for 12 months, subsidised by the state. In the UK, Grundy & Jamieson note that there is an assistance programme into work or training, the 'New Deal', for those young people who have been unemployed for 6 months or more. All young unemployed adults aged 18-24 who qualify are forced to choose to go into a 6-month programme of either: a subsidised work placement; vocational training; work for a voluntary organisation or environmental task force. Failure to undertake one of these programmes leads to a loss of their state unemployment benefits.

5 Employment

As we have seen, there are various transition routes into employment depending on age and qualifications. Some countries have an established apprenticeship or vocational route for those not going onto academic studies at a tertiary level. As the table below highlights, the UK has the highest proportion of (55.9%) people in employment out of the participating research countries; Spain has the lowest (31.8%). On the whole, more men were working than women, although for some countries there is a greater disparity between numbers of men who work and women who don't (Czech Republic, Spain).

Table 10 Employment (15-24 year olds)

	ALL	MEN	WOMEN
Slovak Republic	N/A	N/A	N/A
Spain	31.8	37	26.4
EU	39.9	43.3	36.5
Czech Republic*	42.6	50.2	34.9
Germany*	46.2	49.9	42.6
Austria	52.5	56.5	48.6
UK	55.9	58.2	53.5

Figures from EUROSTAT (2002) except for *figures from 1997 data in OECD (Bowers et al, 2002).

Young adults who enter into employment often do so into poorly paid, temporary work, which offers little opportunity for a career and little long-term security. In the UK socio-economic profile, Grundy and Jamieson report how some commentators have called young people the ‘Kleenex Generation’ after a brand of paper tissues, there to be used and discarded (Lothian Anti-Poverty Alliance 1998, citing Sachdev & Wilkinson, 1998). Grad & Ros say that in Spain, young workers are predominantly (67% of women, 58% of men) on short-term or temporary contracts. Spanning notes the increased use of flexible, temporary contracts in Austria.

6 Unemployment

Young adults are often over represented among those workers who are unemployed within a country. As the table below highlights, some countries have a more serious unemployment problem than others. Austria has the lowest rate of unemployment among our study countries, and one of the lowest rates in Europe. High unemployment typically has a greater impact on younger workers, particularly those with fewer qualifications.

Table 11 Youth Unemployment and Overall Employment

	YOUTH AGED 15-24	OVERALL UNEMPLOYMEN T
Austria*	5.3%	3.7%
Czech Republic	6.9%	4.2%
Germany	10.7%	9.9%
Slovak Republic	20.4%	11.1%
Spain	39.2%	20.9%
UK	13.6%	7.1%
EU	21.2%	10.8%

Figures from UNICEF (2000) except for * Figures from EUROSTAT (2002)

Fuss et al note in the German Socio-Demographic Report that it is those young adults in the former East Germany who have the highest rates of unemployment. Whereas in the former West Germany, 7% are unemployed, in the East, 14% are unemployed. He also notes the greater rates of unemployment for men suggesting the cause is the longer stay in education of German women, as well as those who take time away from employment to have children. Indeed, Miller & Warman (1996) suggest that welfare

support and provision for parents, usually women, mean that in some countries in Europe (including Germany, Austria, the UK), working is virtually impossible for primary carers of young children.

State support for people who are seeking but do not have employment and for those outside of employment because of caring responsibilities or ill health varies between countries. Levels of state support are also subject to change. Since the 1980s, there has been a weakening of welfare system in some countries. As Popple and Kirby note,

“Historically, families in Southern Europe have acted as the primary source of economic and social support for young people, whereas in Northern European countries, where their welfare states have become restructured, the family has regained its importance as an institution that assists the young” (1997:167).

Indeed Eurobarometer (2001) note the growth in use of family financial support from 1997 in all EU countries.

Grad & Ros tell us that in Spain young people who are unemployed seldom receive support from the state (only 2.1%) and this also means that they cannot establish a household of their own until they find work or marry someone who is employed. Lacking the financial strength to live independently was found to be common (67%) amongst youth in the EU (Eurobarometer, 2001) but particularly for young Spaniards (82%). Grad & Ros also note the Madrid has a better rate of employing young people and a lower rate of unemployment than the Basque Country.

Those who are unemployed tend to have fewer qualifications. In Germany, Fuss et al note that those who didn't finish a professional training made up a greater percentage of those youth who were unemployed. In Austria too, those youths who are unemployed are significantly more likely to be lowly qualified.

A report by Bowers et al for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) suggest that even when qualified at a tertiary level, graduates of some countries face difficulty in securing employment. As the table below illustrates, in their analysis of OECD data from 1996 they found that those young adults (aged 25-29) with a degree in Spain were still facing significant levels of unemployment (28.6%) particularly women (32.7%). Although having more qualifications did lessen the likelihood of unemployment. Grad & Ros note that unemployment was higher for women both in Euskadi and Madrid regardless of education.

Table 12 Unemployment rates for young adults (25-29) by educational attainment and gender, 1996. Percentages

	MEN				WOMEN			
	Less than upper	Upper secondary	Degree	Total	Less than upper	Upper secondary	Degree	Total
Austria	8.6	3.4	3.9	4.2	8.5	2.8	7.6	4.3
Czech Republic	17.6	1.9	0.9	2.5	18.2	5.6	1.4	6.0
Germany	18.6	7.4	6.2	8.5	15.8	7.7	5.6	8.2
Spain	26.3	19.9	24.7	24.4	41.3	30.9	32.7	35.5
UK	23.6	10.5	5.0	10.6	17.8	8.3	3.3	7.6

OECD (2000:67).

In Austria, Spanning highlights the relatively low rates of unemployment amongst Austrian youth (4.4% of 15-24 age group). The lack of unemployment links to an education system, which strongly supports a combined approach of academic and vocational training as well as working. Higher rates of employment and low unemployment amongst young people are reflected in the social welfare system in which young people are often not entitled to financial support when they are unemployed. Spanning also notes that parents are legally obligated to financially support their children until they reach the age of 27.

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