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**Encouraging Lifelong Learning
for an Inclusive & Vibrant Europe**

ENLIVEN- Encouraging Lifelong Learning for an Inclusive and Vibrant Europe

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¹ Viz, two sentences in the final paragraph on p. 128 ("Characteristic to Slovakia ... working environment and technologies.") replace one sentence in the previous version ("Characteristic to Slovakia has been the focus on supporting employees and workers to adjust to rapidly changing work environment and technological changes, rather than addressing unemployment, social inequalities and poverty.")

FOREWORD

Encouraging Lifelong Learning for an Inclusive & Vibrant Europe

What's gone awry in Europe's lifelong learning markets? Although it has been a central EU policy priority since 1993, and the European Union's mechanisms for multinational policy co-ordination and measurement in lifelong learning are world-leading, one in every five Europeans under 25 is now unemployed. Many are not in employment, education or training. According to the High Level Group on Literacy, one in five 15-year olds lack the literacy skills required to function successfully in a modern society; 73 million EU adults have low levels of education and literacy; while achieving the current EU benchmark of functional literacy for 85% of 15-year-olds would increase lifetime GDP – lifetime earnings – by €21 *trillion*.

Clearly Europe's educational markets are failing to ensure that our citizens – particularly our younger citizens – have the education and training they need for their own economic prosperity and social welfare. They are also failing European society as a whole. Social exclusion, disaffection and the long-term “scarring” effects of unemployment are clear dangers to economic competitiveness, to social cohesion, and to the European project as a whole.

This is the starting point for ENLIVEN – Encouraging Lifelong Learning for an Inclusive & Vibrant Europe – a three-year research project (2016-2019) funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 programme. The ENLIVEN research explores these challenges in several ways.

First, we are exploring and modelling how policy interventions in adult education markets can become more effective. We bring together state-of-the-art methodologies and theorisations (e.g. Case-Based Reasoning methodology in artificial intelligence, bounded agency in adult learning) to develop and evaluate an innovative Intelligent Decision Support System (IDSS) to provide a new and more scientific underpinning for policy debate and decision-making about adult learning, especially for young adults. For this, we are drawing on findings from research conducted by European and international agencies and research projects, as well as findings from ENLIVEN research itself. The IDSS is intended to enable policy-makers at EU, national and organizational levels to enhance the provision and take-up of learning opportunities for adults, leading to a more productive and innovative workforce, and reduced social exclusion. The IDSS work organised in two workpackages (WPs 8-9).

Second, we are investigating programmes, governance and policies in EU adult learning. By looking at the multi-dimensional nature of social exclusion and disadvantage, and the role of public and private markets in reversing – or reproducing – inequalities across Europe, we aim to provide a more holistic understanding of policies, their rationales, operationalization, and role in enhancing growth and inclusion. Beginning with the main European policies and funding schemes for adult learning aimed at tackling disadvantage, inequality and social exclusion, we are identifying the different ways in which social inequality is expressed, constructed as a policy goal, and legitimized by discourses at the European level, and nationally. Combining policy diffusion studies with studies of multilevel governance that map the relations between various adult learning stakeholders and decision makers, their conceptualizations of the purpose of adult learning and their priorities, we are identifying the main barriers and enablers for access and participation in adult learning in Europe at the programme and subnational levels. This work is organised in three work packages (WPs1-3).

Third, we are examining “system characteristics” to explain country/region-level variation in lifelong learning participation rates – particularly among disadvantaged and at-risk groups, and young people. The “markets” for adult education are complex, with fuzzy boundaries, and the reasons why adults learn vary. Drawing on Labour Force Survey, Adult Education Survey, EU-SILC, and European Social Survey datasets, we use multilevel regression analysis and construct a pseudo-panel to address questions such as which system characteristics explain country and region-level variations in participation rates (overall, and among disadvantaged groups and youth at risk of exclusion), and how government policy can be most effective in promoting participation. This research is organised in Work Package 4.

Underlying the ENLIVEN research is the need for a reconstruction of adult educational policy-formation in Europe. Currently there are two particular problems. One the one hand, the principal beneficiaries of adult education (across Europe as elsewhere) are the relatively more privileged: those who have received better initial education, those in employment, and (among the employed) those in better-paid, more secure and more highly-skilled jobs. The adults who are (arguably) most in need of education and training, such as young, unemployed, low skilled, disabled and vulnerable workers, receive less of it. One the other hand, in contrast to the education of children, adult education is by and large financed by individual students (‘learners’), their families, and/or their employers. Though this is partly the outcome of public policy – in particular the desire to reduce public spending (or restrict its growth), and to utilise the efficiencies inherent in market-based allocation systems – it limits the policy tools available to governments and state agencies. A central feature of public policy is therefore to influence the behaviour of citizens and enterprises, encouraging them to invest in lifelong learning for themselves and their workers.

Finally, we are examining the operation and effectiveness of young adults’ learning at and for work. The availability and quality of work for young adults differs by institutional setting across EU member states. We are undertaking institutional-level case studies on attempts to craft or to change the institutions which govern young adults’ early careers, workplace learning and participation in innovation activities, comparing countries with similar or diverging institutional frameworks. This is the focus of three work packages (WPs 5-7).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report, written as a part of Work Package 1 “Mapping European and national policies and programs and their contribution to economic and social inclusion”, presents an analysis of the concept of vulnerability in lifelong learning policies, at European level and national level. Built upon an earlier review of pre-existing reports conducted within the ENLIVEN project, this report provides insight into the theoretical framework of vulnerability that has been used in the analytical part. Furthermore, a dynamic model of vulnerability is presented as an analytical framework which has been used in this deliverable 1.1. The model considers vulnerability as a dynamic process derived from a set of external factors (macro and meso) and /or personal factors. In addition, our conceptualisation of vulnerability captures various thematic dimensions (economic, social and political).

Methods of analysis include corpus-based critical discourses analysis of 68 European lifelong learning documents (1992-2018), interviews with policy makers (6), analysis of funding schemes (European Social Fund) and analysis of vulnerable groups in the lifelong learning policies of the nine countries forming part of ENLIVEN, including Australia. A Methodological Appendix make available a deep description of the criteria of selection and the techniques developed.

Although the governance and political reality of the EU is hard to compare with the Australian policy space, there are some parallels to be drawn in terms of economic and social policies and developments. Interesting lessons in policy development and governing lifelong learning may be drawn from the actions of the EU institutions towards building common policy objectives and stronger policy coordination in lifelong learning and education policy in Australia. Results of data analysed show that the use of terminology related to vulnerability is not used uniformly throughout the period analysed. It is detected during the first period (1992-1999), documents refer to the most vulnerable groups as marginal or excluded. From the year 2000 the main vulnerability indicator seems to be the low labour capacities. "Vulnerable groups" are specifically mentioned, often referred to as at-risk groups or disadvantaged groups. The implicit motives suggested in relation to "vulnerable groups" appear to be educational attainment (low qualified, early schools leavers, migrant background and age), to which are added structural motives related to their origin (people from disadvantaged social strata, poverty niches or disadvantaged areas) or to global factors (lack of employment, development of the learning society). Faced with this situation, the policies analysed propose, above all, to develop the basic skills and new competences needed to enter the world of work.

The global economy, together with the effects of the financial crisis (2008), has increased interest in lifelong learning policies as an instrument to combat social exclusion and thus to support vulnerable groups. The European Social Fund incorporates a section of human capital that includes lifelong learning. In this case, the target groups are differentiated between general groups and disadvantaged groups, the latter being similar to those previously identified in European policies (people with low educational level or with learning difficulties and the migrant group). However, the analysis of the operational programmes reveals a greater variety of groups (such as groups at risk of being harassed on social networks). The construction of vulnerability at national level to some extent repeats the above results, the main groups mentioned refer to their employment status and the skills needed to get a job. Minority groups and migrants are other groups identified as vulnerable in the countries analysed.

As for young people, on the one hand, they appear as one of the generic groups to which the Social Fund are destined, without delimiting the factors that may give rise to their vulnerability. In European

policies they appear as one of the vulnerable groups, at risk or at a social disadvantage. The factors that affect this situation are school (low qualified, early schools' leavers) or their origin in an environment of low social level. For them, compensatory measures are proposed to enable them to enter the world of work, but also a proposal to enable them to become citizens through social participation. Interviews also drew attention to the need not to reduce lifelong learning only to fighting social exclusion or promoting social inclusion. Finally, to mention the issue of age within national policies, not all young people are considered vulnerable but the combination of different factors may lead to a position of vulnerability.

In the light of these results, the conclusions chapter presents some reflections on the concept of vulnerability, the social construction of youth and the role of lifelong learning in the fight against exclusion and support for vulnerable groups. Firstly, the concept of vulnerability is a constitutive characteristic of human nature, one that is undeniably present at least when we are born and young, and in the final stages of our lives, that is, when we are dependent upon the care of others to survive. If dependency is episodic and related to development stages, vulnerability is constant in times that we are exposed to risks of many kinds.

Across all the countries studied, within the EU as well as Australia, unemployment, alongside low levels of skills, were the most prevalent dimensions of vulnerability targeted by policy measures. By understanding the concept of vulnerability solely in relation to the labour market, young vulnerable young people are framed as lacking certain attributes – those that would enable them to be incorporated into the world of paid employment. Those attributes they do possess – however valuable to themselves personally, or to society – go unrecognized. In this context, the proposal that lifelong learning policies should focus on individual needs without addressing structural measures seems insufficient. Moreover, this situation constrains the rationale of adult education, forgetting its critical and creative dimension that seeks a deep analysis of reality in order to transform it.

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PREFACE

“Almost everyone feels vulnerable at some point in life. But some individuals and some groups are more vulnerable than others due to varying exposure to social and economic conditions and at different stages of their life cycles, starting at birth” (UNDP, 2014, p. 55)

Vulnerability is considered to be a new paradigm for understanding social disadvantage, an analytical lens for understanding policies, and a potentially transformative idea for rethinking the nature and role of government (Carney, 2018). In general, vulnerability refers to the possibility of being harmed by a kind of risk and the ability or inability to anticipate or recover from the damage resulted. The Welfare regimes were built to protect citizens from certain risks, however the risks anticipated since the 1950s are not the same as those faced by today's society. Therefore, traditional welfare is not properly prepared to provide adequate protection to current risks (Ranci, 2010). Moreover, new social risks affect all sectors of the population at some point in the life cycle.

WP1 is concerned with the construction of vulnerable groups in lifelong learning policies at European and national level. The Report 1.1. *Report on utilisation of policies and funding schemes promoting social and economic inclusion of vulnerable groups in EU and Australia* identifies how these policies and programmes perceive the issue of vulnerability; how they identify vulnerable groups; prioritise actions and funds; and how. The following aim was established:

- To explore the discursive construction of target groups among the European policies of lifelong learning both synchronically and diachronically over a period of 1993-2018, using EU lifelong learning documents, national documents and interviews with stakeholders involved in the EU policies.

This endeavour has the following objectives:

- To identify European Commission policies and funding schemes that support education programmes aimed at promoting the social and economic inclusion of the most vulnerable.
- To identify National policies and funding schemes in the nine countries forming part of the ENLIVEN consortium, including Australia.

In order to achieve these objectives, a methodological framework has been created with various collection and analysis techniques, corpus based critical discourse analysis, interviews, analysis of documents and secondary sources, which is presented in detail in a methodological appendix. The analysis is grounded in a dynamic vulnerability model that includes personal and structural factors. The model identifies three dimensions of vulnerability (economic, social and city/policy) that draw on Castel and Silver's theory.

This report is the first of the two deliverables of ENLIVEN WP1. By analysing the European and national lifelong learning policies, Deliverable 1.1 sheds light on the discourse of target groups considered vulnerable. It adds to the existing body of work on lifelong learning and vulnerability and contributes to the further understanding of the creation, diffusion of the discourse about vulnerable groups in the European Union. In cooperation with WP2², fieldwork has been carried out during May to June 2018.

² ENLIVEN Report D2.2. *Barriers to and enablers of participation Barriers to and enablers of participation by young low-qualified adults* presents a first approaches of the twenty cases studies. For further information please see this document (Boeren, 2018).

The content of the present report 1.1. will be used as a framework for further exploitation of those data.

Structure of the report

This report comprises three chapters and a methodological appendix:

Chapter One provides an overview of the main theoretical framework of the report. It is divided into two sections. The first one corresponds to the concept of vulnerability, the vulnerability model used with reference to analysis in this report and implications for lifelong learning. The second one presents a review of the main previous research on European policies about lifelong learning. This part provides the historical framework within which the evolution of these policies and the fight against social exclusion can be situated.

Chapter Two presents the main results of the corpus-based critical discourse on European lifelong learning policies. Based on a corpus of 68 documents from 1992 to 2018, it contrasts this analysis with the result of the interviews carried out with policy makers and the content analysis of the funding schemes (European Social Fund). It involves three main activities analysing the European policies with reference to the target groups, (1) the representation in relation to the main characteristics, (2) the goal of the lifelong learning policies and (3) the strategies suggested to the implementation of lifelong learning to specific groups.

Chapter Three analyses vulnerability at national level policy priority level, focusing on eight purposefully selected countries within the EU and contrasting these with Australia. First, the chapter provides an overview of the various dimensions of youth vulnerability across Europe, following the aspects identified in the corpus analysis. Based on recent analytical policy reviews and mappings, the chapter then highlights the ways in which vulnerability is constructed in national level policy programmes that target social inclusion in these countries. The chapter concludes with comparing the varieties of these applied concepts of vulnerability at national level and exploring how 'youth' is constructed as being a target group for inclusion policies through policy rhetoric and discourse.

Chapter Four analyses vulnerability in the national level policy priorities, focusing on eight purposefully selected countries within the EU and contrasting these with Australia. First, the chapter provides an overview of the various dimensions of youth vulnerability across Europe, following the aspects identified in the corpus analysis. Based on recent analytical policy reviews and mappings, the chapter will then highlight the ways in which vulnerability is constructed in national level policy programmes that target social inclusion in these countries. The chapter concludes with comparing the varieties of these applied concepts of vulnerability at the national level and exploring how youth is constructed as a target group for inclusion policies through policy rhetoric and discourse.

Chapter Five Summarizes the main highlights of the report. Furthermore, it contextualizes the results of comparative analysis of national policies with the general, EU policy level discourse on vulnerability and provides general conclusions.

The Methodological Appendix provides a detailed description of the methodological framework of this report.

1 DYNAMIC MODEL OF VULNERABILITY: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Introduction

Around the year 2000, human vulnerability became a key concept in the scientific world (Oris, Roberts, Joye and Stähli, 2018). Originated in environmental studies (Spini, Bernardi, & Oris, 2017), in social sciences the increasing attention to this term arises from financial instability and the consequences of globalization process which have a growing potential to undermine progress in human development (UNDP, 2014). In the “so-called risk society” (Beck, 2006), politics and mass media have included this concept in our daily discourse, in such a way that the term “has elevated her status to a powerful and highly normative cultural metaphor” (Ecclestone, 2017; p. 443).

The notion of vulnerability has also been increasingly applied by the European Courts in a way that EU have helped to determine the legal status of vulnerable groups (Ippolito & Iglesias Sánchez, 2015). Results from the previous European projects conclude that European policies reflect a concern on vulnerable groups, with special relevance for the protection and promotion of human rights (Abrisketa, et al., 2015, p. iv; Edumap. 2017). Similarly, in Australia the concept is seen as a “paradigm-shifting in understanding the dimensions and character of social disadvantage” however it has not been used in the Australian welfare law nor incorporated into legislative reform (Carney 2018, p.3).

Built upon earlier reports conducted within the ENLIVEN project, in particular the report “ENLIVEN and vulnerability” (Holford, 2018), the purpose of this chapter is to explore the conceptual framework around this concept and lifelong learning policies. The analysis begins with an overview of the vulnerability approach and studies that apply this analytical framework in the sphere of social sciences and education. Firstly, an approximation to the concept is presented. After a theoretical overview of this concept and the relationship with social inclusion and social exclusion, the first section presents an analytical framework of vulnerability which has been used in this deliverable 1.1. The second section comments on the relationship between vulnerability and adult education based on the concept of bounded agency. The chapter ends with a bibliographical review of the main issues related to lifelong learning policies and the fight against vulnerability.

1.2 Vulnerability

The recent interest in the notion of “vulnerability” is reflected in the growing number of publications by researchers from diverse backgrounds and fields who hold different assumptions (Birkmann & Wisner, 2006). They share a common point: the conviction of particular susceptibility or exposure to a risk or to threat (Drichel, 2013).

Originally the concept appeared in research related to natural disasters to prevent them or attenuate their consequences. Later it was adopted in diverse areas, mainly on applied research related to poverty studies, public health or social exclusion. Previous European research projects have used the term for different purposes: to analyse the access to education for vulnerable groups (Includ-ed³), to

³ Strategies for inclusion and social cohesion in Europe from Education INCLUD-ED (Website: <http://creaub.info/included/>)

investigate youth employment (Except⁴), to study policies supporting young people (YOUNG_ADULifelong learning⁵) or to examine the role of lifelong learning in social integration (lifelong learning2010⁶). Other research has focused on the term itself, either to examine its use in European policies (FRAME⁷), or to elaborate a suitable concept for life-cycle studies (LIVES⁸).

ENLIVEN explores issues of vulnerability in the context of lifelong learning (lifelong learning) for adults, particularly young adults. This project examines the role of public and private markets in reversing or reproducing inequalities, aiming to generate a more holistic understanding of adult education policies, their rationales, how they work, and their effect on the economy and inclusion. We explore how forms of social inequality are framed in adult education discourses across Europe. This subsection deals with the uses of the term “vulnerability” in the social sphere and the different explanations used to define it. The first finding is that there is no common definition of this phenomenon, beyond the observation of being exposed to a risk. The growing number of publications may be explained because of the context: we live in a globalized world where uncertainty and risk are its main characteristics. After this, we analyse different approaches to this term, ranging from those that focus on individual and inherent factors to those that conceptualize vulnerability in a more complex way. The term is related to other closed terms such as social exclusion, inclusion and poverty. Finally, we present a dynamic model of vulnerability which include the main factors and dimensions identified during the theoretical review.

1.2.a Vulnerability: the concept

The widespread appeal of this concept has been shown by Spini, Hanappi, Bernardi, Oris and Bickel (2013) with the statistical analysis of the abstracts of some 10.632 articles published between January 2000 and February 2011 across a variety of disciplines. On the basis of this statistical assessment and with a qualitative literature review, Spini et al. (2013) conclude that vulnerability emerges as a key concept in various disciplines and research areas (psychology, sociology, gerontology and youth studies). The disciplinary neutrality inherent in this term has authorized a range of uses. This circumstance seems to be one of the reasons for its expanded use (Oris, Roberts, Joye, & Stähli, 2018). At the same time this characteristic, coupled with the absence of a commonly accepted definition, causes other challenges when using the term, as we will see later in this ENLIVEN report 1.1.

In social sciences, the rise of interest in the use of this term runs parallel to the unforeseen side-effects of modern life. In a period of transition Western societies are faced with a set of changes that affect them: from macroeconomic levels to the daily lives of their inhabitants. As a result of these changes, people's sense of identity has become more sensitive to what they define as risks, such as threats to their health, such as economic security or emotional well-being, than in previous eras. While differing in their approaches, some relevant authors argue that the problems arising from the loss of security have personal and social effects. For example Castel (2016) titled his last book “The Rise of Uncertainties” to express in a synthetic way the fundamental transformation which has occurred in our ways of envisaging the future; Giddens (1991) argues that the climate of uncertainty is disturbing and exposes individuals to a diversity of crisis situations, of greater or lesser importance, which can threaten the very core of self-identity, leading to ontological insecurity; Beck draws attention to global risk, which has become “a human condition at the at the beginning of the twenty-first century” (Beck, 2006, p. 330).

⁴ EXcept (web site: <http://www.except-project.eu/home/>)

⁵ YOUNG ADULifelong learningT (website: <http://www.young-adullt.eu/>)

⁶ Lifelong Learning 2010. lifelong learning2010 (website: <http://ll2010.tlu.ee/>)

⁷ FRAME. Fostering Human Rights among European Policies (web site: <http://www.fp7-frame.eu/>)

⁸ Surmonter la vulnérabilité: perspective du parcours de vie. LIVES (web site: <https://www.lives-nccr.ch/>)

Among others, those authors argue that the second half of the twenty century created growing social uncertainties and new forms of man-made insecurities that affect the industrial bases of society as well as the concept of nation states. As a result of this process, structural changes, undermining the social contract and the foundation institutions (work, family and welfare) have progressively lost the capacity to provide security to many citizens. People living under those conditions feel more vulnerable and National Welfare Systems seems less able to protect the residents. This implies a transition towards new forms of social organizations that reflects a crisis of organized capitalism (Ranci, 2010).

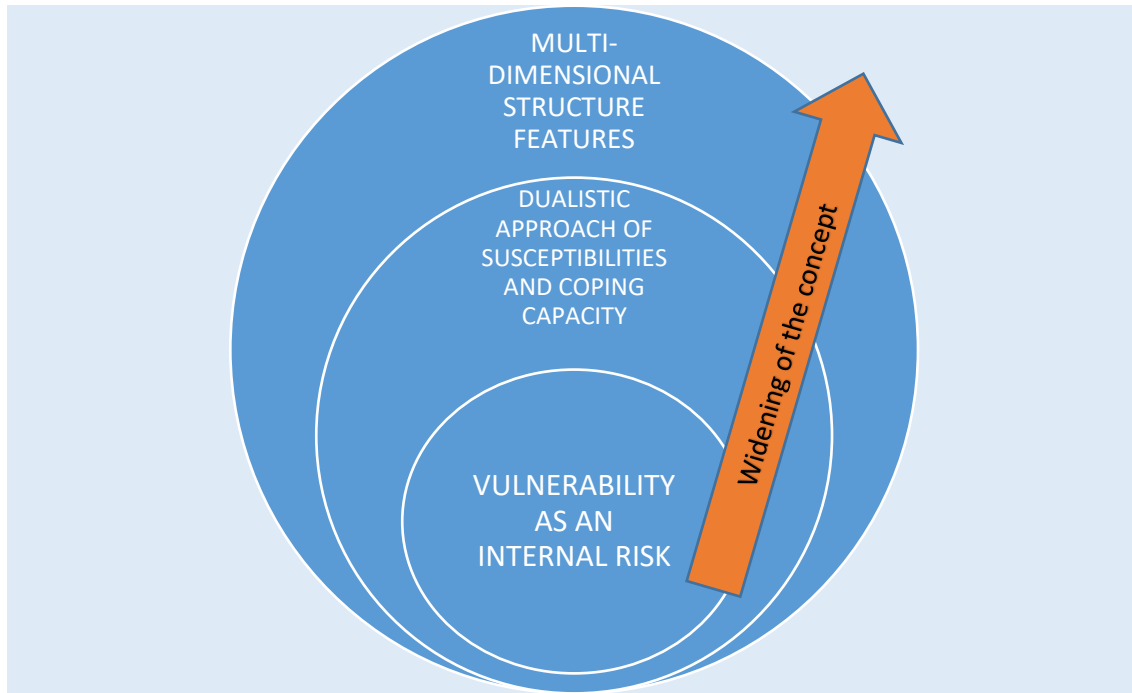
A person is considered to be vulnerable when he or she is at risk of worsening his or her living conditions. Although risk affects the whole society, some people are much more exposed to them and therefore are more vulnerable than others. The 'most vulnerable' are considered to be those exposed to the greatest menace that threatens either their chances of survival or their ability to live with minimum security, economic and social, and human dignity (Garz, 1997).

The interest has led to a heterogeneity of uses, and an absence of a commonly accepted definition may cause misunderstanding (Carney, 2018; Oris, Roberts, Joye & Stähli, 2018; Spini et al, 2013; Zimmerman, 2017). Beyond the levels of technical definitions it appeared that "vulnerability" and "vulnerable groups" runs the possibility of being used automatically without thinking about the nuances, as was seen in the FRAME project (Abrisqueta et al, 2015). Generally speaking, vulnerable people are often described as "individuals and groups who needs sympathy, help, support or intervention" (Ecclestone, 2017, p. 445). The sympathy mentioned by Ecclestone (2017) is based on the assumption that vulnerable individuals are considered to have a lack of freedom and capability to protect themselves from intended or inherent risks, those circumstances make them unable to make informed choices (Shivayogi, 2013). As the report UNDP, 2014) highlights "the concept of human vulnerability describes the prospects of eroding people's capabilities and choices" (p.1). However, it has been noted that the categorization of a person belonging to a particular group as vulnerable may mask the capabilities of individuals to resist and to affect the course of their lives and may downplay or deny the agency of the person perceived as vulnerable. It is argued that socially vulnerable people "cannot bridge this gap under their own power". This vision can be misleading because people have multidimensional capabilities that can be forgotten (Vandekinderen, Roets, Van Keer, & Roose, 2018). The risk is not only of being paternalistic with the people in question, but also that these approaches do not address the underlying reasons for vulnerability. As the FRAME team reminds us (Abrisqueta et al, 2015, pg. 22), "protection approaches do not change the status quo." For these reasons the UN wants to go further and looking to Human Development Goals proposes to advance towards an enabling environment where people can develop their skills and face the challenges (UNDP, 2014).

In order to identify the main approaches on vulnerability, the report ENLIVEN 1.1. is going to analyse them by using the following the model developed by the second UNU-EHS Expert Working Group (EWG II) meeting on Measuring Vulnerability (Birkmann & Wisner, 2006). Birkmann and Wisner (2006) affirm that vulnerability can be conceptualized into a series of increasing degrees of complexity and scale, the difficulty of which lies precisely in its diffuse contours and boundaries. In our case, rather than focusing on measuring the vulnerability and adaptive capacity of societies, the economy and the environment in the face of natural hazards, we are going to focus on the social risks which create susceptibility in the population.

Figure 1 represents a range of concentric 'vulnerability' spheres, from the personal characteristics (sphere 1) approach to a multi-dimensional one involving personal and structural factors (sphere 3). This report is framed in this last approach that represents the most complex scope of vulnerability (Holford, 2018). In this regard, the notion of vulnerability seems relevant for examining various level of explanations (micro, meso and macro) (Oris, Roberts, Joye & Stähli, 2018; Spini et al, 2013).

Figure 1. Key Spheres of the Concept of Vulnerability



(Based on Birkman and Wisner, 2006, p.11.)

As shown in figure 1, in the first sphere: intrinsic vulnerability is considered an internal risk factor, which usually labels specific groups (children, women, indigenous people etc.) that are considered vulnerable. It is used by many organizations, such as the United Nations or the EU, when listing groups of people or communities as being particularly vulnerable (people with disabilities, migrants, unaccompanied minors, asylum-seekers, etc) (Abrisqueta et al, 2015; Holford, 2018).

Portraying Vulnerability in collective terms, "vulnerable population", corresponds to the concept of "Embodied vulnerability" (Fineman, 2008) which underlies the assumption that vulnerable groups need to be provided with special protection as their rights are perceived to be at a particular risk of being violated. Even though the intrinsic approach can be regarded as being inclusive because the protection of vulnerable individuals is seen to be justified and necessary, voices are raised against the risks of stigmatising people and potentially belittling them (Holford, 2018). For this reason, using a vulnerability approach based on the identification of "vulnerable groups" runs the risk of stigmatizing the group and reinforcing the exclusion process that, in theory, was intended to be eliminated. Furthermore, Spini, Hanappi, Bernardi, Oris, & Bickel (2013) maintain that identifying vulnerability as objectified individual categories (for instance, women or people with mental illness) also has serious limits for theory building due to vulnerability being anchored in specific socio-historical contexts.

In this regard, Ippolito & Iglesias Sánchez (2015) go further when they identify two types of vulnerability associated with the collective identification of vulnerable groups. On the one hand, the

authors define "inherent vulnerability" (p.) as that which has traditionally been perceived as intrinsic to certain socially very large population groups, but which are often considered disadvantaged when it comes to enjoying their human rights. This group includes children, the elderly, people with disabilities and women. On the other hand, they consider the groups whose vulnerability derives from the situation of domination that other social, cultural, ethnic or sexual positions or orientations occupy in society, for instances minorities, Roma community or indigenous peoples. This proposal aims to overcome a certain taken for granted assumption about the socio-political context and the way those relations are filtered.

Figure 1 shows that an extension of this approach can be seen in the following spheres. Rather than listing groups, other approaches explain the factors which render certain people vulnerable. For instance, the Youngadullt project (Youngadullt, 2017) has identified several factors as contributing to vulnerability. For instance, physical issues (e.g. sickness, disability), emotional/psychological issues (e.g. poor mental health, dependence), material circumstances (e.g. poverty, homelessness, inadequate or uncertain access to health care or education), and social context (lack of support by family or peer group, absence of guidance in difficult situations, and immediate risks from the physical environment).

All those conditions enhance the sensitivity of a person or community to the impacts of a risk. The British Red Cross organized these factors in two groups personal and structural ones. At the same time, there are considerable overlaps between social and personal vulnerability issues (Garz, 1997):

- a) Personal factors: along with physical and psychological characteristics, they include the physical and emotional above mentioned, as well as education, personal resources and social support. Those factors affect the exclusion from full social and economic participation.
- b) Structural factors: it is evident that vulnerability is also framed by the socioeconomic context as other aspects of daily life (cultural, institutional, etc). Structural factors of many different types can therefore be mentioned, for example geographical ones, living in an area marked by high levels of deprivation or living in isolated rural communities; economic circumstances; technological development and access to new technologies or event factors related to delinquent: caused by corruption, negligence, etc.

The Human Development Report (UNDP, 2014) explains that, throughout the world, most people are vulnerable to unexpected circumstances affecting their personal lives - unemployment, intra-family conflicts or illness - as well as their social, economic and environmental contexts. This explanation corresponds with the second sphere in the model proposed. In Birkmann and Wisner's (2006) view, vulnerability is a matter of scale and the concept has gone through a process of expansion. In the second area of Figure 1, a dualistic approach to susceptibilities and responsiveness, it includes two types of factors, external and internal. With respect to external factors, vulnerability is considered to be similar to the experience of harm. For this reason, vulnerability is defined as the probability of an extreme event that leads to unusual difficulties in recovering from it (Birkmann & Wisner, 2006). In a similar way, Osgood, Foster and Courtney (2010) make clear that vulnerable population can be described in terms of "the specific challenges they confront-their disabilities, for example, or their trauma histories" (p. 210).

Moreover, this second sphere broadens the approach since it considers that together with the susceptibility to suffer an event, it is necessary to consider the capacities to overcome these

circumstances, the internal or personal factors. This is a very widespread approach. After extensive theoretical revision of the term Adger (2006) verifies that vulnerability is perceived as a double structure including external elements and internal factors. The first one is the exposure to perturbation or external stresses; the second one is the sensitivity to those situations and the capacity to adapt. Furthermore, this approach introduces a positive element, the capacity to cope which is considered to be the other side of vulnerability (a positive definition focus on the capacities). The next sphere (sphere 3) proposes a multi-structure covering not only susceptibility (negative definition of vulnerability) and capacity to adapt, but also personal and structural resources.

Resources and stress are key elements in the approaches of the spheres 2 and 3. The capacity that people must use their personal and social resources is a high indicator of (in) vulnerability. Lastly, also the thematic dimensions can be broadened within the discourse of vulnerability. The current debate clearly shows that vulnerability captures various thematic dimensions (Holford, 2018), such as physical, economic, social and institutional aspects (third sphere, see Figure 1). In this sense, vulnerability and security form an indivisible pair of antonyms, which, on one side, depends on the conditions of the socio-economic context, and on the other, on the cultural and institutional aspects of everyday life. In addition, the resources that individuals can mobilize to cope with danger affect the equation. Indeed, understanding the socio-economic context is essential to understanding vulnerability, because the context causes risk and at the same time offers opportunities. As Spini, Hanappi, Bernardi, Oris, & Bickel (2013, p. 11-12) highlight:

The vulnerability processes that individuals face, experience and deal with are observed within the societal context, which has its own dynamic and which should be systematically studied in its own rights. These structures and objectified institutions heavily condition the constraints and opportunities faced by the individuals, locating a more or less large number of them in vulnerable situations and/or impinging on their capacity to act and make biographical choices in such situations.

In summary, vulnerability is a dynamic process derived from a set of external factors (macro or meso) and/or personal factors that cause individuals or groups to have difficulty facing risk situations. In addition, vulnerability is contextual, since institutions and opportunities condition the capacity to act and the perception of choice in different circumstances.

1.2.b Vulnerability and related concepts: social exclusion and social inclusion

Used as an analytical tool to describe states of fragility, vulnerability seems to be related to other concepts such as discrimination, marginalization, victimization, exclusion or protection, with limits not always well established (Abrisqueta, et al, 2015). Sometimes these terms are used interchangeably even though they are not synonyms. There are many ways to define and measure poverty, from limited concepts to material possessions to broader concepts that take social issues into account (Peçiak & Tusinska, 2015). For example, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development⁹ reaffirmed the importance of multi-dimensional approaches to poverty eradication that go beyond economic deprivation. It identifies three main dimensions: Health, education and standards of living.

On the one hand, the notion of social exclusion is a multidimensional and dynamic concept that encompasses a broad range of social indicators. In the EU, the concept of social exclusion spread from France during the presidency of Jacques Delors (Silver, 2010). Specifically, it was in 1989 that the

⁹ <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2018-MPI>

Council of Ministers of Social Affairs of the European Community adopted a resolution in order to combat exclusion and to promote integration and a "Europe of solidarity". The Resolution of 29 September 1989 introduces for the first time in a public document the reference to the notion of social exclusion (Jimenez Ramírez, 2008).

Different nuances and meanings have been given to the word exclusion. This implies the application of the term to a greater number of social categories and sectors but, above all, accentuating aspects such as unemployment, precarious and poorly paid work, difficulty of access to housing and the difficulties that the education system must face in adapting to social and technological transformations. The concept of social exclusion has acquired a primary and growing role in recent times. Its centrality has been in substituting for the term poverty, a term with primarily economic connotations that also entails a social categorization, so that in the language of social exclusion it has become a commonplace in public discourses (Levitas, 2006). Poverty alludes to the means by which a person can achieve minimum standards and participate normally in society. Although there are no fixed limits between the two concepts, social exclusion is a multidimensional concept that refers to a process of loss of integration or participation of the individual in society. Eurostat (2010) defines social exclusion as a multidimensional concept that addresses the complexity of a personal and social situation, beyond the classic indicator of income, used from the poverty approach:

... a process whereby certain individuals are pushed to the edge of society and prevented from participating fully by virtue of poverty, or lack of basic competencies and lifelong learning opportunities, or as result of discrimination. This distance them from job, income and education opportunities as well as social and community network and activities. They have little access to power and decision-making bodies and thus often feeling powerless and unable to take control over the decisions that affect their day to day lives (EUROSTAT, 2010, p. 7).

The state of vulnerability is closely related to the state of exclusion; but it demonstrates a situation of fragility prior to this state of exclusion, but does not necessary need to lead to one. According to Vassa (in Ranci, 2006) the notion of vulnerability is "characterized by the state of weakness which exposes a person (or a family) to suffering particularly negative or damaging consequences" (Ranci, 2006 p. 16). Those with uncertain access to fundamental material resources are among the most vulnerable to suffer a process of social exclusion. From this perspective vulnerability becomes a central dimension in understanding social processes.

We can see an example of this approach in the definition of vulnerable groups developed by the European Social Fund and Social Inclusion Background Report, included in the Enliven report on Vulnerability (Holford, 2018). It defined vulnerable groups as those groups that

experience a higher risk of poverty and social exclusion than the general population. Ethnic minorities, migrants, disabled people, the homeless, those struggling with substance abuse, isolated elderly people and children often face difficulties that can lead to further social exclusion, such as low levels of education, unemployment or underemployment (Di Nardo, Cortese & McAnaney, 2010, p. 5).

Robert Castel (2003), one of the main theoreticians on the subject, allows us to go into depth on this subject. Castel describes vulnerability as a dynamic condition marked by the transition from inclusion to exclusion and vice versa. It differs from permanent poverty and social exclusion in that these are

static situations characterized by chronicity. Precisely because of its often-temporary nature, vulnerability is difficult to capture. It is only apparent when it no longer exists and it has turned into a more severe situation, although most of the time it has been absorbed back into “normality”

Therefore, Castel suggests the need to study vulnerability in terms of a process (Table 1). The intersection of two axes (labour market and the social ties) defines different zones in the social space, according to the degree of cohesion that they provide (Castel, 2000). The first axis relates to employment:

Representing this schematically: to be in the zone of integration means that one has the guarantees provided by a permanent job and can mobilize solid support from relationships; the zone of vulnerability involves a dual process, of which they represent the extreme form. That is to say, on the axis of relationship to work, there is a range of positions from attachment to a steady job to complete absence of work, through participation in insecure, casual, seasonal or similar forms of occupation. We can also mark a range of positions along the axis of integration into relationships, lying between involvement in solid social networks and social isolation” (p.524)

The scenario is accompanied by another vector, the social axis that passes through inscription in family and sociability networks (Castel, 1995, 2006). The crossing of both axes allows us to identify three zones of cohesion or density of social relations: integration, exclusion and vulnerability. The first presupposes a successful connection both in the world of work and in family ties. Exclusion is the social space where people lack employment and have precarious or non-existent social ties. In the zone of vulnerability there is a degree of instability, since it is distinguished by precarious work and by a fragility in relational ties. The way in which the sociologist studies the term empowers people in zones of vulnerability, drawing a range of disparate possibilities with respect to being disaffiliated and affects the idea that in most cases people keep some kind of thread that holds them and, at the same time, moves them away from absolute isolation (Castel, 2014).

The "analysis of the zones" allows a deeper understanding of the complex process of construction of social exclusion and the role of vulnerability. In the proposal Castel identifies three zones ranging from integration to exclusion (Castel, 1995). In the first zone, the inclusion zone, there are those people who have a stable job as well as a stable relational environment; the vulnerability zone would be the second, which is characterized by its instability. It is usually accompanied by precarious work and can be accompanied by fragility in the relational sphere; the third is the zone of marginality or social exclusion determined by the absence of work and social isolation (Castel, 1995, 2014).

Castel (2014) argues that the problems of exclusion are no longer found only on the margins of society. Furthermore, he draws attention to the fact that the threat of exclusion hangs over people and groups that seemed to have the capacity to integrate, to “lead a dignified life” (p. 16). By situating themselves in an area of vulnerability, they may not become excluded, but in any case, they are condemned to lead a precarious life plunged into the uncertainty of what will become of them tomorrow and unable to control their destiny. For this reason, he points out that the massive problem is rather one of precariousness, characterized by the proliferation of vulnerable individuals or groups who lack sufficient resources to guarantee their economic and social independence. It is these groups that may ultimately fall into what he calls social exclusion.

Despite the differences in conceptualization of exclusion, Silver (2015) identifies a third dimension, the political, to characterize inclusion. The political dimension refers to “the capability of all citizens to participate in making collective decisions about matters that affect their lives” (p. 10). In Table 1 we have included this dimension which is closely related to the lifelong learning objectives as defined by the EU (Mikelatou & Arvanitis, 2018) and allows a global vision of the possible areas of participation.

Table 1. The zones of social exclusion, vulnerability and social inclusion

Dimensions	Social Exclusion or Marginality Area	Vulnerability Area	Inclusion Area
Economic Dimension	Absence of work Lack of resources Poor consumption	Precariousness in the work Fragility in the relational sphere	Stable job Resources
Social Dimension	Social Isolation	Fragility in the relational sphere	Relations stability
Political Dimensions	Segregation: restricted public space; safety/protection; rights	Fragility in the social and political participation	Political engagement volunteer

(Based on Castel 2000 and Silver 2015.)

In summary, a vulnerable person is one whose environment - personal, family-relational, socio-economic or political-administrative - suffers from some weakness. Consequently, she/he is in a situation of risk that could trigger a process of social exclusion. The level of risk will be higher or lower depending on the degree of deterioration of the environment. In light of this approach, vulnerability does not affect specific predetermined groups, but rather affects groups and individuals in a changing way according to their individual equation of vulnerability with respect to the social dynamics of risk and marginalisation, placing them in a continuous state of exclusion-integration. Moreover, in the zone of vulnerability certain conditions reinforce each other, such as employment, education and income (Vandekinderen, Roets, Van Keer, & Roose, 2018). Although exclusion from one dimension may increase the risk along other dimensions, their relationship remains unclear. Silver (2015) highlights that those dimensions of exclusion/inclusion are not necessarily related. In fact, it seems that their association also varies across national contexts. Based on a review of secondary sources, she highlights the influence of the contextual framework, for instance she comments that “the link between material and social disadvantage is weaker in the Mediterranean than in the northern European countries” (Silver, 2015. p 143).

For the purposes of this project, vulnerability is considered through three dimensions: economic, social and political (Table 1). The objective of Table 1 is to provide a general view without aiming to cover all possible factors, but it is enough to present vulnerability as a complex phenomenon influenced by a large number of factors and in a process between social exclusion and inclusion. The life cycle perspective allows one to observe that people oscillate over time between one social status and another (e.g. between precarious and casual employment, unemployment and withdrawal from the labour market). In the case of young people, the challenge is to progress in their adult life structures, where one step forward leads to another (cumulative advantage). In this regard, ENLIVEN report on vulnerability points out that:

disadvantaged young people "without a net" can be trapped in processes of cumulative disadvantage. This results in what is reported as multiple vulnerability or even comorbidity, where poor education is combined with poor employment, low income and large-scale debt, poor health, lack of support from friends and family, or a history of crime (Holford, 2018, p.2).

1.2.c *Towards a dynamic model of vulnerability*

As discussed in the previous section, another characteristic of the notion of vulnerability is that it is not a state but rather a life-changing process. Throughout the life cycle, people face stressors, against which they use their resources. Stressors can be chronic or relatively stable (poverty, family conditions); events of daily life (deadline at work) or particular moments/transitions of the life cycle. The outcomes are the result of the interaction between stressors and available resources, both personal and those provided by the social environment. Based on those four concepts: resources, stressors, outcomes, and contexts, the project LIVES "*Methodological and Substantive Challenges in Measuring vulnerability across the Life Course*" (Oris, Roberts, Joye, & Stähli, 2018), proposes a definition of vulnerability as a process

as a lack of resources, which in specific contexts, place individuals or groups at a major risk of experiencing (1) negative consequences related to sources of stress; (2) the inability to cope effectively with stressors; and (3) the inability to recover from the stressor or to take advantage of opportunities by a given deadline (Spini et al. 2013, 19).

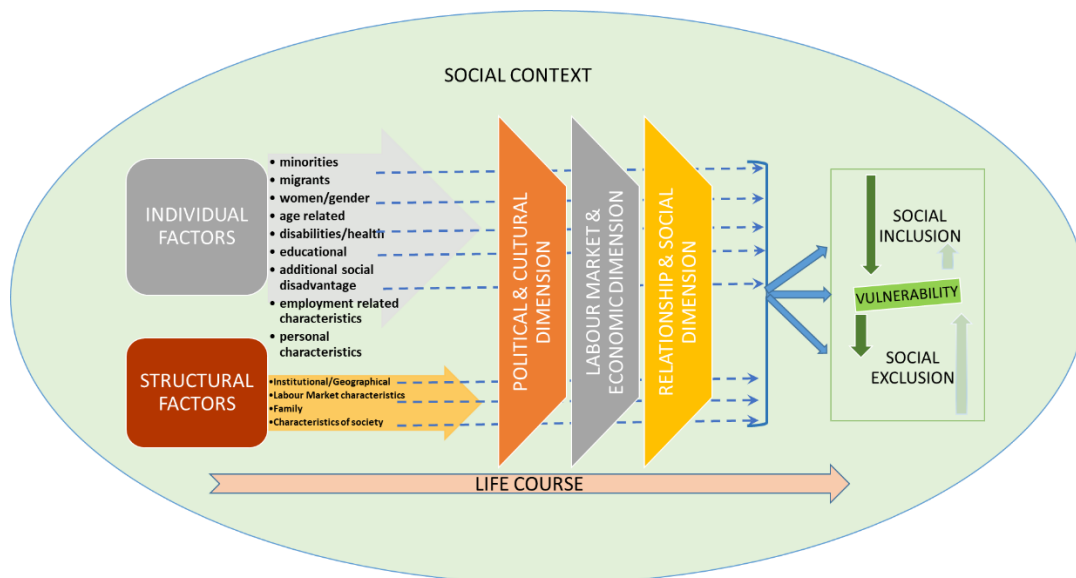
In a similar way, Ranci & Migliavacca (2010) defined social vulnerability as a life-situation characterized by a multi-dimensional combination of factors of disadvantage and advantage, of inclusion and exclusion. Its distinctive feature is that weak and unstable integration in the main mechanisms of resource distribution in contemporary society places people in a situation of uncertainty and high exposure to the risk of poverty and, eventually, of social exclusion.

This deliverable presents a dynamic model of vulnerability which includes both the personal and social factors mentioned in the main definitions as well as the dimensions of vulnerability that affect the exercise of citizenship and therefore a broad vision of inclusion. As figure 2 shows, this model of vulnerability considers that individual and structural factors are interrelated in a dynamic system that affects the way the individual crosses different educational, social and political structures throughout its life.

Depending on the resources and possibilities found in this critical process, the people's situation can lead to a process in which fragility can become embedded in precariousness, as Castel (2014) says, or move towards processes of inclusion or exclusion. The process of globalization has driven a set of deep dynamics, financial and economic, which aggravate the processes of precarious employment and fragility of people. Although Castel (2016) considers that there are irreversible aspects to these processes, and therefore the uncertainties to which we are subjected increase, the worst is not certain to happen. In summary the main characteristics of vulnerability are:

- A Multifactor approach
- A Life course approach
- A Contextual approach

Figure 2. A dynamic model of vulnerability



The ENLIVEN project calls for a life course perspective, in particular young people who suffer from multiple vulnerabilities because of the poor economic situation must be added to other health problems or lack of family support (Holford, 2018). It has been shown that the problems of job insecurity and the difficulties in achieving emancipation or higher education (fewer scholarships, higher education, etc.) mark the difficult situation of some European young people, as the Spaniards, in their transition to adulthood, generating a climate of insecurity and uncertainty. Among Spanish youth, the future is perceived as unstable and uncertain, and there prevails a critical view of institutions with responsibilities in public management (Megías & Ballesteros, 2016).

Framed in the social exclusion discourse, Fineman (2008) provides a reflection on the political responsibilities the use of the term “vulnerability” brings to the State. In her opinion, the role of the State involves the establishment and support of societal institutions. A major consequence of such an approach has been to redefine ideas about State responsibilities to place the vulnerable subject at the centre of political and theoretical endeavours. Fineman (2008) argues that the “vulnerable subject” must replace the independent subject inherent in neoliberal thought. This understanding has become so widespread and explicit that it might be said to constitute a “normative cultural metaphor” (Ecclestone, 2017, p. 443). Despite good intentions, to be recognised as vulnerable runs the risk of emphasizing personal accountability and stigmatisation (Brunila & Rossi, 2018; Brunila et al, 2017; Ecclestone, 2017). The next section will focus on the relationship between vulnerability and one of the policies of lifelong learning.

1.3 Lifelong learning concepts and vulnerability

According to the United Nations, in order to tackle vulnerability and to sustain recent achievements, it is crucial to reduce inequality in all dimensions of human development. In this process, lifelong learning plays a key role as learning is to develop the capacity to “affect many dimensions of poverty”: access to financial services, demand the perceived rights, human capital theory, income (UNDP, 2014 p.7). The United Nations consider that reducing inequality in all dimensions of human development is

critical to addressing vulnerability and sustaining recent gains. In this process, lifelong learning plays a key role as learning provides the capacity to "affect many dimensions of poverty", beyond the theory of human capital. In particular, states that recognize and take measures to reduce inequality between groups (so-called horizontal inequality) are in a better position to uphold the principle of universalism, foster social cohesion and prevent and recover from crises (UNDP, 2014, p. 6).

This section focuses on the challenges of the fight against exclusion and the vulnerability. The bibliographical review has made it possible to identify two educational challenges. In the first place, reaching the most vulnerable groups, ENLIVEN considers the bounded agency to be one of its central concepts to overcome access barriers. Second, the potentialities of lifelong learning beyond work approach are commented.

1.3.a Bounded agency

Participation in learning activities could improve the position of the low-qualified employee in the labour market. However, the most socially vulnerable (young) people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to participate in lifelong learning. There are two main reasons for this situation: firstly, the lack of financial resources to finance their studies, and secondly, the absence of expectations that these projects will improve their future situation and help them to achieve economic benefits (Róbert 2012, p. 88). Previous experiences and those of their reference groups can reinforce the sense of helplessness and inability to control risk and increase the sense of fragility (Ranci, 2010).

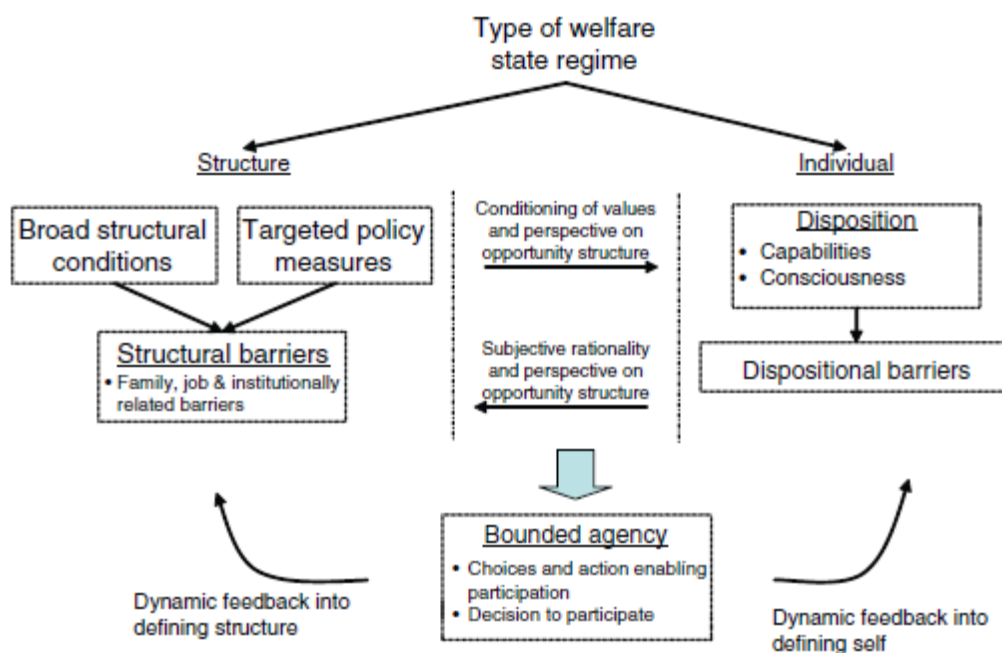
As mentioned above, there is no state of invulnerability; rather, there are different possibilities of facing or mitigating vulnerability. Fineman (2008) argues that resilience, embodying an individual's agency, is socially produced and can therefore be supported, improved or even hindered by the institutional and other opportunities that an individual find in society. Thus, to mitigate vulnerability, some authors focus their attention on designing and maintaining structures and strategies within societies and addressing the intrinsically unequal elements of societies (Abrisketa, et al, 2015). Increase capacities, particularly in education, i.e. the capacity of decision-makers. From an approach to capacity education, UNDP argues that there is a relationship between capacity building and the ability to act freely. It contrasts vulnerability with agency. Therefore, better capacities would achieve a higher level of agency, so that people would be more protected from the events that place them in conditions of fragility. However, the UN recalls that capacities may not be sufficient to make decisions. To be fully empowered, people must also be free from the social, institutional and other constraints that inhibit their ability to act (UNDP, 2014, p.20).

In relation to European youth population, active employment policies and the implementation of the YG are not achieving the expected results due, among other reasons, to the heterogeneous profile of the young unemployed and to the difficulties of the YG in reaching the target groups: the young people who could benefit most from it (Moreno, 2017). According to the European Commission's 2016 report on the functioning of the Public Employment Service (PES), access to these services for the most vulnerable unemployed young people remains insufficient despite the progress being made. In fact, it is precisely the young people with the least training and therefore most likely to experience situations of poverty and social exclusion who are rarely registered as job seekers, together with young people with higher education, although perhaps for very different reasons: the former, because they have fewer skills and competences to seek employment, as well as being demotivated; and the latter, because they do not trust in finding employment through these services (Moreno, 2017). Nicaise

(2012) sees this development as part of the construction of the system, although she considers that there is still a great need for a deeper analysis of the characteristics of the system that determine inequalities in participation.

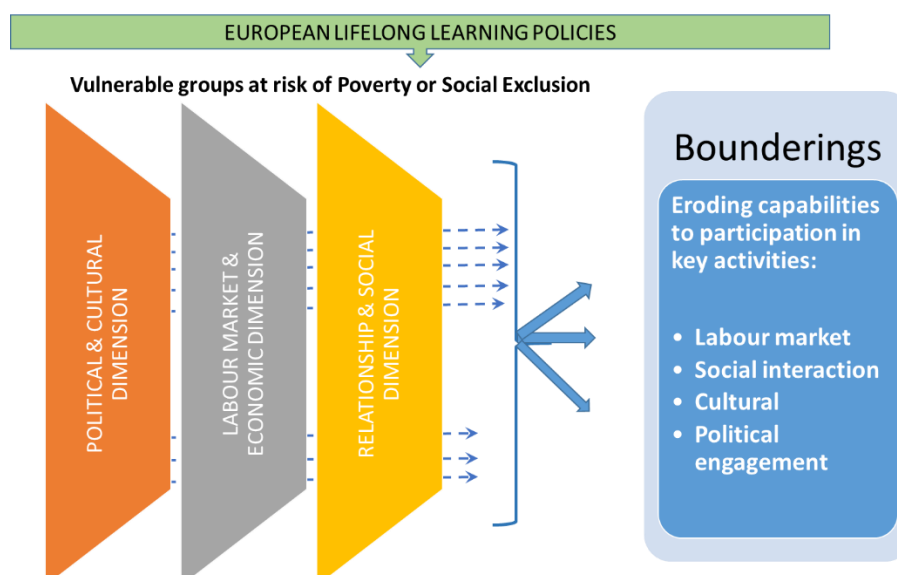
Bounded agency, a central concept in the ENLIVEN research, suggests that broader structural and cultural conditions (in the case of a young adult, features such as institutional and labour market settings and the social support available) are as important in shaping an individual's response to work, education and future life chances and opportunities as dispositional factors, internalized conceptual frameworks, or personal agency (Holford, 2018). Bounded agency involves a "re-conceptualisation of agency as a process in which past habits and routines are contextualised and future possibilities envisaged within the contingencies of the present moment" (Evans, 2007, p.86). As Róbert (2012) has pointed out in the context of an earlier EU research project, bounded agency provides a way of articulating the "interaction of structure and agency" (figure 3).

Figure 3. Bounded agency model (Source: Rubenson & Desjardins, 2009, p.195)



The concept of Bounded agency draws on a dynamic concept of temporality in which the present is shaped by experiences of the past and anticipates futures (Worth, in Hamilton & Adamson, 2013). There is a relationship between the real difficulties and the perceived ones, so that some people, in particular young people, exercise their agency and become involved in different activities, thereby overcoming personal or family barriers (Hamilton & Adamson, 2013).

Figure 4. Lifelong learning and vulnerability



The bounded agency perspective takes into account the relationship between structural and individual barriers to participation (Rubenson & Desjardins, 2009). Structural conditions play a key role. Participation is based both on available opportunities and on a certain level of capabilities that seems necessary to make the decision to participate. As can be seen, bounded agency results from the interaction between values and rationality which, in turn, are the result of structure and therefore, the role of public policies in mitigating barriers to participation, both structural and individual. Boyadjieva and lieva-Trichkova (2018) argue that the concept is important from a life course perspective as it regards an individual's life events as resulting from the interaction between the broader structural conditions and targeted policy measures, on the one hand, and the individual's conceptual apparatus, on the other. The bounded agency is a socially situated agency, influenced, but not determined, by social structures and environments (Boyadjieva & lieva-Trichkova, 2018, 275). Figure 4 represents how lifelong learning policies can affect the three dimensions of vulnerability by improving skills for participation in different activities from the labour market to political participation, social relations and participation in cultural life.

1.3.b Traditional adult education

Finally, concerning the hegemony of the learning economy, several authors identify progressive movements towards new ways of understanding education that reflect the moral and intercultural concerns derived from life in a global society (Jarvis, 2000; Rizvi, 2017). The purpose of adult development is to increase one's agency through increasingly expanded awareness and critical reflection (Milana & Holford 2014). Such a view reclaims the democratic dimension of lifelong learning (Biesta, 2006).

The intellectual root of this problem lies in a partial and incomplete vision of lifelong learning. Adult education policies have resulted in a quantitative increase in educational opportunities that have had an impact on people's lifestyles. In practice, and from the point of view of its results, , for Boyadjieva

and Lieva-Trichkova, (2018) lifelong learning could be defined from a double perspective, as a means of reproducing existing social values and as a mitigating or even eliminating factor. That is to say, as a mechanism of social control, but also as a mechanism of emancipation, of power for groups and individuals.

In a model of lifelong learning based on social integration, there is an emphasis on the identification of the status of citizen with those people who contribute something to society - basically through work - and assume both private and public responsibilities (they are parents, workers and citizens); people lacking these required attributes are mainly unemployed people. With this baseline, Benedicto (2016) points out that it should come as no surprise that most of the action of the public authorities in this field are guided by the idea of the civic deficit for which it is necessary to compensate.

Today, the “precarisation” of labour market conditions has pushed important sectors towards the periphery of the economic system, in the form of high unemployment, long duration or continuous inputs and outputs of the labour market. Rizvi (2017) has pointed out the manner that neoliberal globalization affect also education. According to him, the ideal of social justice is reduced to property rights.

Among the groups considered as vulnerable, young people have an important presence. The weakening of the economic position of these sectors and their reduced expectations of improvement result in a deterioration of their social position and, therefore, of their civic status (Benedicto, 2016). The humanist agenda for lifelong learning is seen in the renewed emphasis on the social dimension of education and training is reflected in EU policy when it is recognized that adult learning is offered in a variety of settings such as educational institutions, local communities and NGOs, as well as in their goals that incorporate learning for personal civic, social and work development (Rubertson, 2018). It seems evident that public discourse of lifelong learning goes beyond the world of work and seeks a broader integration than that derived from participation in the economic system. Vargas (2017) explains that “the promise of work and the role that society assigns to it as a means of social integration, a way of giving meaning to personal life, a space for civic participation and a motor for material progress is profoundly problematic in the following areas of today's society” (p. 9). In Western societies the individualization of social problems led to a state of vulnerability by enhancing the illusion of individual autonomy (MacDonald, 2011). In this context, the proposal of lifelong learning without including the critical and creative dimension seems to be limited.

1.4 Lifelong learning policies and vulnerability

Deliverable 1.1 aims to present an analysis of the concept of vulnerability in lifelong learning policies. This section analyses the European lifelong learning as a contextual framework that provides key issues for the analysis of vulnerable groups in European policies, both at EU level and at national level.

Lifelong learning discourse became an essential component of the EU agenda from the mid-1990s, when the publication of a series of documents and the establishment of certain measures aimed at influencing the policy of the Member States were initiated (Jarvis, 2014; Volles, 2016). This process increased and became more important to the extent that, in the context of an earlier EU research project (lifelong learning2010), Holford and Mleczko (2013) pointed out that the EU become one of the main advocates of lifelong learning among international organizations. Those circumstances have led to a growing number of published analysis about the evolution of lifelong learning in the EU policies. Different authors have made a significant contribution to issues relating to the evolution of lifelong learning policies in Europe (e.g. Biesta, 2006; Brine, 2006; Dehmel, 2006; Hingel, 2001; Holford & Mleczko, 2013; Kerch & Toiviainen, 2017; Lee, Thayer, & Madyun, 2008; Mikelatou & Arvanitis, 2018; Milana & Holford, 2014; Mohorcic Spolar & Holford, 2014; Panitsides & Anastasiadou, 2015; Rasmussen, 2014; Volles, 2016 among others).

The broad body of literature that has examined the historical evolution of the European discourse on lifelong learning, will serve as a starting point for following the trace of European policies and the translation into policy statements, programs and projects (Table 2)¹⁰. This report studies only policies issued after 1992. This year was chosen as a starting point because it was only with the Treaty of Maastricht which was signed in 1992 that education became a question of EU competence (Rasmussen, 2014). The period is situated on the second generation of lifelong learning when, among different international organizations. At this time, the concept re-emerged with a conceptualization characterized by a solid base of human capital that differentiated it from the first generation emerged in the 1970s (Schuetze, 2006; Schuetze & Casey, 2006). A considerable literature on EU lifelong learning policies have tended to emphasize the evolution and purposed of policy. Holford and Mleczko (2013, p. 26) summarize this debate in the following way:

Lifelong learning should contribute to economic competitiveness on the one hand, and to social cohesion, inclusion and citizenship on the other.

From a bibliographical review, this section aims at tracing this process in relation to key issues that enable us to understand the approach to vulnerability in lifelong learning policies. For this reason, the section has been organized into four interconnected sub-sections: a) evolution of the lifelong learning concept in the European policies; b) social cohesion, lifelong learning and the fight against vulnerability, poverty and social exclusion; c) social funding schemes and lifelong learning; d) challenges for learners: between responsibility and dependence.

¹⁰ Table 2 presents a summary of the main social, political changes that contextualize the evolution of EU Lifelong learning policies, the four parts of the section will refer to different aspects of it. This table will also serve as a reference in the chapter 2 presenting the analysis of vulnerable groups in the framework of European policies.

1.4.a Evolution of lifelong learning concept in the European policies

Mohorcic Spolar and Holford (2014) identify the “European Year of Lifelong learning” (1996) as a moment of reference for the development of the area of education aimed at achieving a society with equal opportunities. From the beginnings, European lifelong learning policies have included two dimensions, a social dimension related to personal development and the fight against inequality and an economic dimension aimed at improving the EU's competitiveness (Holford & Mleczko, 2013). However, the two dimensions do not appear to have the same intensity. The adaptation of European education systems to economic needs has determined the reform of European education and training systems, as well as the redefinition of education and learning (Rizvi 2007). With different methodologies and from different approaches, it seems that there is a consensus among the consulted authors in the fact that the European policies of lifelong learning have evolved towards a neoliberal model, human capital model, that affects the essence of the concept as it leaves in second place the original objectives related to personal development and the democratic function (Biesta, 2006). In this sense, in an attempt to prepare European society for a global and competitive future to overcome the challenges of international, the influence of neo liberal politics has been noted on the lifelong learning (Borg & Mayo, 2005).

This is not just a European process but a broader movement affecting international and national policies. Regmi (2015) affirms that present discourses on lifelong learning are based on two foundational models: the humanistic model and the human capital model. The former one, the humanistic model, has its origins in the UNESCO relevant initiatives as the well-known report on education, the so-called Faure report “Learning to be: the world of education today and tomorrow” (Faure et al, 1972). The Faure report formulated lifelong learning as a philosophical–political concept based on “a humanistic, democratic and emancipatory system of learning opportunities for everybody, independent of class, race or financial means, and independent of the age of the learner” (Schuetz, 2006; p.290). In the light of this, lifelong learning was view as means to a social justice promoting opportunities for all (Vargas, 2017). From the mid-1970s, in a context of economic crisis, this idea was gradually blurred in political agendas to give way to the discourse of human capital (Dehmel, 2006). All over the world, this trend is often associated with OCDE because it gives priority to the economic dimension and promotes the primacy of adaptation under socioeconomic transformations (Rizvi, 2017). Such a view attempt to regulate education under the interest of the markets (Desjardins, 2009 in Vargas 2017). Consequently, the policy of lifelong learning is considered a central lever in creating a competitive and knowledge-based economy (Boeren et al. 2010).

Regmi (2015) identifies three underlying assumption under both models. The humanistic model is based in citizenship education, building capital social and capability enhancement. The key propose is to strength democracy and social welfare, expanding capabilities. Similarly, the approach of human capital is based on three underpinning premises: competitiveness, recognition of private sector for managing, financing and governing the education system and the emphasis on the responsible citizens (Regmi, 2015). In effect, participation in learning activities is seen as a key factor for economic competitiveness and individual well-being. Through education and training, low-skilled workers could improve their vulnerable position in the labour market (Prince 2008 in Kyndt, Govaerts, Dochy, & Baert, 2011, p. 213). This approach is rooted in a "functionalist" vision of education, since it is mainly seen as a means of updating personal skills and adapting to the needs of the labour market, improving the employability of individuals and the competitiveness of the economic system (Cefalo & Kapezov, 2018).

The *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* (CEC, 2000) is identified as a key document in the transformation of the humanist approach to lifelong learning policing with the consequent shift towards activation and employability (Dehmel, 2006). While recognizing the social dimension of lifelong learning policing and the promotion of active citizenship, the Memorandum placed great emphasis on employment and labour markets (Borg & Mayo, 2005; Jarvis, 2014). In a scenario characterized by the intensification of the globalization process, Borg and Mayo (2005) assert the main aim was to make the EU more competitive and a humanist façade was given to a set of guidelines inspired by neoliberalism. In doing so, the *Memorandum* recaptured the principles of the Lisbon Strategy postulating lifelong learning as an essential element for the transition towards a knowledge-based society and economy, and as a tool to fulfil the objective of the European development strategy for the next decade (Vargas, 2015).

The tension between the two issues, the economic objectives aimed at improving competitiveness and productivity, and the non-economic objectives related to personal development and inclusion has been maintained since the earliest times. More recent documents mention the search for social inclusion (Holford & Mohorcic Spolar, 2012, p. 39). Although the issues related to social inclusion and active citizenship remain generic without further specification of the processes of social inclusion and active citizenship, there is a lack of clarity on the processes of social inclusion and active citizenship (Mikelatou & Arvanitis, 2018). For instance, The New Skills for New Jobs initiative (2010) specifies comprehensive lifelong learning among the elements for improving access to employment through more flexible learning pathways, specific measures for the low-skilled and other vulnerable workers, increasing stakeholder participation and improving incentives and shared costs for lifelong learning (Rasmussen, 2014).

In a contrasting case, Australia does not have a lifelong learning policy, against all international trends. A review of Australian academic literature and policy shows there has been little interest in the concept of lifelong learning - it is under conceptualised, under researched and non-existent in policy discourse, with some decade-old exceptions (Watson 2004, Karmel 2004, Chapman et al. 2005, Cornford 2009). Lifelong learning is often equated with adult community education and seem to take a narrow view. It seems that there are two competing definitions existing in the Australian policy discourse on lifelong learning: one based on classic, humanistic understanding promoted and used by the adult and community education representatives, and another one associated with economic growth, global competition and skill development existing in the discourse of business and policy community (Business Council 2017, CEDA 2005). The reasons for such a different approach lie in the relatively high post-compulsory education participation rates, steady economic growth and low unemployment rates. It is an interesting example of how the vulnerability is managed within a vast, structurally complex and multicultural society

Table 2. Overview of EU Lifelong Learning policy milestones

Source: adapted from Volles, 2006, pp. 357-359

PERIOD	HISTORICAL CONTEXT	EUROPEAN STRATEGIES	SPECIFIC INITIATIVES	LIFELONG LEARNING: KEY DOCUMENTS	LIFELONG LEARNING VISION
Before 1992	Fall of the Berlin Wall (1989)		Erasmus Program (1987)	UNESCO. Faure report 1972 Humanistic (all life/all contexts)	First Generation of lifelong learning (Schuetz, 2006) Humanistic (all life/all contexts) Other concepts: Adult education
	Schengen Agreement signed (1985)		COMETT (1987)		Recurrent education (OECD, 1973) Council of Europe: <i>éducation permanente</i>
BEFORE THE LISBON STRATEGY (BETWEEN 1992 AND 1999)	Foundation of Single European Market (1993)			1993 White Paper on <i>Growth, Competitiveness, Employment: The Challenges and Ways Forward into the 21st Century</i>	Second Generation of lifelong learning: ‘new educational order’ (Schuetz, 2006): knowledge had become a central economic factor and that permanent learning is the hallmark of, and prerequisite for, modern organizations and society as a whole.
	Expansion of the EU to 15-member states (1995)	1992 Treaty of Maastricht	Socrates Programme (1995-1999)	1995 White Paper <i>Teaching and learning: Towards the learning society</i>	lifelong learning: Life wide learning for all, including:
	Economic crisis	1997 Treaty of Amsterdam	Leonardo da Vinci programme	1996 European Year of Lifelong Learning	Idea of “learning society”: key concept on European policy documents (Borg & Mayo, 2005)
	Lack of competitiveness	First European Employment Strategy (1997)		UNESCO: 1996 ‘Learning: The treasure within’ by Delors Commission	Lifelong Learning was seen by the Ministers as the most important vehicle for social mobility, equality of life chances, social cohesion and active citizenship
	Knowledge economy based on information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)			OECD: 1996 ‘Lifelong Learning for all’	

PERIOD	HISTORICAL CONTEXT	EUROPEAN STRATEGIES	SPECIFIC INITIATIVES	LIFELONG LEARNING: KEY DOCUMENTS	LIFELONG LEARNING VISION
AFTER THE LISBON STRATEGY (BETWEEN 2000 TO 2010)	1993 Single European Market completed				
	2004. New member states join the EU (25 countries)		National Actions to implement lifelong learning in Europe (2001)	Memorandum on Lifelong Learning (SEC (2000) 1832) Making a European area of lifelong learning a reality (COM (2001) 678 final)	lifelong learning move towards a holistic lifelong and life wide approach (Brine, 2006; Volles, 2016). lifelong learning strategy for accelerating economic growth (Regmi, 2015)
	2007. EU 27 members		Socrates II Lifelong Learning Program (2007-2013)	Council resolution of 27 June 2002 on lifelong learning (2002/C 163/01) Investing efficiently in education and training: an imperative for Europe (COM (2002) 779 final)	Recognition of social dimension of lifelong learning (Borg & Mayo, 2005; Mohorcic Spolar & Holford, 2014) lifelong learning focus on the LSL (Brine, 2006)
	Knowledge Economy & Knowledge Society	Treaty of Nice (2003)	Youth in Action Program (2007-2013)	Efficiency and equity in European education and training systems (COM (2006) 481 final)	lifelong learning as Methodological principle: <ul style="list-style-type: none">lifelong learning raise to overall qualification and activation to promote a predisposition for tackling new situations (Lodigiani, 2010)
	Treat of a “dual society”	Treaty of Lisbon (2007)	2010 European year for combating poverty and social exclusion	Adult learning is never too late to learn (COM (2006)614 final) An updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (COM (2008) 865)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Individualistic emphasis on “self-directed learning” (Borg & Mayo, 2005)Post compulsory sector with VET and higher education (Brine, 2006)
	Long term structural unemployment: women, older workers.			European Communication Framework for Lifelong learning (2008)	Open Method of Coordination OMC Recognition of transfer of knowledge
	Aging population				
	Intensification of globalization				
	2008. Global financial crisis				

PERIOD	HISTORICAL CONTEXT	EUROPEAN STRATEGIES	SPECIFIC INITIATIVES	LIFELONG LEARNING: KEY DOCUMENTS	LIFELONG LEARNING VISION
AFTER THE EUROPE 2020 STRATEGY (2010 TO 2018)	Impact of the global financial crisis 2008	Europe 2020 strategy	Erasmus+ (2014)	New Skills for New Jobs: Anticipating and matching labour market and skills needs (COM(2008) 868/3) A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. (COM (2010) 2020).	Focus on benchmarks and indicators (Rasmussen, 2014; *Holford, 2008 en Tett EU's education become more utilitarian (Volles, 2016)
	Debt Crisis of Ireland, Greece, Portugal and Spain		European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion.	An Agenda for new skills and jobs: A European contribution towards full employment (COM (2010) 682 final) A renewed European agenda for adult learning (2011/C 372/01)	lifelong learning as a tool for the development of the workforce's skills with the aim of increasing labour participation and better matching labour supply and demand.
	Unsatisfactory progress in implementation of education strategy		Youth on the Move (2010-2014)	"Youth on the move" — promoting the learning mobility of young people (2011/C 199/01)	Main priorities: combating stagnation and recession, stimulating growth and increasing productivity. Employability and adaptability dominate lifelong learning policy (Mikelatou & Arvanitis, 2018)
	High youth unemployment rates		Youth Guarantee (YG)	Validation of non-formal training and informal learning (2012)	Learning outcomes (Volles, 2016)
	The challenge of Ageing population		Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)	A new skills agenda for Europe: Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness (COM (2016) 381 final)	A tendency toward more neoliberal discourse, the nature of lifelong learning policy becomes strongly vocational. lifelong learning is the mechanism for establishing a flexible and adaptive workforce through constant training in order to meet business and labour market requirements. It is co-opted from a right into a commodity and its effectiveness is measured by economic criteria (Mikelatou & Arvanitis, 2018)
	Globalization 4.0		Upskilling Pathways	Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults (2016/C 484/01)	
	Refugee crisis		European Pillar of Social Rights	Key competences for lifelong learning (2018/C 189/01)	
	2013. New member state join the EU (28 countries)				

1.4.b *lifelong learning as key element against poverty and social exclusion*

As referred to in the preceding paragraphs, from the end of the 1990s onwards, lifelong learning became an essential component of the EU agenda, leading to numerous policy changes aimed at tackling a wide range of problems, unemployment, knowledge society, etc. In this way, over the past three decades, social inclusion/exclusion became an important topic of the European lifelong learning agenda¹¹. In this sense it can be recalled that 2010 was designated as the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion by the European Commission. This event noted the serious hardships that some social groups in European countries experienced. This section presents an analysis of lifelong learning as a resource to combat poverty and social exclusion.

From the publication of the first European documents, the concern for social inclusion has been evident. Brine (2006) draws attention to the fact that the *White Paper on Teaching and Learning* (1995) had two main concerns: the competitiveness of the EU in a global market and the inherent risk of unemployment for stability and social cohesion. Since then, several documents have been published which relate to social inclusion. These include the 2001 Communication from the Commission: *Making an European area of lifelong learning a reality* (COM (2001) which extended the objectives set out in the Memorandum to include personal development, the fight against inequality and social inclusion (Jarvis, 2014). However, some authors consider that it rather had a rhetorical function (Dehmel, 2006).

At least two strategies have been employed to fight against poverty and social exclusion: employment and empowerment for participation. First, the benefit of learning in terms of employment possibilities is considered a key area for poverty reduction (Sabates, 2008). Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that through the twenty-century employment has been seen as the main component of the transition from social assistance to work. In other words, "the best way to achieve social inclusion is through employment" (Vandekinderen, Roets, Van Keer, & Roose, 2018, p.2). An example is the *Communication of the Commission of the European Communities* (2000) which states that employment is the cornerstone of an inclusive Europe (Levitas, 2006). However, Levitas (2006) points out that social exclusion "goes beyond the unemployment issues and access to the labour market. It manifests itself through deprivations and obstacles of various kinds which, alone or in combination, prevent full participation in areas such as education, health, the environment, housing, culture, the exercise of rights or access to family benefits, as well as to training and employment opportunities. Social exclusion (...) requires attention to education and training policies, especially as lifelong learning is vital if we are to empower young people to develop their skills and abilities as individuals so that they can participate fully in the knowledge society, and information" (p.125.)

The global economy has increased interest in the relationship between lifelong learning strategies and social investment perspectives. Despite the differences between the two approaches, they share some characteristics, such as underlining the central role of lifelong education. Moreover, both are seen as resources that governments use to drive economic growth and, at the same time, ensure social cohesion (Cefalo & Kapezov, 2018). The logic of the social investment is present in the Lisbon Strategy and in the "open methods of social coordination" (Ferrera 2016 in Cefalo & Kapezov, 2018). Further on, in 2013 the

¹¹ See ENLIVEN Deliverable 2.1. *Provision of seven types of education for (disadvantaged) adults in ten countries: overview and cross-country comparison*. By Boeren, Whittaker and Riddell (2017).

EU formally adopted the term "social investment" with the "Social Investment Package" (European Commission 2013).

The Lisbon strategy (2006) gave to the concept of lifelong learning a key role in EU education and training policy. It introduced benchmarks and indicators as part of a governing by numbers' regime (Rasmussen, 2014). Early school years and participation in tertiary education were two of the areas identified. At the same time, according to Brine (2006), the Lisbon strategy consolidated previous discourses on lifelong learning in the framework of the knowledge economy and the employment strategy. In addition, it introduces the concept of the "knowledge society" by differentiating two lines of argument. The first is to use the "learning economy" for students with high levels of knowledge (HLS). The EU needs these citizens to compete in the global marketplace. The second, the "knowledge society", which refers to low-skilled citizens (LKL), reflects the fear of a "dual society" dealing with social and political stability. The distinction involves two concepts of lifelong learning, the first of which is achieved through undergraduate and postgraduate studies within higher education. The latter, based on the fear of a dual society, leads to cyclical focus on vocational training, "in the knowledge society there is no reference whatsoever to higher education" (Brine, 2006, p. 654).

It is also relevant to note that the Lisbon Summit introduced the generic label of the Open Method¹² MC, extending its application to issues related to "social protection" and "social inclusion, in addition to education, training, R&D and enterprise policy" (Scharpf, 2002). That means that in the year 2000, a new stage began towards the convergence of national education systems through the definition and development and the implementation of structures, mechanisms that would allow similar achievements to be achieved in different countries: the so-called "open method of coordination" that has been so important in European convergence policies. The open methods established a series of standards and benchmarks. These principles of cooperation represent a step forward in the development of benchmarks and standard among educational policies (Dehmel, 2006). Although with differences between the above-mentioned areas, Scharpf (2002) considers that they share the following characteristics

- Policy choices remain at the national level and European legislation is explicitly excluded.
- At the same time, however, national policy choices are defined as matters of common concern, and efforts concentrate on reaching agreement on common objectives and common indicators of achievement.
- Moreover, governments are willing to present their own plans for comparative discussion and to expose their performance to peer review.
- Nevertheless, coordination depends on voluntary cooperation, and there are no formal sanctions against member states whose performance does not match agreed-upon standards.

Economic participation is put forward as the key marker to recognize people as responsible adult citizens (Cox, 1998). There is a wide variety of strategies to tackle social exclusion in education. Rather than a lack of knowledge, it is disagreement on the definition of equality objectives that prevents societies from

¹² The online Glossary of Euro-Lex describes the Open Methods of coordination as "as a form of 'soft' law. It is a form of intergovernmental policy-making that does not result in binding EU legislative measures and it does not require EU countries to introduce or amend their laws" (for further information: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/summary/glossary/open_method_coordination.html)

achieving truly inclusive education systems. In this sense, in this section we should point out the Europe 2020 Strategy. As the European Union highlights: “It emphasizes smart, sustainable and inclusive growth as a way to overcome the structural weaknesses in Europe's economy, improve its competitiveness and productivity and underpin a sustainable social market economy”¹³. The strategy identifies five ambitious targets in the areas of employment, innovation, education, poverty reduction and climate and energy to be achieved by 2020. Each Member State has adopted its own national targets in each of these areas.

The Europe 2020 Strategy justifies the fight against poverty and social exclusion by the damage they do to individual life, not only in economic terms, but also in terms of health and well-being, as they limit people's opportunities to reach their full potential and overcome their educational level. The proposal is a joint action of different systems affecting the conditions of poverty and exclusion, whether educational, social and employment. Through more effective investments in education, research and innovation, the Europe 2020 Strategy aims to achieve not only economic growth, but also an inclusive European society and therefore places great emphasis on poverty reduction (Abrisqueta, et al. 2015). In addition, the strategy relies on concrete actions at EU and national level. Appreciating that measures to combat poverty are treated in a similar way to the other elements of Europe 2020, Daly (2012) points out that the concept of ‘inclusive growth’¹⁴ can remain in aspirational terms if measures are not included that clearly explain how there is a shift between growth and poverty reduction.

The European 2020 strategy identifies a commitment to universal education may help in two or all three areas by enhancing individual capabilities, contributing to social cohesion and reducing deprivations. In turn, expanding the space for diverse voices to be heard—and reflected in policies—enables individuals and societies to address their particular concern and promote equal life chances, laying the base for secure and sustained development. (p.25). A major part of EU funding is dedicated to fulfilling the “Europe 2020” strategy, programming and activities must correspond to the aims.

In lifelong learning policies learning is seen as a necessary premise for the achievement of social inclusion and the promotion of an inclusive society (Edwards, Armstrong, & Miller, 2001). In effect, some authors argue that lifelong learning seems to be a “modern panacea” with multifarious potential benefits in economic, social, political spheres (Panitsides & Anastasiadou, 2015). People engaged in adult education are generally optimistic about the benefits of lifelong learning despite the scarce longitudinal research evidence (Edwards, Armstrong, & Miller, 2001). However, the impact of lifelong learning policies on labour market integration is rarely evaluated and depends on the regional labour market situation (Youngadullit, 2017). The provision of educational opportunities is highly diversified. Sabates (2008) highlights three roles of adult learning: (i) maintaining the skills of the current work force; (ii) Upgrading the skills of those with the greatest needs to increase the employability; and (iii) allowing adults to re-skill to find employment in

¹³ See the web site: https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-economic-governance-monitoring-prevention-correction/european-semester/framework/europe-2020-strategy_en

¹⁴ “Inclusive growth” is envisaged as growth that raises Europe’s employment rate, helps people of all ages anticipate and manage change through investment in skills and training, modernizes labour markets and welfare systems and ensures that the benefits of growth reach all parts of the EU. Skills and employment are strongly emphasized throughout “(Daly, 2012, p. 274).

other areas. The benefits of learning in terms of employment have been demonstrated, both for attainment of qualifications as well as for improvements in basic skills” (p. 21)

The EU-funded SI-DRIVE project¹⁵ aimed to “determine the nature, characteristics and impacts of social innovation as key elements of a new paradigm of innovation”. To this end, one of its tasks was to determine the factors driving change as well as the obstacles in seven areas, one of which is lifelong learning. Based on the main finding from the field work, this project identifies a set of different specific social needs linked to societal challenges. Among them, six points are related to development of equal opportunities and the inclusion of vulnerable groups (Table 3). One of the challenges refers to the final goals of education (reduction of educational disadvantages); one refers to competencies and skills to be developed (digital inclusion); two of them relate to the strategies more flexible, tailored and learner-centred education that the implementation of lifelong learning has to have to achieve social inclusion processes: specific learning agreement and networking for specific groups, prevention of school violence, basic education and training guidance. The latter can be understood both as a resource of the teaching process and as a purpose of the same (Diversity-competence in schools (SI_DRIVE, 2017).

Table 3. Societal-challenges and social needs and in Education and Lifelong Learning Source

Societal Inclusion of vulnerable groups & equal opportunities	Reduction of educational disadvantages Digital inclusion Specific learning arrangement and networking for education of vulnerable groups (migrants, handicapped and disadvantaged people.) Prevention of school violence Basic education and second chance education, training guidance (qualification, apprenticeship, language courses) Diversity-competence in schools
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Source: SI_DRIVE, 2017, p. 13

The improvement of capacities in different fields such as education, health and control of resources through a process of empowerment so that people overcome the risks they face throughout the life cycle. UNDP (2014) recalls that a higher level of capacity alone may not be enough, as a lack of social cohesion limits collective action and hence personal actions.

It is important to note, that after the crisis of 2008 the high levels of poverty and the differences between the member countries of the EU has increased. The picture for the years 2005-2006 shows stagnation or very small improvements in many of the indicators used to measure progress under the Europe 2020 Strategy, while some continue to worsen. To tackle poverty and unemployment, the EU and other international institutions are mainly focus on Youth Unemployment policies (Healy, 2017). However, empower-oriented approaches run the risk of increasing the vulnerability of young people when they mask

¹⁵ For further information, please see the web site: www.si-drive.eu.

the effect of social inequality and highlight the ideology of opportunity (Vandekinderen, Roets, Van Keer, & Roose, 2018).

1.4.c Target groups between responsibility and dependence

The analysis of the evolution of lifelong learning shows a change in the conceptualization over the past 50 years. At the beginning of 1990s, as a consequence of an increasingly neoliberal discourse, there was a change in the relationship between civil society and the state, giving more responsibility to individuals in their educational process (Volles, 2016). This subsection highlights the rhetoric about the target groups of lifelong learning policies.

Schneider & Ingram (1993) emphasise that the social construction of the groups is created by different stakeholders, among them policy-makers, through policy documents. It is important to note that all construction of an image is political since they are related to public discourse. Several crucial factors include the recognition and attribution of certain characteristics, values, or images to build the public image for these populations.

Inspired by the logic of the knowledge economy, one of the characteristics of the dominant discourse of lifelong learning is the shift from education to learning (Biesta, 2006; Brine, 2006; Jarvis, 2014; Vargas, 2017). This change has a great influence on the reform not only of European education systems but also of welfare systems. *The Memorandum* identifies lifelong learning as one of the pillars in the reform of European welfare systems. This modification aims to achieve a state that invests in its citizens, first and foremost in the development of its human capital. The main aim was to activate the capacity for choice, for responsible action and for coping with situations of need or risk (Lodigiani, 2010). The purpose of this change combines objectives of economic efficiency with others of social justice and equity. Specifically, Lodigiani (2010) affirms that the main concern was to develop what is defined as “activation” which is considered a “Copernican revolution of the Welfare State” as it “stops providing assistance and insurance to make individuals aware of their responsibilities for their own welfare and well-being and for the community” (p. 61). Literature on activation highlights the narrow scope of the activation approach. The normative notion presented in the international political discourse focus on activation and cost-containment could potentially ignore today’s poor, contributing to increasing poverty, thus leading to a “functionalist” view of education governed by market-driven logic and economisation (Cefalo & Kapezov, 2018, p.4).

From this evolution in lifelong learning and welfare policies follows a further fundamental assertion: the relationship among human capital and social and political participation. In this framework, the human capital model promotes employability as a “way the individual can contribute to society, thus becoming an active citizen” (Mikelatou & Arvanitis, 2018, p. 501). As Lodigiani argues:

investing in human capital (increasing the personal pool of knowledge and skills) not only leads to higher labour productivity and thus higher economic returns (as confirmed by the classical theory of human capital), but also increases the likelihood that individuals will understand the reality around them, develop a critical way of thinking, face risks and needs, and take responsibility for playing an active role in the pursuit of personal and collective well-being (Lodigiani, 2006, p.62).

This model has been criticized because it conveys a message of work as a moral and civic duty. Through analysis of the rhetoric of social exclusion and inclusion by New Labour in UK, with some references to the EU, Levitas (2006) notes that the dominant explanation of social exclusion was a distributive one, based on overcoming poverty and access to resources. During the nineties, in a context of crisis and unemployment, European policies evolved towards a model concerned with social integration. In this case, lack of employment was considered to be the main reason for exclusion, so measures were aimed at stimulating people to take responsibility for training and finding work. Recently, Vandekinderen and Roose (2014) illustrated that social vulnerability mainly refers to supporting people to find connections with societal expectations. In this respect, they stress the increasing emphasis on employment and education policies.

However, the identification of different target groups with different objectives according to their own capacities was not entirely new, being present in numerous previous policies.. In the White paper on lifelong learning (1995) Brine (2006) identifies three types of learners:

first, those with high knowledge-skills for higher education and the 'information society, second, the unemployed, low knowledge-skilled, 'disadvantaged person 'in need of training', and third, the young employed persons, who (...) was located almost exclusively within the low knowledge skilled category (p. 651).

Levitas (2004) identifies a third model which essentially links the situation of exclusion to the behavioural or moral deficiencies of certain groups (Levitas, 2004; 20016). This model is reminiscent of one of the types of target population created by Schneider and Ingram (1993) to analyse the convergence between power and social construction. In particular, the type known as "dependent", which Schneider and Ingram (1993) consider to be presented in policies as needy, impotent and weak but positive. This group is not seen as dangerous but as one in need of help. The rationale behind this requires group members "to admit their dependency status" which could create a stigma of passivity and indifference (Schneider & Ingram, 1993, p. 342). The other three target groups are advantaged, perceived as powerful and positively constructed; contenders, powerful but negatively constructed and deviants considered to be weak and with a negative image.

In light of the Levitas surveys, Williams (2008; 2011) conducts a critical analysis of lifelong learning's policy discourse in the United Kingdom. She focuses upon documents produced by government ministries. The analysis reveals that New Labour had constructed an image of a psychologically disadvantaged population among the groups defined as socially excluded. The risk of this approach is to infantilize adult education students by contending that they have neither aspiration nor resilience, and are at a risk of becoming dependent as a result of supportive measures and tutoring.

Behind the complexity and ambivalence of lifelong learning policies, there is a view of social order that could deny difference (Edwards, Armstrong, & Miller, 2001). Scholars in the field of education (Brunila et al, 2016; Brunila & Rossi, 2018; Ecclestone, 2017; Ecclestone & Brunila, 2015; Edwards, Armstrong, & Miller, 2001) demand a response to the discourse of vulnerability when it ignores questions of diversity, hierarchies and ethos. Based on Davies' (2005) arguments on the consequences of responsibility moving

from society to individuals rather than structural factors, Ecclestone, Brunila and their colleagues are especially concerned with the “ethos of vulnerability” on educational policies which translates this assertion into educational practices. The ethos of vulnerability is associated with bureaucratic condescension, paternalism and social control. In the research project Youth on the Move, revisiting the ethos of vulnerability in the era of market-oriented education, focusing on youth EU program documents, the authors asserts that unemployment is constructed as an individual problem against which one has to fight with specific skills that underpin a certain view. In the documents analysed, young people are labelled with different kinds of emotional problems or a lack of appropriate attitudes (Brunila, et al, 2016). Consequently, educational interventions that have proliferated have responded to this negative image through overprotection.

In summary, this situation presents a new dilemma in the way particular groups are represented in education policies. On the one hand, there is a transfer of responsibility to individuals, who have to deal with the illusion of individual autonomy in order to achieve inclusion, especially through employment. On the other, it offers a vision of weakness, an ethos of vulnerability, with the risk of stigmatizing groups of people that are considered to be capable of developing the necessary skills to achieve autonomy and therefore inclusion.

Levitas (2004) reaches the conclusion that education and social capital becomes individualized and the responsibility focuses on the individual, forgetting other social factors:

There has been a slippage towards treating formal, accredited knowledge as educational or cultural capital, and to treating cultural capital as something that intrinsically resides in individuals rather than in groups and can be acquired by them through participation in or consumption of the cultural and heritage industries. Cultural capital, then, becomes something that is individualized, commodified, and used as a resource in a competitive system (Levitas, 2004 p.53)

In summary, the review of literature about target groups allows us to appreciate a variety of ways of representing these groups that are located between two perspectives, one based on personal responsibility and activation, focused mainly on the labour market and the other characterized by the dependence and care of vulnerable groups.

2 THE CONSTRUCTION OF VULNERABILITY IN EUROPEAN LIFELONG LEARNING POLICIES

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the discursive construction of vulnerable groups in European lifelong learning policies and funding schemes. It analyses the main ways in which vulnerable groups, and youth populations, are represented as target groups of European policies in the period 1992-2018. In the following sections, we present material, findings and assumptions which derive from different sources and various lines of inquiry (corpus based critical discourses analysis of European lifelong learning documents, interviews with experts and analysis of the content analysis of the funding schemes). They were selected in accordance with the WP1 aims, in particular with the Task 1.1 “Analysis of European policies and funding schemes to promote the social and economic inclusion of vulnerable groups”. The Annex 1.1 Methodological deliverable 1.1. offers a description of the procedure followed in this work package to answer the research questions derived from tasks 1.1. and 1.2.¹⁶

The research questions to be answered in this chapter are as follows:

- What are the frequent topics of, or issues discussed in, policy documents relating to vulnerable groups and other related key words (marginalized, low skilled, etc)?
- In what ways are vulnerable groups are defined and constructed?
- Which specific groups are considered vulnerable within the specific socio-political context?
- Which vulnerable groups are reflected in the allocation of European Fundings?

In pursuit of this task and to answer the research questions, this chapter is firstly orientated methodologically on corpus based critical discourse analysis. A substantial part of the analysis is based a corpus of 68 publications of EU institutions and information provided by other actors and stakeholders working in the field of lifelong learning in relation with the European Union. We treated these documents as “social facts” (Bowen, 2009, p. 75) that provide information on how the EU’s discourse is produced and how funding schemes have been analysed.

Combining critical discourse analysis with the corpus-based tools, we examined a corpus of 68 documents published by EU during the period 1992-2018, amounting to more than a million words, which required the use of a software (Atlas-ti). The aim of this chapter is to identify the discourses towards vulnerable groups that emerge from the body of European policies related to lifelong learning. For this report we have chosen the 68 documents through online interface with the European database of official documents of the Commission, the Council and the European Parliament.¹⁷ The corpus has been divided into three historical periods. The year 1992 was chosen as a starting point because it was only with the Treaty of Maastricht which was signed in 1992 that education became a question of EU competence (Rasmussen,

¹⁶ Chapter 4 addresses the second task of WP1.

¹⁷ https://europa.eu/european-union/documents-publications/official-documents_en.

2014). Before the 1990s education was not an important question within the EU agenda and it also seems to have been a taboo question in European debates until the 1970s (lifelong learning2010, 2007).

Taking a corpus-based approach, the data has been analysed not only as whole but also with regard to a synchronic variation, by carrying out concordance analysis of key words related to vulnerability, by investigating consistent collocates and frequencies of specific terms over time. Inspired by previous studies that have applied Corpus based CDA to analyse the construction of different social groups (eg. Ethnic minorities, Albakry & Williams, 2016; Refugees and migrants, Baker et al, 2008, Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008; Khosravinik, 2009; women, Martínez Lirola, 2014), Report 1.1. consisted of two separate methodological strands. The first strand used computer software (Atlas-ti), to investigate trends in the data. The second follows the more traditional trend of critical discourse (CDA) through which small samples of text were made in the corpus, which allowed for a more in-depth analysis of the discourses on the different groups considered vulnerable in European politics. The theoretical framework of the CDA is the ENLIVEN and WP1 approach to vulnerability and lifelong learning, in particular previous approach, wchi payd attention to the construction of target groups by lifelong learning policies (Brunila & Rossi, 2018; Brunila, et al. 2016; Levitas, 2004; and Williams, 2008, 2011). Using CDA implies understanding the documents as social practices, we undestand that there is relationship between how vulnerables groups are constructed and the social reality that frames them. And there is a social purpose in the whole process (Faircoulgh, 1989).

Furthermore, we conducted 6 semi-structured expert interviews with policy experts in the field of EU and European organizations involved in the development of lifelong learning policies. The research questions related to these interviews are the following:

- What is the role of vulnerable groups during the process of policy drafting in lifelong learning policies, according to the stakeholders involved in the design and development of European lifelong learning policies? How do they perceive the issue of being involved in these processes? How are their interests and needs being reflected?
- What do they think about the role of lifelong learning and the proposed measures for addressing social exclusion?

The chapter includes the analysis of key funding schemes, in particular the European Social Fund, through the content analysis of the available evaluation of the two periods (2007-13 and 2014-20). In this case, a thematic analysis has been done in order to recognize the groups identified as vulnerable.

2.2 Historical context: three periods of lifelong learning policies

The account of the political and economic context of a case study is "in itself a theoretically informed interpretation of the social practices (of educational governance) under investigation" (Mulderrig, 2014 p. 442). An initial starting point of the project was to investigate a broader context framing the evolution of lifelong learning in European policies. This chapter begins with an interpretation by commenting on some of the milestones in lifelong learning policies that have taken place in the three periods in which the corpus has been divided.

As previously explained in section 1.3 of this report, analysis of the bibliographical review on the evolution of the concept of life long learning will allow us to contextualize the evolution of the concept of

vulnerability within the framework of European policies. Table 2 presents a summary of the certain characteristics that enable to understand the evolution of lifelong learning and the vulnerable groups.

The corpus has been divided into three historical periods. The first period is the period before the Lisbon strategy (between 1992 and 2000). Although schooling and not lifelong learning or higher education was the focus of the Treaty, it gave legal force to the Commission to adopt recommendations to the Council and measures to implement similar practices in different states (Holford & Mleczo, 2013). The second period is the period after the Lisbon strategy (2000 to 2010), and the third period is the period after Europe 2020. As the Lisbon strategy and Europe 2020 are two key policy documents, the selection of the periods was organized in reference to these documents. Only a few documents pertain to the first period; the majority come from the second and third period.

2.2.a First period (1992-1999): the origins

In the 1990's, the confluence of a set of social factors and technologies broke with force, turning the term lifelong learning into a generic term that sought to respond to the situation (Schuetze, 2006). Schuetze lists the following as contributing factors:

The widespread dissemination and use of new Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), and in particular the Internet, the liberation of trade in goods, services and capital from national boundaries and control, the recognition that knowledge had become a central economic factor and that permanent learning is the hallmark of, and prerequisite for, modern organisations and society as a whole, all these factors created a new context for a fundamental debate on knowledge and skills and the way they were imparted and learned (Schuetze, 2006, p. 292)

Education does not initially form an element of the contents of the process of economic integration, but this absence is progressively addressed by some normative initiatives such as mobility programmes. European action in education and training is determined by two main parameters: it is an activity linked to the achievement of the economic objectives of the Treaty and to the need to supplement them with social measures; and it is a complementary competence since the Member States retain their main responsibility in these areas while the EC plays an essentially complementary role.

As president of the European Commission, Delors (1985/1994) championed lifelong learning as the catalyst for a changing society and proposed to include lifelong learning on national agendas through the European Year of Education (Volles, 2016). From the first documents, such as the White Paper on Growth, Competitiveness: the Challenges and ways forward into the 21st century (1993), the EU has considered lifelong learning as a central element to achieve the economic success of the European project. The white paper's main concern was tackling the challenges brought about by globalization, information and communication technology, and foreign economic competition, with unemployment as the overarching theme, and lifelong learning and continuing training as key to accomplishing the paper's objectives.

Holford & Mleczo (2013) identified three characteristics of this initial period that point to what became the consolidated policies in the following years. Firstly, lifelong is a distinctive feature of European education policies. In fact, the EU has become one of the key institutions in this field. Secondly, the European lifelong learning framework has given great importance to the development of skills related to technological advances and other skills for workers in light of the global economy (technological skills, foreign languages, etc). To achieve this, it has set up programmes to promote mobility and the

recognition of skills. In this initial stage, the first Leonardo and Erasmus programmes were launched. Thirdly, they point out that the two major themes of social inclusion and improving competitiveness have been present since the first documents dealing with lifelong learning. Brine (2006) highlights that from the outset the risk inherent in becoming a dual society (because of differences between countries and groups) has been one of the preoccupations present in the European policies.

2.2.b Second period (2000-2009)

The Treaty of Lisbon is the key reference for this period. This treaty began in 2002 and 2003 within the framework of the European Convention and was signed on 13 December 2007 at the Lisbon European Council. It was subsequently ratified by all Member States. Article 165.2 identifies several areas of EU educational activity, such as the exchange of students, teachers, the participation of young people in public life or the development of distance education.

Presented in October 2000, the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning recaptures the principles of the Lisbon Strategy postulating lifelong learning as an essential element for the transition towards a knowledge-based society and economy, and as a tool to fulfil the objective of the European development strategy for the next decade (Vargas, 2015). According to Brine (2006) the Lisbon strategy consolidated the previous discourses on lifelong learning in the framework of the knowledge economy and employment strategy. Moreover, it introduces the concept of “knowledge society”.

During this period the EU introduced a new method of governance called Open Method of Coordination (OMC) based on the identification and dissemination of good practice, to enable Member States to actively engage in “collective action to foster compatibility, consistency or convergence between member states’ public policies” (Gornitzka, 2005, p. 4). As part of the OMC the EU implemented a set of measures of competences and outcomes to contribute to a successful life in the knowledge society. This is now referred to as Article 165(1) in the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU), in which it states that:

The Union shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member States for the content of teaching and the organization of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity (European Union, 2010, pp.87).

This aforementioned article strengthens the power of EU institutions in the field of educational policy-making but makes it clear that this capacity remains limited. In 2010 states were asked to collect data emphasising participation in formal learning of the strategic objectives for the decade, the OMC as a key instrument for their achievement. “OMC development proceeds from common objectives establishing a field of common concern. Progress towards objectives can be measured once common indicators are established. Indicators allow comparison of performance of member states that is, in turn, used to set targets. Once targets are set member states or the EU draw up action plans to meet the objectives peer reviewing allows badly performing member states to draw lessons from best practice” (Robles Carrillo, 2011). Since then, three priorities have been maintained: a) concentrating reforms and investments in strategic areas; b) making lifelong learning a concrete reality and c) creating a European area of education and training (Robles Carrillo, 2011).

Two critical elements of the OMC for lifelong learning have been highlighted by Holford & Mleczo (2013, p.33). The Lisbon Strategy includes indicators and benchmarks that have acted as crucial elements in the formulation of European policies and has involved greater intervention of the member states on the formulation of lifelong learning policies. In addition, they point out the role of:

lifelong learning strategies as a mechanism by which European objectives would be translated in a democratic and inclusive way, into the policies and the practices not only of member states, but also of public and private sector agencies and social partners (p. 34)

Adopted in 2008, the European Qualification Framework (EQF) is another common European reference framework whose purpose is to make qualifications more readable and understandable across different countries and systems. Covering qualifications at all levels and in all sub-systems of education and training, the EQF provides a comprehensive overview over qualifications in the 39 European countries currently involved in its implementation¹⁸

2.2.c Third period (2010-2018)

In the context of the economic and financial crisis, lifelong learning is considered as a tool for the development of the workforce's skills with the aim of increasing labour participation and better matching labour supply and demand. In other words, lifelong learning is perceived as a tool to modernise the national education and training systems, at the same time is considered as a vehicle for the remaking of Europe (Volles, 2016, p. 360).

The effects of the global financial crisis (2008), that had began in the previous period, are noticeable in the following years and had a severe impact on European economies. Several countries (Greece, Portugal, Spain and Ireland) suffered a debt crisis. Austerity measures led to drastic cut to education budgets, while unemployment rates hit a historic high and the indicators of the European and Training Monitors revealed that EU countries had not met the educational objectives, particularly in the areas of basic skills, early schools leavers and adult education (Volles, 2016, p. 355). Another characteristics of this period is the implementation of the Open Method of Coordination (Borg and Mayo, 2013).

The themes that emerge from the strategy for Europe 2020 are similar to the previous Lisbon Strategy (Holford & Mleczo, 2013). Lifelong learning principles have been narrowed, in this period some key documents aimed at improving the skills of citizens are approved. In June 2016, the European Commission published the New Skills Agenda for Europe which is a package of measures to respond to concrete skills problems identified in Europe and to revise a number of existing European tools (e.g. Europass, European Qualifications Framework). This updates and complements the previous one: An Agenda for new skills and jobs (COM2010).

The Commission reviewed the key competences for lifelong learning. In the e Upskilling Pathways document eight key competences¹⁹ were proposed which should be promoted as part of national strategies for lifelong learning.

¹⁸ <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/es/events-and-projects/projects/european-qualifications-framework-efq>

¹⁹ The key competences are the following ones: "1. proficiency in a mother tongue, 2. proficiency in a foreign language, 3. mathematical, scientific and technological competence, 4. digital competence, 5. learning to learn, 6. social and civic competences, 7. sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, 8. cultural awareness and expression" More information on this subject is available on the EU web site: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223>

2.3 ENLIVEN keywords on the European policy documents

The purpose of the analysis is to show policy constructions of different groups in the document under analysis. The corpus-based analysis involves several stages. Before presenting insights of the global discourse on these groups, the documents were analysed in a preliminary step involving the selection of several key words. ENLIVEN key words were derived in three ways: firstly terms used in a similar way to “vulnerable” were identified according to the literature consulted, second, during the interviews with stakeholders involved in the lifelong learning policies this topic was queried, and thirdly, the words identified in ENLIVEN 2.2. report “Barriers and enable to participation in different types of provisions by young low qualified adults” were included as keywords were contrasted and included if not previously recorded.

Firstly, this topic was one of those discussed in the preliminary interviews. What emerged in all of the interviews is that there is no clear definition of vulnerability. Interviewees commented on the usual use of the term in the context of lifelong learning policy making, while pointing to the variety of related terms used with similar meanings which do not offer a clear identification of vulnerable groups:

...I am not sure there is a definition of vulnerable groups and it really depends on how you work with it and so no. And in a way we have had some discussions when we started out the OED project ourselves: are we talking about disadvantaged groups, are we talking about vulnerable groups, are we talking about low qualified adults... But I am not sure whether I could give you more of an insight of how we understand vulnerable groups. (Maria)

The concepts also seem to be very recent and not particularly well known as one of the participants stated that she does not work with these terms:

Some groups that were specifically mentioned include the low-skilled, minorities, cultural minorities, Roma, the unemployed, people with learning difficulties, prisoners, people coming from socioeconomic deprived backgrounds, people living in deprived areas or rural areas, people with physical and mental disabilities, women, children, and the elderly (Nina).

As can be seen, these answers correspond to a list of groups identified as vulnerable. The interviewees pointed out two key difficulties in identifying these groups, because they depend on the policies of each country and because they vary according to the objectives of the different programs. Migrants and refugees are two groups that were emphasized in several of the interviews:

the question of refugees and immigrants which is not the same thing but that has to be treated in an almost equal way because there are the problems of social inclusion that arise with this immigration, with these refugees, and also the training problems. We enter in fact into the reality of the need for training, linguistic training, training to the realities of the countries, training to the cultural reality of the countries. We have received our first Syrian refugees three years ago, now two or three years ago here in France and I am in contact with some of them, and for example we have some linguistic problems. (Eric, authors' translation)

In summary, in ENLIVEN we opted to begin the analysis of the documents from the selection of those terms that we had detected in the interviews as well as in the bibliographic review that were used in a similar or even equivalent way. We began with a selection of five terms to which we added four others that had appeared during the analysis of the case interviews in the policy Trail (see ENLIVEN report 2.2). This entails a total of 9 terms that directly reference the state of vulnerability: disadvantaged, excluded, at risk, unemployed, low skilled, low qualified, excluded, vulnerable and marginalized. The following list of words were used in order to carry out the concordance cluster analysis.

Table 4 ENLIVEN Keyword search

Disadvantaged
Excluded
At risk
Unemployed
Low skilled
Low qualified
Vulnerable
Marginalized

Table 4 gives an insight into the eight key words identified allowed us to start the search in the selected corpus. They appear in the lifelong learning corpus thus: disadvantages (274), excluded (36), at risk (273), unemployed (210); low skilled (130), low qualified (67), excluded (53), vulnerable (52) and marginalized (20).

A frequency count of the key words in relation to the three periods in the corpus (Table 4) reveals key trends. These categories do not emerge in the abstract as if they had their own independent existence; on the contrary, they are situated in a concrete socio-historical context and are intimately linked to the political models applied in different eras. Table 5 shows that several terms introduced under the first period almost disappear from the discourse during the following periods, terms such as excluded or marginalised. The term 'marginal' never seems to have been used much and its use is reduced until it appears as less than 1% of the key words in the third stage. In the first stage 'marginalised' represented less than 5% and in the second stage it drops to 0,80%. A similar process is followed by the term 'excluded' with an evolution from 14.7% to 0.71%. That is to say it seems that they are outside the actual discourse in lifelong learning policies. Enriquez (2007) explains how marginality is a concept that is rooted in the regime of the Welfare State. "Marginalization" was considered a transitory phenomenon that could be resolved in a matter of time, since it was only necessary to integrate marginal sectors into society.

In the same way "exclusion" reflects a certain dual image of society, in which there is an integrated sector and an excluded one (Jimenez Ramírez, 2008). Exclusion and inclusion are strongly embedded in European government policies because, since the Lisbon Summit in 2000, the promotion of social inclusion and social cohesion have been core strategic aims of the EU. (Levitas, 2006). Our analysis seems to suggest that the pursuit of this objective is done withoutreferencing "excluded people", those for whom the policies are intended.

On the contrary, it is other adjectives that have been detected in the three periods to identify these groups. This is a characteristic related to their relationship with the world of work, due to their exclusion from it (unemployed) or because of the fragile conditions derived from their educational level (low skilled, low qualified). There are terms that appear in the three periods with similar intensity (unemployed) as target groups of the policies throughout the period analysed. This suggests a “permanent interest” in certain educational themes, some of which are commensurate with an economic view of lifelong learning. The occurrence, more prominently, in the third period, of the terms low qualified and low skilled, coincides with the approval of the *New Skills Agenda* (2016).

‘Risk’ and ‘vulnerability’ are closely linked concepts, as a person at risk is considered a vulnerable person. The appearance of both terms has a very similar sequence in the corpus analyzed. The ‘vulnerable’ concept axis of this report has a very similar presence throughout the three periods analyzed. With a slight decrease its percentage of presence oscillates between 6 and 7 %. Something similar occurs with the term ‘risk’, which remains at levels close to 20%, with a slight increase in the second period when it reaches 27% of the terms analyzed (Table 5).

Table 5. Evolution of frequency of ENLIVEN keywords (column percentages)

KEYWORDS	<2000		2000-2009		2010-2018		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Disadvantaged	31	20%	82	32 %	77	18%	190	23 %
Excluded	22	14%	11	4 %	3	0,7%	36	4 %
Low-qualified	1	0,6%	1	0,4%	59	14%	61	7%
Low-skilled	1	0,6%	30	11%	85	20 %	116	14%
Marginalised	7	4 %	2	0,8%	2	0,4%	11	1 %
Risk	31	20%	69	27%	78	18 %	178	21 %
Unemployed	45	30%	43	17%	90	21 %	178	21 %
Vulnerable	11	7%	13	5%	26	6 %	50	6 %
Total	149	100%	251	100%	420	100%	820	100 %

The collocation of the key words provides a strong indication of the stance adopted in their representation (Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008). A first impression is that the use of these key words is not random but suggests that there has been a selection of these concepts in each of the documents analyzed. Using the coefficient of Atlas.ti, we can see that there is no relation between these terms (table 6). They are employed in different moments and with different approaches.

Table 6. Collocation of ENLIVEN keywords

	Disadvantaged		Excluded		Low-qualified		Low-skilled		Marginalised		Risk		Unemployed		Vulnerable	
	n	Coeff.	n	Coeff.	n	Coeff.	n	Coeff.	n	Coeff.	n	Coeff.	n	Coeff.	n	Coeff.
Disadvantaged			2	0,01	5	0,02	7	0,02	4	0,02	17	0,05	17	0,05	5	0,02
Excluded	2	0,01			1	0,01	0	0,0	0	0,0	4	0,02	3	0,01	0	0,0
Low-qualified	5	0,02	1	0,01			13	0,08	0	0,0	3	0,01	13	0,06	3	0,03
Low-skilled	7	0,02	0	0,0	13	0,08			1	0,01	11	0,04	25	0,09	7	0,04
Marginalised	4	0,02	0	0,0	0	0,0	1	0,01			0	0,0	0	0,0	2	0,03
Risk	17	0,05	4	0,02	3	0,01	11	0,04	0	0,0			21	0,06	7	0,03
Unemployed	17	0,05	3	0,01	13	0,06	25	0,09	0	0,0	21	0,06			6	0,03
Vulnerable	5	0,02	0	0,0	3	0,03	7	0,04	2	0,03	7	0,03	6	0,03		

The study of the characteristics of collocations or words makes it possible to show their associations and connotations (Sinclair, 1991). Table 6 shows collocations of the selected key words²⁰. In this part of the analysis the collocation underlies similarities and differences between the three period. in the following paragraphs, three example of concordations are highlighted to point out the finding of the main analysis.

The appearance of the terms, 'risk', 'vulnerable' and 'excluded', in the corpus underlines the connection of the words carried out in the preliminary step of the analysis. Tables 7, 8 and 9 are sample extracts from the concordance finding from data related to key words vulnerable, at risk and excluded. The main analysis, which is presented in the following section, details information on social groups related to key words. For this reason, this first approximation focuses on the context to which the different terms refer. 'Vulnerable' is most often coded in a generic way (G) or related to 'social exclusion; socially vulnerable (SE). A second meaning is related to the labour market (LM).

²⁰ For this analysis the Atlas.ti has been used. According to Atlas.ti, the Atlas.ti coefficient C indicates the intensity of the co-occurrence relationship between two codes. It varies between 0 and 1. A co-occurrence is when two codes co-exist on a date. That is, when codes code the same quote or code quotes that are in contact with each other.

Table 7. Sample extract from the collocations finding from the data of vulnerable

Concordance results of vulnerable

workers more *vulnerable* to changes in work organisation (LM)
 most *vulnerable* sections of the population (G)
 vulnerable on the employment market (LM)
 most *vulnerable* sections of the population (G)
 socially *vulnerable* groups (SE)
 the needs of *vulnerable* groups (G)
 people from vulnerable social groups (G)
 the needs of vulnerable groups (G)
 more vulnerable in the labour market (LM)
 the most vulnerable to economic swings (LM)
 the most vulnerable (G)
 innovation for the most vulnerable (G)

Vulnerable people are susceptible or exposed to a risk or to threat (Drichel, 2013). Regarding the term risk, each instance is coded as E (exclusion), LS (learning society), ES (leaving the educational system) and G (general risk). The cases of risk, in general, are scarce, and they are applied to children or pupils. Table 12 shows some examples of concordances. The risk of being left out of the knowledge society is a recurring theme, as is the risk of being left out of the labour market. In the case of “risk” another striking collocation characteristic relates to employment.

Table 8. Sample extract from the collocations finding from the data of risk

Concordance results of risk

use of these new technologies, such as the *risk* (LS) of non-skilled people
 The *risk* (E) of exclusion
 risk of a social rift
 risk of feeling overqualified (
 pupils *at risk* (G)
 young people *at risk* (G)
 the *risk* (LS) of unequal access to these new media
 in employment who are *at risk* of seeing their skills overtaken by rapid change.
 at risk (SE) of long-term social exclusion
risk (LS) exclusion from the electronic marketplace
 for citizens *at risk* (E) of exclusion
 those *at risk of* (SE) exclusion
 at risk of being excluded in the future (G)
 Those *at risk* (G)
 young people *at risk (ES) of* dropping
 at risk of (ES) educational underachievement

Social inclusion is one of the objectives of lifelong learning policies. The document analyses explain that a special effort has to be made for the *most vulnerable* sections of the population, particularly in urban areas hardest hit by unemployment. They identify the following groups:

States need to take care of the needs of vulnerable groups, particularly people with disabilities and people with learning difficulties as well as those living in rural/remote areas — participation in tertiary education, or having problems in reconciling their work and family commitments (D 15: 2002 Detailed work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of Education and training systems)

In the corpus “excluded” can be referred to generically as a noun: this may also refer to young people or excluded families. In relation to the appearance of the term “excluded”, we have coded excluded from the educational system (ES), the labour market (LM), social exclusion (SE) or in general (G). The analysis reveals that the adjective ‘social’ or ‘socially’ are often added to the term excluded. The collocation underlines the close connection of exclusion with topics of “employment”.

Table 9. Sample extract from the concordances finding from the data of excluded

Concordance results of Excluded
Young people *excluded* (G)
excluded (G) sectors of the population
excluded (LM) from the labour market
youngsters *excluded* (ES) from the education system
socially *excluded* (SE)
socially excluded /SE) persons
socially *excluded* (SE) families
excluded from what kinds of opportunities (G)
who are *excluded* (G)
young person is *excluded* (G)
excluded (LM) from training or employment opportunities

The findings show several similarities of the use of ENLIVEN key words. Exclusion is understood in a global way, social exclusion, or from one of the dimensions of vulnerability: exclusion from the labour market. Another of the meanings is the exclusion from the educational system that harms future inclusion related to the working environment. To a lesser extent, disengagement with developments such as new technologies that affect professional and personal life is mentioned. The current emphasis on the concern for the possible exclusion of different groups is analysed in the next section.

2.4 Identification of vulnerable groups, goals and measures

2.4.a Introduction to the section

As noted in the methodological appendix, the corpus-based aspects of the ENLIVEN project is mainly based on the notion of criticality, collocation and concordances²¹. In the previous section an analysis of the first two steps has been carried out, and then with the aim of identifying and describing the conceptualisation

²¹ For further details please refer to the Methodological Appendix

of vulnerable groups in European lifelong learning policies we present the results obtained from the analysis of the concordances.

It should be noted that in a linguistic corpus-based analysis “a concordance is a selection of the occurrence of a word form, each in its textual environment” (Sinclair, 1991, p. 32). Following previous research (Albakry & Williams, 2016; Baker, Gabrielatos, Khosravini, Krzyzanowski, Mcenery, & Wodak, 2008; Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008), we designed a qualitative process in a way akin to a qualitative analysis. The ENLIVEN key words were qualitatively examined via detailed concordance analysis in order to identify the EU discourse about vulnerable groups.

The linkages of concordances were examined by hand in order to identify wider themes. The examination of this informed the initial categorization. Subsequently the topic, and dimensions identified by a previous CDA/content analysis were used to fine-tune the categorization (Annex IV on the Methodological Appendix).

Another point is that the word clusters are analysed within their contexts. The number of lines for the concordance can be expanded to the researchers’ needs (Baker, Gabrielatos, Khosravini, Krzyzanowski, Mcenery, & Wodak, 2008, p. 279):

- Concordances analysis - each instance of a particular search word with its co-text, in relation with structural and personal factors related to the vulnerability process and lifelong learning measures designed to support groups at risk of vulnerability.
- Co-assignment of information - those words that define groups and frequently co-occur with that search word: target groups as youth, migrants, disabled people
- Co-relation of information - relationship of those groups with other relevant codes, e.g. educational goals, measures designed.

The discourses of vulnerability in the ENLIVEN corpus revolved around four dimensions: individual factors, structural factors, educational goals and planned measures. These dimensions group several categories and codes emerging from the CDA analysis (Table 10). The elaboration of the categories has been done through a deductive and inductive procedure. Deductive since it has been based on the theoretical referential framework, in particular the dynamic model of vulnerability developed in the first chapter (figure 2) as well as previous literature reviewed, particularly this on target group analysis (Brine, 2006; Levitas, 2004; Schneider & Ingram, 1993; Williams, 2008). On the other hand, the inductive approach has made it possible to adapt and modify the codes and categories according to the information analysed. In addition, the elaboration of the codes and categories developed for the ENLIVEN Intelligent Decision Support System (IDSS) has been a source of contrast²², for example in the identification of groups (see the personal axis of Table 10), although always adapting it to the results found in the corpus. For this reason, the number of codes is not the same either in the table or in the analysis presented below. Finally, it should

²² For more information see the categories presented in the ENLIVEN *Deliverable 8.1* by Qu, Palmer, Atkin & John (2018) *Knowledge base of cases represented in unified formats, and measured by similarity measures for each type of participating country*. ENLIVEN

be noted that this process has been contrasted by the team of researchers in a flexible process and that all the texts have been coded by two people.

The analytical approach adopted combines qualitative and quantitative techniques, several previous studies have combined both approaches and influenced this study.

Table 10. CDA-informed categories

DIMENSION	CATEGORIES	DEFINITIONS
INDIVIDUAL FACTORS	Minorities & migrants	Used to refer all forms of diversity. E.g. ethnic minorities, refugees, migrants.
	Gender	Mainly used for women
	Age Related	Used for different stages of the life course. E.g. young people, children /minors, adult, young adults
	Educational	Mainly used for Early schools leavers, low skilled/qualified, digital skills, special educational needs
	Employment related characteristics	Mainly used for unemployed, long-term unemployed, people re-entering the labour market.
STRUCTURAL FACTORS	Geographical	Mainly used for disadvantaged areas/communities, rural and urban areas.
	Labour Market	Used to refer to lack of jobs locally / unemployment and demanding technological market.
	Family	Mainly used for low Income and lower socioeconomic background/poverty.
	Characteristics of society	Used to refer to learning society, Knowledge based society, global competitive society and Inequity.
EDUCATIONAL GOALS	Work experience	Used to refer to forms of internships, work placement and work experience.
	Education/training	Mainly used for basic skills, civic education and new competencies.
	Employability	Used to refer to employability as reduction of Inequality and competitiveness.
	Personal Development / Empowerment	Mainly used for Self-esteem, Autonomy and awareness
	Citizenship	Used to refer to civic participation and consumers
	Characteristics of the proposed society	Mainly refer to Social Justice and Democratic society
PLANNED MEASURES	Provide Work experience	Used to refer to forms of internships and work placement.
	Education/training	Mainly used to work based education and grants
	Employability	Used to refer to validation of outcomes
	Provide support measures	Mainly used to basic skills training, mentoring /counselling, tailored guidance and flexibility
	Organization of measures	Used to refer to partnership / stakeholders, quality of teacher training and quality education.
	Political measures	Such as legislations and funding schemes

2.4.b Target groups

Young people are one more group in a broad list of different groups at risk of social exclusion. In the document Europe 2020 Employment guidelines (2010) this group is the main group which Member States should support and prevent from falling into poverty, especially when they are in periods of transition from the end of schooling to entering into the world of work

Benefit systems should focus on ensuring income security during transitions and reducing poverty, in particular among groups most at risk from social exclusion, such as one-parent families, minorities, people with disabilities, children and young people, elderly women and men, legal migrants and the homeless (P.23. Recommendation, D 44: 2010, Title: Europe 2020 Integrated guidelines for the economic and employment policies of the Member States)

This section presents an analysis of the main target groups, in general, considered as vulnerable in the ENLIVEN corpus. For this purpose, following the vulnerability model developed in the first chapter of this report 1.1. (Figure 2), results have been divided into two dimensions: individual factors and the structural factors. Together the two vulnerability factors make it possible to identify how the ENLIVEN corpus portrays vulnerable groups.

Individual factors

As regards the analysis of the evolution of the appearance of individual factors in lifelong learning policies, we can observe (Table 11) that terms related to employability (Low skilled/qualified) and the labour market (unemployed) are the terms most commonly used to characterise all ENLIVEN keywords.

Table 11. Most relevant personal factors (Evolution) (%)

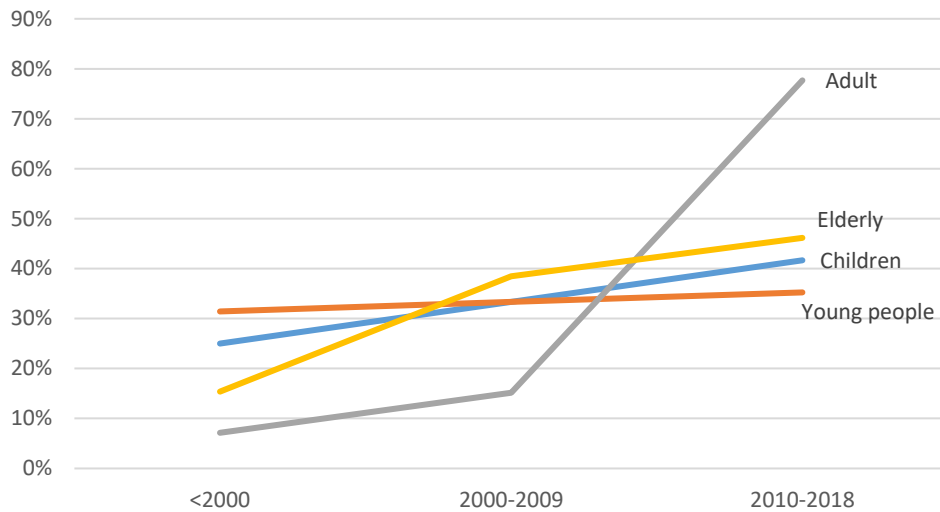
	<2000	2000-2009	2010-2018	Total
Low skilled/qualified	14,7	23,5	46,5	37,0
Adult	6,9	7,7	27,5	19,2
Young people	28,4	15,8	11,7	18,0
Unemployed	6,9	5,4	13,6	10,8
Migrants	2,6	8,1	10,4	9,2
Early school leavers	6,0	10,9	5,7	8,4
Children / minors	7,8	5,4	4,7	6,2
Women	10,3	2,7	3,2	4,8

It should also be pointed out that age (Young-adults) is the category most commonly used to identify these groups; below we can observe variations in the characteristics indicated by the policies, where women were most recognised in the 1990s, early school leavers in the first decade of the 21st century and migrants in the last decade.

The young people now represent a general priority for the current generation of action programmes, so that many projects focus on attracting the young unemployed, young people

belonging to ethnic minorities and from migrant backgrounds, the young disabled, and those young people living in particularly disadvantaged circumstances and localities P. 23 (Report, D 7: 1998, Title: Education and active citizenship in the European Union)

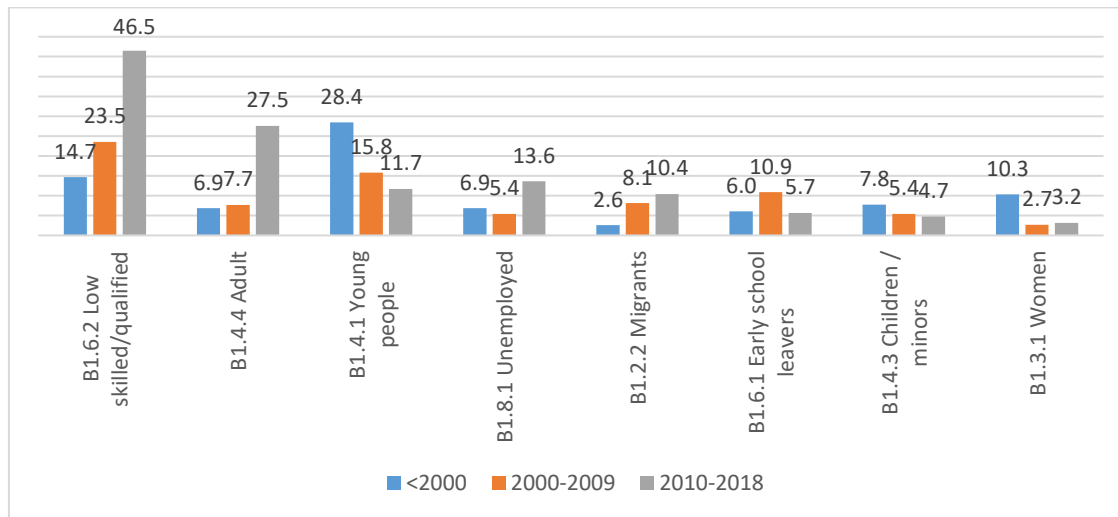
Figure 5. Distribution of diachronic use of aged related target groups (%) in the ENLIVEN corpus



This shift towards the characterization of vulnerable groups (Figure 6), especially young people, based on the economic dimension of their situation is linked to an individualizing discourse that carries the idea of vulnerability in the low attributes of their capabilities as a cause, and their weakness in the labour market as a consequence.

Europe has experienced difficult adjustments in the last decade. This has resulted in large numbers of people, and particularly young people, who do not have useful qualifications and who are unemployed. They are dependent upon social benefits of various kinds; they may be on training courses and schemes, but with uncertain future prospects. These people, who have considerable difficulties, generally live in the disadvantaged areas of our large cities P. 23 (Report, D 7: 1998, Title: Education and active citizenship in the European Union).

Figure 6. Most relevant personal factors (evolution) (%)



Looking at the three periods, the list of groups considered as vulnerable are similar, for instance in 2002 the Detailed work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of Education and training systems mentions the following ones:

States need to take care of the needs of vulnerable groups, particularly people with disabilities and people with learning difficulties as well as those living in rural/remote areas — participation in tertiary education or having problems in reconciling their work and family commitments. It cannot be accepted that substantial proportions of people drop out of learning prematurely, and miss proportion of the population aged 18-24 with only essential basic skills and qualifications to participate actively in lower secondary education and not in education or society, without accepting also the loss to society and the training (Structural indicator). P. 142/12 (Work programme, D 15: 2002, Title: Detailed work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of Education and training systems in Europe (2002/C 142/01)

The discourse based on low qualifications and skills is also, in this sense, the reason for the characterization of the groups identified as vulnerable (women, early school leavers and migrants). In other words, they are not vulnerable insofar as they are women, early school leavers or migrants, but insofar as they have low qualifications and low capacity.

those who are disadvantaged because of their low literacy levels, inadequate work skills and/or skills for successful integration into society. Depending on the Member State, these could include migrants, older people, women or persons with a disability. (D 31: 2007 Action Plan on Adult learning Its always a good time to learn)

Thus, the relationship of weakness with the labour market is the main dimension that characterizes vulnerability, leaving aside any other cause of a more collective or social nature. In addition, it should be noted that this discourse does not include the reasons why these particular groups possess these low qualifications and skills, but rather assumes that they are so without delving into, or analysing, the social, economic or political problems that have caused them to be configured in this way.

Those who have not been able, for whatever reason, to acquire the relevant basic skills threshold must be offered continuing opportunities to do so, however often they may have failed to succeed or to take up what has been offered so far. P.3 (Communication, D 31: 2007, Title: Action Plan on Adult learning. It is always a good time to learn)

The analysis of the main categories observed in the keywords (Table 12), selected as synonyms of vulnerability, confirms the primacy of the discourse in the characterization of the vulnerable in the low training and skills of the indicated groups, mainly young people.

To ensure equity of opportunity, targeted public interventions in particular within active labour market programmes are needed to ensure that the disadvantaged (e.g. low-skilled, vulnerable, unemployed young people) can access training and enhance their employment prospects. P. 11 (Staff working paper, D 10: 2000, Title: A memorandum on lifelong learning)

Secondly, and as a consequence of a discourse focused on the economic and labour environment, the unemployed are the category most used to define the excluded and people at risk. On the other hand, the most general keywords (disadvantaged) also include the group of migrants and children/minors.

Table 12. Main personal categories by keyword

Keywords	CATEGORIES					
Disadvantaged	Migrants & Refugees	Young people	Children / minors	Low skilled/qualified		
Excluded	Young people	Low skilled/qualified	Unemployed			
Low-qualified	Adult	Low skilled/qualified	Unemployed			
Low-skilled	Adult	Low skilled/qualified	Unemployed			
Risk	Young people	Early school leavers	Low skilled /qualified	Unemployed		
Unemployed	Refugees	Migrants & Refugees	Young people	Adult	Low skilled /qualified	Unemployed
A8 Vulnerable	Young people	Adult	Low skilled/qualified			

Structural factors

Regarding the analysis of the evolution of the appearance of structural factors of individuals in lifelong learning policies, we can observe (Table 13) that the main one is *Lower socioeconomic background / poverty*. In other words, the main factor defined as a structural cause is coming from a low-income or poor family.

it is cooperation between school and family which best secures the acquisition of basic knowledge. Special attention must be devoted in this connection to the role of the family, particularly in the

disadvantaged areas. P. 20 (White Paper, D 2: 1995, Title: Education and training: teaching and learning: towards the learning society)

To a lesser extent, global characteristics of society are also pointed out as a result of macroeconomic processes of an international nature that can be explained by changes in production models, mainly due to the eruption of factors such as technology, automation and robotization.

these groups are even more vulnerable since access to knowledge is crucial to fitting into society and finding employment. P. 42 (White Paper, D 2: 1995, Title: Education and training: teaching and learning: towards the learning society)

This new society, which is already pointed out in the European policies of the mid-nineties, is defined under three major axes: learning/knowledge, global and competitiveness.

Table 13. Main personal categories by keywords. Evolution %

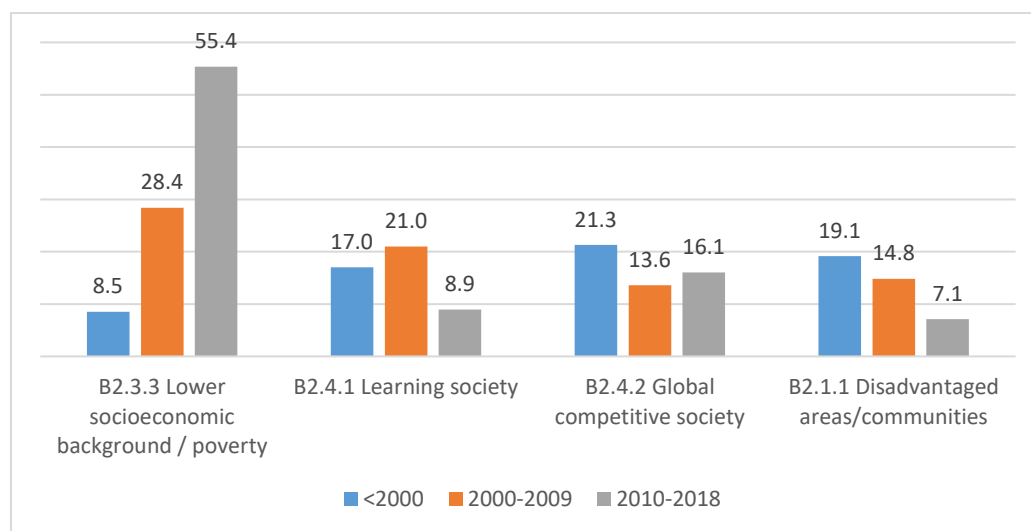
	<2000	2000-2009	2010-2018	Totals
Lower socioeconomic background / poverty	8,5	28,4	55,4	31,5
Learning society	17,0	21,0	8,9	16,3
Global competitive society	21,3	13,6	16,1	16,3
Disadvantaged areas/communities	19,1	14,8	7,1	13,6

As we have commented on personal characteristics, and perhaps here to a greater extent, the discourse that characterizes vulnerability in the structural part does not include the reasons why these structural conditions occur, but rather the simple observation that there are families with low incomes, without delving into or analysing the social, economic or political problems that have caused them to be configured in this way.

Everyone must be able to seize their opportunities for improvement in society and for personal fulfilment, irrespective of their social origin and educational background. This particularly applies to the most disadvantaged groups who lack the family and social environment to enable them to make the most of the general education provided by school. These groups should be given the chance not just to catch up, but to gain access to new knowledge which could help to bring out their abilities. P. 3 (White Paper, D 2: 1995, Title: Education and training: teaching and learning: towards the learning society)

It should also be pointed out that within the factors analysed (Figure 7), the trend in recent years has been to reduce structural vulnerability to the closest environment (family, neighbourhood, etc.) and to reduce the reference to the most macro or global level of our environment.

Figure 7. Most relevant structural factors (Evolution) (%)



The analysis of the main categories observed in the key words (Table 14), selected as synonyms of vulnerability, confirms the primacy of discourse on the characterization of the vulnerable in relation to the areas/communities they live in and to their families, especially when it comes to disadvantage and unemployment.

Secondly, and as a consequence of a discourse focused on the economic and labour environment, globalisation, competitiveness and knowledge are the categories most associated with low-skilled and low-skilled people at risk.

Table 14. Main structural categories by keyword

Keywords	Categories	
Disadvantaged	Disadvantaged areas/communities	Lower socioeconomic background / poverty
Excluded	Learning society	
Low-qualified	Global competitive society	
Low-skilled	Global competitive society	
Risk	Learning society	Global competitive society
Unemployed	Disadvantaged areas/communities	
Vulnerable	Global competitive society	

This discourse links vulnerability to the well-intentioned approach of helping society's "least favoured" (Brown, 2014). The policies and practices targeting vulnerable young people often resonate with good intentions. However, as Kristiina Brunila (2016) has argued:

In the context of youth education and training where disengagement, exclusion and alienation are recast as causes, outcomes and manifestations of psycho-emotional vulnerability, individually and therapeutically oriented interventions present emotional well-being as a form of social justice in its own right. (p.71)

This has further strengthened the idea of societal problems as individual psycho-emotional deficiencies. Consequently, interventions offer opportunities to learn how to carry individual choices and responsibilities, to become developmental and trainable in the markets of education and work (Ecclestone and Brunila, 2015. p. 17).

2.5 Educational goals

The Commission Communication "Towards a Europe of knowledge" puts lifelong learning at the centre of an integrated approach to education, training and youth policy action (Montané & Beernaert, 2001). This approach is based on the conviction that "in a fast-changing world, our society must offer all its citizens opportunities to join the knowledge economy" (Report, D 6: 1997, Title: Accomplishing Europe through education and training, P. 28) which will enable them to progress throughout their lives. To respond to this challenge, three main orientations have been given priority: enabling European citizens to continuously develop their skills and competencies through lifelong learning; encouraging a process of building and enriching citizenship in an open and pluralistic society; and improving skills-based employability for a knowledge-based society. Over the years, the European institutions, especially the Council, have emphasised the dual role - social and economic - of education and training systems:

The vision and the aim is that education should make it possible to give everyone the opportunity for personal development and for achievement at the high levels required by the new economic context, and also to acquire the personal resources needed for an all-round personal development and for social integration. P. 29 (Report, D 6: 1997, Title: Accomplishing Europe through education and training)

As we have mentioned in the conceptual review Holford and Mleczo (2013) already defined these different dimensions of the European discourse on lifelong learning as economic competitiveness on the one hand, and social cohesion, inclusion and citizenship on the other.

So, this purpose of education has been expressed clearly and unequivocally since the end of the 1990s in lifelong learning policies:

Education and training are a determining factor in each country's potential for excellence, innovation and competitiveness. At the same time, they are an integral part of the social dimension of Europe, because they transmit values of solidarity, equal opportunities and social participation, while also producing positive effects on health, crime, the environment, democratisation and general quality of life. P. C 79/1 (Communication, D 27: 2006, Title: Modernising education and training: a vital contribution to prosperity and social cohesion in Europe)

However, in the analysis of the evolution of the emergence of the objectives of education in lifelong learning policies, we can observe (Table 15) that the discourse has been evolving. Thus, while in the 1990s the social cohesion, inclusion and citizenship dimension was the most important and present in European policies, from the year 2000 and especially in the second decade of the new millennium, the economic competitiveness dimension has played a leading role in European lifelong learning policies.

Table 15. Most relevant educational goals (Evolution) (%)

	<2000	2000-2009	2010-2018	Total
Basic Skills	10,8	20,7	21,1	19,4
New competencies	2,7	15,2	13,8	12,7
Employability	5,4	12,0	15,4	12,7
Social Justice	8,1	16,3	9,8	11,9
Civic participation	27,0	4,3	8,1	9,5
Reduction of inequality	10,8	13,0	6,5	9,5

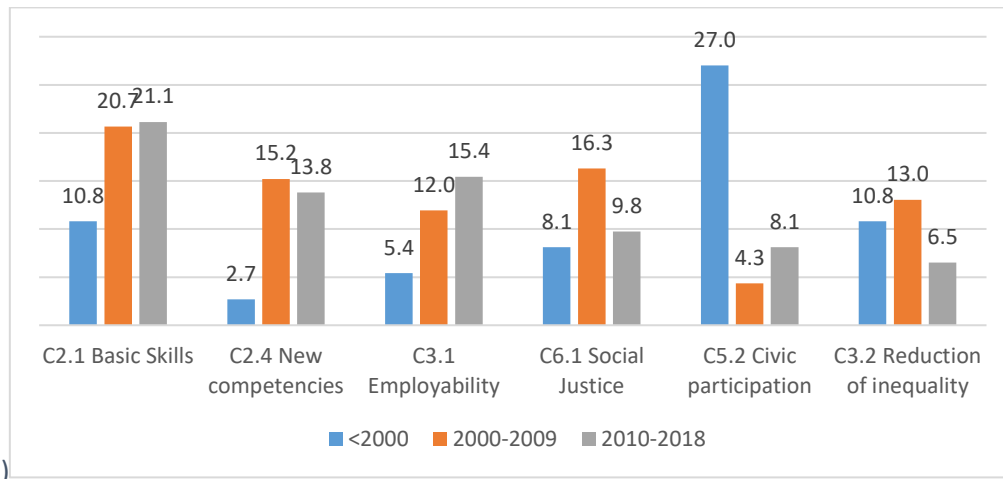
This orientation towards a more utilitarian dimension has produced an imbalance in this dual role of education and training systems. In recent years, there has been a deepening of a discourse that is basically a discourse of (basic) skills and (new) competences with a clear orientation towards the labour market.

Providing people with relevant skills, competences and knowledge drives innovation and growth and promotes personal fulfilment and well-being. It is the best means of preventing individuals from becoming unemployed, thus reducing the risk of poverty and social exclusion. P. C 105/1 (Resolution, D 27: 2016, Title: Resolution on promoting socioeconomic development and inclusiveness in the EU through education)

This instrumental purpose is linked to the neoliberal political discourse that focuses on the individual and the development of his/her capacities as a solution to confront the characteristics of a society that seems to be given and immutable, and against which little can be done collectively except to adapt. Under this framework, the role that public administrations must play is to guarantee through their resources (education) the social equality that is reduced to an equality of opportunities for individuals.

As we have said, this discourse has been consolidating in recent decades, (Figure 8), while the discourse of education as a lever for equality and social justice has been increasingly relegated to a second level.

Figure 8. Most relevant educational goals (evolution) (%)



For more than two decades, and especially since the Lisbon Strategy, this instrumental rationale has been proposed as a way of avoiding risk and maximising the potential of the new knowledge society:

Efforts must be made to improve skills, promote wider access to knowledge and opportunity and fight unemployment: the best safeguard against social exclusion is a job. (D 9: 2000 Lisbon strategy)

In this sense, the analysis of the main categories observed in the key words (Table 16), selected as synonyms of vulnerability, confirms the primacy of the discourse of (basic) skills and (new) competences with a clear orientation to the labour market as a way of increasing employability.

Table 16. Main educational goals by keywords

Keywords	Categories		
Disadvantaged	Basic Skills	New competencies	Reduction of inequality
Excluded	Civic participation		
Low-qualified	Basic Skills		
Low-skilled	Basic Skills		Employability
Risk	New competencies	Employability	Social Justice
Unemployed	Basic Skills	Employability	
Vulnerable	Social Justice		

As we have mentioned, this is the most relevant discourse of the European Union in the last decade, and it is at the heart of the major key documents that mark European policies, including those of lifelong learning.

Equipping people with relevant skills and qualifications, maintaining and making full use of the skills available drives innovation and competitiveness and provides the basis for high productivity

and sustained competitiveness and growth. At the same time, a high level of skills reduces significantly the risk of individuals becoming unemployed, the risk of poverty and social exclusion and is associated with increasing engagement in society. P. 3 (Communication, D 66: 2016, Title: A NEW SKILLS AGENDA FOR EUROPE Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness)

2.6 Planned measures

As might be expected, the set of measures planned in the European lifelong learning policies analysed has evolved over the years, but has always corresponded to the objectives set out and described above. This section analyses these measures as a way to identify the vulnerability discourses of lifelong learning policies. Thus, with regard to the analysis of the evolution envisaged in lifelong learning policies, we can observe (Table 17) that there are two main groups.

Table 17. Most relevant planned measures (Evolution) (%)

	<2000	2000-2009	2010-2018	Total
Tailored guidance / flexibility	16,7	12,5	19,3	17,0
Partnership/Stakeholders	16,7	13,5	10,6	12,3
Basic skills training	12,5	6,7	12,6	10,9
Quality education	8,3	15,4	3,4	7,5
Validation of outcomes	4,2	4,8	9,2	7,2
Legislations	4,2	4,8	9,2	7,2
Work based education	4,2	7,7	7,2	7,0
Qualification of teacher training	6,3	11,5	3,9	6,4
Mentoring / counselling	12,5	3,8	5,3	5,8

On the one hand, the emphasis is on basic skills training, in a framework with partners and stakeholders; but above all, and this is the main issue, following methods that involve tailored guidance and flexibility. This proposal is supported by authors who have highlighted the good results obtained in those programmes in which personalised guidance and advice is given to young people (Rodríguez-Soler & Verd, 2018).

Success has also been highlighted in those measures in which the application is tailored to the needs of each young person (tailored support), both in relation to their socio-demographic characteristics and in relation to their personal circumstances, as well as programmes specifically targeted at disadvantaged and low-income young people (Kluve et al., 2016). A policy that is "contextualized" and adapted to the characteristics of the receiving population would therefore seem more likely to be effective than one that overlooks specific personal circumstances (O'Reilly et al., 2015).

In this sense we also have to recognise that that multi-agency working is focused on supporting the learning needs of all individuals in the community. To support these needs institutions strive to become responsive to the communities they serve and to establish collaborative patterns of working with other organisations and agencies, but the focus of the intervention is on the individual.

Support for adults with low basic skills or low-level qualifications is now commonly integrated into Member States' policy agendas, often as a part of education and training policies. Other policy areas, including active labour market policies, also target provision at low-skilled people. These different policy measures are not always well-coordinated. Across Europe a wide range of education and training programmes (financed or co-financed by the state) is provided in a variety of ways. In few cases those programmes are accompanied by skills validation schemes (including skills assessment), guidance support and outreach campaigns. P. 6 (Communication, D 66: 2016, Title: A NEW SKILLS AGENDA FOR EUROPE Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness)

On the other hand, we can find a second group of measures that have a more educational character, such as the improvement of the quality of education, the validation of results, legislative change, education based on work and the qualification of teacher training. Since the Treaty of Amsterdam of 1997, there has been a focus on the promotion of a more active and participatory citizenship in the life of the European Community. This citizenship is based on an integrated approach to lifelong learning and on complementarity between membership of the European Union and citizenship of the respective Member States. Another element is the complementarity or strategic partnership between the European Union and its citizens is a priority for the present and future political actions of the EU.

The analysis of the main categories observed in the key words (Table 18), selected as synonyms of vulnerability, confirms the existence of a double discourse, on the one hand centred on measures referring to the increase of employability (tailored guidance and flexibility, partnership and stakeholders, and basic skill training) and on the other, measures more focused on the improvement of education (quality of education, the validation of results, legislative change, education based on work and the qualification of teacher training).

Table 18. Main planned measures by keywords

Keywords	Categories
Disadvantaged	Tailored guidance / flexibility
	Partnership/Stakeholders
	Qualification of teacher training
Excluded	Basic skills training
Low-qualified	Tailored guidance / flexibility
Low-skilled	Work based education
	Validation of outcomes
	Basic skills training
	Tailored guidance / flexibility
	Partnership/Stakeholders
Risk	Tailored guidance / flexibility
	Partnership/Stakeholders
	Quality education
Unemployed	Basic skills training
	Tailored guidance / flexibility
Vulnerable	Tailored guidance / flexibility
	Partnership/Stakeholders

This discourse is in line with the analyses of other authors who identified a European tendency to adapt young people to a labour market which is perceived as a given factor and to construct employability, activation and labour market mobility as the solutions for youth unemployment (Lahusen, Schulz, and Graziano 2013).

Guidance services should promote equal opportunities by being accessible to all citizens, especially those at risk of exclusion, and tailored to their needs through systems that are coherent, cohesive, transparent, impartial and of high quality. Systems must also be flexible, and adaptable to the changing needs of the individual learner – bearing in mind the value of guidance for personal fulfilment, as well as the needs of the labour market and the wider community. P. 17 (Communication, D 12: 2001, Title: Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality)

Regarding employability, it has to be added that Bessant and Watts (2014) identified the focus on education and training as a form of “cruel optimism”, given that without the creation of new jobs for qualified employees, higher levels of education only favour an increased competition for the existing workplaces and a readiness to accept job offers that require lower levels of education or that encompass precarious working conditions. MacDonald (2011) similarly commented on the “myth of the skills economy” as a major error in policy solutions for youth unemployment in the UK: Politicians believe that the future labour market will have a higher demand for skilled workers and consider, hence, better skills as the solution for unemployment. The reality shows, nevertheless, that the supply of skilled workers is

bigger than the demand and unskilled jobs are not disappearing at all, leading to higher levels of underemployment both among skilled and unskilled workers.

There is no doubt, as Cabasés, Pardell & Strecker (2016) have already expressed, that these proposals need to come with a change in the productive system and the overcoming of neoliberal policies, if the aims are to create quality employment and to overcome the tendency to blame young people for not adapting to labour markets which are unable to accommodate them.

Finally, it must be considered that, as we have mentioned previously in the conceptual review, in the globalisation process the main aim was to make the EU more competitive and a humanist façade was given to a set of guidelines inspired by neoliberalism (Regmi, 2015). In this sense we must come back to the humanistic model under the discourses on lifelong learning as an attempt to not regulate education through the interest of the markets (Desjardins, 2009 in Vargas 2017).

2.7 Young people and vulnerability in European lifelong learning policies

The aim of this section is to present the results of the analysis conducted specifically from the corpus-based critical discourse analysis on the *Young People* category. This analysis responds to the main objectives of this report. It should be remembered that young people are considered to be one of the groups most at risk of social exclusion, and therefore most vulnerable. The main reason is that they are one of the groups most affected by the "new social risks", mainly associated with the challenge of having job instability together with care responsibilities, especially in the phase of family construction (Zimmerman, 2017). In addition they may be subject to additional personal risk factors such as having a disability, coming from an ethnic minority background, being homeless, leaving care, or such structural risk factors as coming from a disadvantaged area.

The social inclusion of young people has been high on the EU policy agenda for a number of years and increasingly since the impact of the crisis (2008). The search for the term "young" through different periods of the ENLIVEN corpus suggests that this target group has been maintained as one of the reference groups over the three periods analysed (Table 19). It should be borne in mind that the number of documents analysed varies across the three periods; therefore it seems greater weight should be given to the first stage.

Table 19. Young category by period

	<2000		2000-2009		2010-2018		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Young people	33	31,43%	35	33,33%	37	35,24%	105	100,00%

As a point of departure, this group was searched for by the ENLIVEN key word or term of reference. The examples about young people in relation to vulnerability key words offer the possibility of talking about multiple vulnerabilities as there is a variety of key words related to young people. The findings about the collocation between the use of the Young people category and the ENLIVEN key words (Table 20) show

that terms such as youth at risk, disadvantaged youth or unemployed youth are preferred in describing the situation of vulnerable young people.

Table 20. Young category by Keywords

	Young people	
	n	%
Disadvantaged	30	21,3%
Excluded	11	7,8%
Low-qualified	3	2,1%
Low-skilled	10	7,1%
Marginalised	1	0,7%
Risk	41	29,1%
Unemployed	32	22,7%
Vulnerable	13	9,2%
	141	100,0%

One of the outstanding features of the corpus of examples is the assignment given to young people when presenting them as persons at risk. The examples in Table 21 show the presentation of young people at risk of social exclusion due to their have not developed the necessary skills to enter the labour market (because they have not completed their training, or this training becomes obsolete and consequently they cannot face the new challenges). The following examples show they are portrayed according to the risk involved in their personal situation (lack of compulsory education, basic skills, lack of experience) which initiates a cycle of exclusion. To address this, they are offered an education adapted to their needs.

Table 21. Co-occurrences of categories (Youth & risk)

QUOTATION	DOCUMENT
This situation raises problems for the attractiveness of vocational education, which in several Member States is considered as a 'second best' option offering limited career prospects. Young people therefore tend to go for general education at the risk of feeling overqualified in their jobs.	D 2: 1995 White paper Towards the learning society
They will have to offer learning and training opportunities tailored to target groups at different stages of their lives: young people, unemployed adults and those in employment who are at risk of seeing their skills overtaken by rapid change.	D 9: 2000 Lisbon strategy D 12: 2001 Communication
Significant disparities between Member States may be closing due to better schooling for successive cohorts of young people, but almost 150 million people in the EU without this basic level of education face a higher risk of marginalisation.	Making a European Area of lifelong learning a Reality

QUOTATION

Young people at the bottom of the qualifications ladder encounter substantial difficulties in entering the labour market and are the most vulnerable to economic swings. They face a higher risk of unemployment and tend to end up in low-skilled or temporary jobs, with a future of state-funded training programmes interspersed with insecure low paid employment and lengthy periods of unemployment.

Young people who leave education without recognised qualifications are at a disadvantage in the labour market. Their personal and social development is curtailed and they are at increased risk of poverty and social exclusion.

Compulsory education to ensure that young people who are at risk of dropping out gain some kind of qualification and proof of skills

Inactivity has negative repercussions on the readiness and economic capacity of young adults to raise families. Unemployment and inactivity of parents are strong risk factors for child poverty

Europe has far too many young people leaving education without the skills they need to participate in the knowledge society and to move smoothly into employment. They face the risk of social exclusion.

Benefit systems should focus on ensuring income security during transitions and reducing poverty, in particular among groups most at risk from social exclusion, such as one-parent families, minorities, people with disabilities, children and young people, elderly women and men, legal migrants and the homeless.

Young people have been severely hit by the crisis, with an unemployment rate over 21%. There is a strong risk that people away or poorly attached to the world of work lose ground from the labour market.

A more personalised approach to learning by disadvantaged pupils is a clear trend. This is often accompanied by targeted action to support those with literacy problems (including migrants) and with special educational needs, or those at risk of dropping out.

All Member States should implement targeted measures to reach young people at risk of dropping out.

Ensuring that every young person has equal access to quality and inclusive education and the opportunity to develop his/her full potential, irrespective of individual, family-related or gender-related factors, socioeconomic status and life experiences, is key to preventing marginalisation and social exclusion, as well as reducing the risk of extremism and radicalisation.

Transition from school to work is a critical step for many young persons. Lacking work experience, but unable to obtain that experience without a job, throws young people into a vicious circle. Young people that do not manage to get their first work experience risk being permanently excluded from the labour market.

At the same time, a high level of skills reduces significantly the risk of individuals becoming unemployed, the risk of poverty and social exclusion and is associated with

DOCUMENT

D 42: Commission staff working document 2006 efficiency and equity

D 29: 2006 Progress towards Lisbon objectives

D 29: 2006 Progress towards Lisbon objectives

D 34: 2007 Promoting young people's full participation in education, employment and society

D 38: 2008 Joint progress report

D 45: 2010 Europe 2020 Employment guidelines

D 46: 2010 Europe 2020

D 47: 2010 Joint progress report

D 51: 2012 Joint Report

D 57: 2015 Council conclusions on reducing early school leaving

D 65: 2016 Working document New Skills Agenda

D 65: 2016 Working

QUOTATION

DOCUMENT

increasing engagement in society. This is especially urgent as there are 4.4 million are young unemployed people across Europe.

document New Skills Agenda

The choice of the term “disadvantaged” is unclear. Table 21 suggests that it is understood mainly as a dimension of vulnerability: exclusion from the labour market (greater risk and unemployment). However, the description is not explicit. There is a particular focus on describing disadvantaged people as those lacking educational achievements; Williams (2011) suggests that disadvantage may be a result of societal or economic factors or could be a result of personal decisions.

If we consider the objectives proposed in the corpus, we can appreciate their relationship in terms of the models of approach to social exclusion proposed by (Levitas 2006). The SID (social integrationist) approach assumes that finding a job will be the passport to leaving the zone of vulnerability and becoming integrated into society: integration comes through work. Levitas et al. (2007) saw this as the “dominant model” in the EU. However, when the proposed measures are analysed in detail, it can be seen that they are moving towards what she calls a MUD (moral underclass discourse or dependency model (Levitas, 2006; Williams, 2011). This is focused on “behavioural and attitudinal characteristics of the excluded and their imputed deficiencies” (Levitas et al 2007, pp. 27-28) , and the stress therefore shifts to overcoming the low self-esteem derived from the experience of school failure. This process is detailed in the analysis of the categories.

2.7.a Targeted young groups: personal and structural factors

Before describing the main young people's concordances, it is necessary to further qualify which are the specific groups of young people who are more vulnerable to poverty and social exclusion than others. To do so, the analysis was carried out by associating the youth category with the other categories used in the ENLIVEN study.

Although there is no definition of vulnerable groups or vulnerabilities in these documents, we can identify a number of factors related to vulnerability that allow us to affirm that not only personal factors related to identification of groups are available but also the identification of social factors. The difficulty of attaining a stable position in the working life applies mainly to people starting their working life (Ranci, 2010). Therefore it seems clear that one of the greatest risks facing young people relates to the risk of social exclusion is also closely linked to their participation in the labour market. While not a homogeneous group, young NEETs are especially at risk of becoming socially excluded (Eurofund, 2015). This analysis allows us to see a concern for precariousness associated with changes in a global and competitive society.

Personal factors of vulnerability

As we mentioned, the examples about young people in relation to categories of vulnerability offer the possibility of talking about multiple factors of vulnerabilities, internal and structural ones. In relation to individual factors we can see that, as discussed in the previous section, we can observe (Table 22) that terms related to employability (Low skilled/qualified), the education (early school leavers) and the labour market (unemployed) are the terms most commonly used to characterise young vulnerable people. The Integrated Guidelines for Europe 2020 explains this priority:

To support young people and in particular those not in employment, education or training, Member States in cooperation with the social partners, should enact schemes to help recent graduates find initial employment or further education and training opportunities, including apprenticeships, and intervene rapidly when young people become unemployed. P, Europe has experienced difficult adjustments in the last decade. This has resulted in large numbers of people, and particularly young people. P. 22 (Recommendation, D 44: 2010, Title: Europe 2020 Integrated guidelines for the economic and employment policies of the Member States)

The implicit grounds suggested in connection to “vulnerable groups” seem to be gender, age and ethnic or migratory background:

initiatives that target all groups, including for example, young people of specific disadvantaged groups (low-qualified people, immigrants, women, etc.) P.9 (Communication, D 66: 2016, Title: A NEW SKILLS AGENDA FOR EUROPE Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness).

The paragraph points to women, people without qualifications, or immigrants as vulnerable groups since it explicitly includes "disadvantaged groups", without giving a definition of what that disadvantage consists of. In a similar way, the Resolution on Promoting Socioeconomic Development and Inclusiveness in the EU through Education, describes such groups as: “young people with low educational and employment prospects based on their socioeconomic status, migrant background or gender” (CEU, 2016b, p. C 105/3).

Table 22. Young category by most relevant categories (individual and structural factors)

YOUNG PEOPLE		N	%
INDIVIDUAL FACTORS	Low skilled/qualified	32	21,8%
	Early school leavers	26	17,7%
	Unemployed	18	12,2%
	Women	12	8,2%
	Adult	12	8,2%
	Migrants	11	7,5%
STRUCTURAL FACTORS	Lower socioeconomic background / poverty	10	32,3%
	Disadvantaged areas/communities	6	19,4%
	Lack of jobs locally / unemployment	3	9,7%
	Learning society	3	9,7%

These paragraphs point to a "group of groups" that consider themselves unprotected either because they are members of a class (women, migrants) or because they share a condition related to school failure. As can be seen, these are two very different circumstances. Putting them together in the same paragraph it could be understood that migrants and women also find themselves in similar circumstances although this

is not precisely the case, as can be seen from the analysis of women's school results. In addition, this enumeration of groups runs the risk of generalizing the vision of certain groups, stigmatizing them even if they are intended as the recipients of certain support measures.

Other vulnerable groups, such as refugees, are referred in some specific planning documents, but they are not mentioned as specific groups in relation to ENLIVEN key words. Regarding minorities and migrant groups, many times both terms are used in a similar way, as demonstrated by the Promoting young people's full participation in education, employment and society (2007) document. In this case it explicitly mentions Roma people:

social inclusion of youth with a migrant background or from disadvantaged minorities (in particular Roma) has so far not been successful. Often combined with a weak socioeconomic status of their parents, they account for a large portion of disadvantaged youth, have higher rates of early school leaving and often lower reading skills (P. 7 (Communication, D 34: 2007, Title: Promoting young people's full participation in education, employment and society)

It should be noted that most of the references to young people with a migrant origin come from 2007 onwards. There are two issues to which reference must be made: this period saw the beginnings of the refugee crisis, when public opinion placed considerable attention on this group. In addition this period witnessed certain acts of terrorism, which indirectly appear in the corpus as reference is made to vulnerable young people with a new risk: the risk of radicalization. The young and, in particular, vulnerable young people are seen as especially at risk as “networks of extremists engage with vulnerable youth, regardless of borders” (CEU, 2016a, p. 7). Linking vulnerable groups to terrorism and extremism reflects a new tendency to portray them as what Ingram and Schneider (2015) call ‘deviant’. We will delve deeper into this issue in the following section (Prevent radicalization).

Structural factors of vulnerability

The individual approach to vulnerability is not the only one, since a more socio-structural approach to vulnerability appears in some documents. Nevertheless, this complementary focus, linking socioeconomic factors and structural changes, are not frequent, although they have serious implications on the possibility of entering the labour market (Table 4). This set of factors affects the transition processes of young people, beyond a classic linear and direct transition from school to the working world. The comments related to such transition processes appear above all in the second period examined (2000-2010), characterized by the Lisbon strategy and the implementation of benchmarking and open methods of coordination (OMC) to allow coordinated progress. For this reason, supporting the transition processes appears as a general objective of the documents analysed. Several documents mention structural factors that complicate this process. For example, the lifelong learning Memorandum explains:

The increasingly complex patterns of young people's initial transitions between learning and working may be an indication of what lies in store for people of all ages in the future. P. 9 (Staff working paper, D 10: 2000, Title: A Memorandum on lifelong learning).

Other factors linked to the origin of young people from marginal areas are mentioned more frequently (Table 4). Regarding the analysis of the evolution of the appearance of structural factors affecting young

people in lifelong learning policies, we can observe that the main one is that of Lower socioeconomic background / poverty and living in disadvantaged areas.

The young people now represent a general priority for the current generation of action programmes, so that many projects focus on attracting the young unemployed, young people belonging to ethnic minorities and from migrant backgrounds, the young disabled, and those young people living in particularly disadvantaged circumstances and localities. P. 23 (Report, D 7: 1998, Title: Education and active citizenship in the European Union)

Moreover, the latest studies about the situation of young people in the European Union (European Commission 2018, p.125) show certain groups of young people and those living in certain regions of Europe are more vulnerable than others. Young people born outside the country they live in, or who have parents not born in that country have significantly higher chances of being at risk of poverty or social exclusion than their native-born peers (Eurofound, 2015). Most poverty indicators also show higher proportions of women at risk. In the countries most affected by the economic crisis, most notably in Greece and to a lesser extent in Spain, young people's risks of poverty or social exclusion have been increasing considerably and these trends have not yet been reversed. At-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion rates and material deprivation rates increased the most and are still increasing in Greece, together with deteriorating housing conditions and exponential growth in the proportions of young people who cannot access appropriate health care (European Commission, 2018). This is certainly a source of growing inequalities amongst European young people. In short, the personal and structural factors that affect vulnerability appear in the documents, sometimes separately - only identifying specific groups, or jointly, warning of the multiple variables that affect the processes.

The young person's background and family relationships are frequently mentioned in relation to the structural causes that make the participation of young people in the lifelong learning offer difficult - and this occurs across different periods. Here we can see how the 1995 *White paper Towards the learning society* explains this process:

the most disadvantaged, who quite often do not have a suitable family and social setting to enable them to benefit from the general education provided at school. P. 42 (White Paper, D 2: 1995, Title: Education and training: teaching and learning: towards the learning society)

A similar point is made by the Commission staff working document *Efficiency and Equity* (2006):

evidence shows that the most disadvantaged are also the most risk and debt averse and, without a family culture of learning, they often prefer to begin earning straight away rather than enter higher education P. 8 (Communication, D 28: 2006, Title: Efficiency and equity in European education and training systems)

As Levitas (2006) makes clear, this offers a conception of social exclusion as having a low level of aspiration. When families are presented as one of the causes of exclusion, several reasons are given. First of all, because the need to have a job that allows them to subsist is a necessity for some families, therefore young people should be integrated as soon as possible into the labour market. Secondly, growing up in an environment that does not value education as a measure of social promotion does not encourage the

development of concerns or motivation to continue either in university or in lifelong learning programmes. Faced with this situation, the documents analysed propose different educational goals.

2.7.b Educational goals

In addition to the analysis of the identification of young people, the fundamental objectives of lifelong learning policies that are specifically aimed at young people can be explored in greater depth since this category allows us to reveal the discourse on young people considered vulnerable. In this sense we have already defined the different dimensions of the European discourse on lifelong learning: economic competitiveness and social cohesion, inclusion and citizenship (Holford and Mleczko, 2013). We can observe (Table 23) that the most important and obvious discourse in European policies is the economic competitiveness dimension (Basic Skills, New competencies, Employability) and, to a lesser extent, the social cohesion, inclusion and citizenship dimension (Social Justice, Civic participation): “EU funds and programmes, for supporting young people's transition from education to employment and reducing regional disparities” (D 34: 2007 Promoting young people's full participation in education, employment and society). The former are objectives aimed at young people themselves, while the latter are global objectives that allow us to recognise concerns about the type of society that is being built, and, in particular problems of social cohesion linked to social justice.

Table 23. Young people category by codes (educational goals and planned measures)

YOUNG PEOPLE		N	%
EDUCATIONAL GOALS	Basic Skills	7	17,5%
	New competencies	6	15%
	Social Justice	6	15%
	Employability	5	12,5%
	Civic participation	5	12,5%
PLANNED MEASURES	Partnership/Stakeholders	7	15,6%
	Basic skills training	6	13,3%
	Tailored guidance / flexibility	6	13,3%
	Mentoring / counselling	5	11,1%

The development of basic skills is one of the main measures mentioned to achieve employment and social inclusion. In this case, there was an evolution in the representation of the young people that Brine (2006) had observed in a previous period regarding technological skills. The first documents, such as the *White paper on growth competitiveness* (1993), already stated the need to improve certain skills related to new technologies in order to improve human capital and achieve greater competitiveness:

Particular attention is given to continuous training and upgrading skills, basic and introductory training and new technology skills (P.130. White Paper D1:1993. Title: Growth, Competitiveness, Employment: the challenges and ways forward into the 21st century.)

This quotation contrasts with the following, from 2016, where the change in technologies integrated into society is acknowledged, not only for citizens as users but also in relation to certain coding skills that have been integrated into school curricula or labour market inclusion projects in different countries:

Member States, national coalitions on digital skills have been set up and more are planned. Initiatives by these coalitions have led to the training of many thousands of Europeans, in the workforce at large, unemployed, teachers, and young people in digital skills, including coding. (P. 36. Communication, D 66: 2016, Title: A NEW SKILLS AGENDA FOR EUROPE Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness)

This is not an obstacle to continue recommending the development of these skills considered essential for integration into the so-called knowledge society (Brine, 2006), i.e. beyond skills related to integration into the world of work. In this case, they do not only appear in relation to people who are employed or with high capacities, as Brine (2006) points out, but are also considered necessary for all citizens, and specifically those considered as more vulnerable, as in the 2016 document, New Skills Agenda for Europe:

Thus, it specifically recommends that early school leavers and low-skilled young people are offered routes to reenter education and training or second-chance education programmes, address skills mismatches and improve digital skills. The Skills guarantee will provide support to early school leavers, in a broader sense (P. 41. Communication, D 66: 2016, Title: A NEW SKILLS AGENDA FOR EUROPE Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness)

These objectives are commented on in more detail below, grouped into three themes: skills for work, citizenship and participation and prevention of radicalization.

Skills for work

Measures to promote the social inclusion of young people have been high on the EU's political agenda. Two important milestones for social inclusion in the EU policy arena are the current Europe 2020 strategy and its predecessor, the Lisbon Strategy of 2000. Both strategies acknowledge the importance of social inclusion by aiming to reduce social exclusion. "Moreover, over the past two decades, increased policy attention has been given to the social inclusion of young people, with this policy focus becoming more pronounced since the beginning of the crisis" (Eurofound, 2015, p.35).

As early as the 1995 *White paper Towards the learning society* it was noted that the right kinds of abilities and skills were vital due to the " high number of young people leaving education without qualifications and with a feeling of personal failure, who are consequently vulnerable on the employment market through the total lack of any recognised skills" (White Paper. D 2: 1995, Title: Education and training: teaching and learning: towards the learning society, p.15).

In 2016 Working document New Skills Agenda for Europe explains a similar issue in the following way:

At the same time, a high level of skills reduces significantly the risk of individuals becoming unemployed, the risk of poverty and social exclusion and is associated with increasing engagement in society. (P. 3. Communication, D 66: 2016, Title: A NEW SKILLS AGENDA FOR EUROPE Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness)

The paper points out that high-level skills significantly reduce the risks of unemployment and thus protect against the risk of poverty and social exclusion. In another paragraph, it recognizes these skills “skills stock in Europe” – and acknowledges the economic cost of not using these resources – “the macro-economic cost of skills gaps and skills mismatches”, recognising that there is a danger in:

not using the available skills (e.g. those of migrants, women, educated but unemployed youth and those in employment who do not fully use their skills) (P. 4. Communication, D 66: 2016, Title: A NEW SKILLS AGENDA FOR EUROPE Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness)

It is interesting to contrast how, throughout the documents, young people are presented with certain skills, either computer skills, as in the previous case, or other types of skills which, however, have difficulties in being acknowledged by society, and in positioning them in the labour market. This situation places different groups at a disadvantage, sometimes because they come from countries outside Europe that join European society. Such young people may not have certificates to support their studies, or if they do, they often require long and expensive processes of legal recognition. The discourse also shows concern about the negative economic consequences for a society as a whole which does not take advantage of its potentialities. For this reason, it recommends recognizing these skills, mainly in the group of young people (disadvantaged) or of migrant origin. The New Skills Agenda for Europe document also makes recommendations to both governments and civil society:

There are few initiatives that target all groups, including for example, young people or specific disadvantaged groups (low-qualified people, immigrants, women, etc.). However, in parallel with the skills audits undertaken by public authorities, private sector employers are also involved in competence assessment mostly as part of their recruitment process or for evaluating employees' performance (P.9. Communication, D 66: 2016, Title: A NEW SKILLS AGENDA FOR EUROPE Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness)

Citizenship and participation

In relation to engagement in society, high levels of employment are associated with increasing engagement in society. Alongside a lifelong learning model centred on the labour market that sees young people as future workers, there is also, albeit to a lesser extent, the vision of young citizens integrated into a European society. In the context of the Lisbon process, the European Commission opted for the strategy of active citizenship in order to increase social cohesion and reduce the democratic deficit throughout Europe (Mascherini, Manca, & Hoskins, 2009). In 1998, the document Education and Active Citizenship mentioned the Youth for Europe programme to highlight the challenges of youth and in particular listed those groups that seem to have fewer opportunities, such as young people belonging to minorities, or with a migrant background, or coming from especially disadvantaged areas:

Youth for Europe III addresses itself to young people in non-formal learning contexts and aims to contribute to their educational process by supporting youth exchange activities and the development of youth work, with a special emphasis on facilitating the access of disadvantaged young people's participation. The programme explicitly aims to offer young people a concrete experience of European citizenship and thus to encourage them to become more active citizens that many projects focus on attracting the young unemployed, young people belonging to ethnic minorities and from migrant backgrounds, the young disabled, and those young people living in particularly disadvantaged circumstances and localities (P. 13. Report, D 7: 1998, Title: Education and active citizenship in the European Union)

The proposal sought to develop the participation of young European citizens through education and youth policies. One of the challenges was to develop a European feeling of solidarity between participants coming from different countries (EU or bordering). It is a moment of development for the Union, not only valuing the European dimension of the project but considering it "an essential learning element". In this sense, there is an interest in supporting this sense of "community" and of a common project: "Rethinking young people's sense of belonging and engagement in the societies in which they live is an urgent task" (P. 8. Report, D 7: 1998, Title: Education and active citizenship in the European Union). Through this learning, the aim is to overcome problems emanating from co-existence and to focus on the barriers to active citizenship stemming from racism and structural inequalities.

It is worth mentioning that together with the opportunity of citizenship experiences for vulnerable groups, the project includes the experience of volunteering for young people from other environments. The terminology used identified two groups of young people clearly, those from disadvantaged groups and the rest:

participants are encouraged to consider the experiences and identities of both the disadvantaged/marginalised and those belonging to the 'majority' group/s in their communities. (P. 27. Report, D 7: 1998, Title: Education and active citizenship in the European Union)

In this case, volunteering is considered not only as a form of social participation but a measure of skills development that will be valued in future employment integration. It should be noted that this is one of the few documents that mentions the term "marginalised youth":

This project therefore contributes to learning for active citizenship in two ways- not only by improving the scope for social and economic integration for the young disabled themselves, but also by equipping those who are ready to engage in voluntary work with the skills to do so with greater assurance and effectiveness (P. 31. Report, D 7: 1998, Title: Education and active citizenship in the European Union).

In the corpus analysed in relation to vulnerability, it takes 17 years before there is another reference to citizenship related to these groups. It is in the 2015 Paris Declaration of Education. Nine years earlier, in 2006, the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of The Council on Key Competences for lifelong learning included "those which all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment" (p. L 394/13). It recommends providing all young people with the means to attain key competences at a level that enables them to for adult life. It offered a holistic

view of lifelong learning, especially for those young people who need support in achieving their potential for education because of educational disadvantage due to personal, social, cultural or economic circumstances. The declaration of Paris has other nuances. It is the document aimed at promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination. The Paris Declaration

called for action at all levels to reinforce the role of education in promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination, strengthening social cohesion, and helping young people become responsible, open-minded and active members of our diverse and inclusive society (P. 11. Joint Report, D 58: 2015, Title: New priorities for European cooperation in education and training)

Times have changed, and the challenge is now about adapting to new circumstances. Education is important in seeking to prevent and tackle marginalisation but also in promoting intercultural dialogue and preventing radicalization:

ensuring that children and young people acquire social, civic and intercultural competences by promoting democratic values and fundamental rights, social inclusion and non-discrimination as well as active citizenship (ii) enhancing critical thinking and media literacy (iii) fostering the education of disadvantaged children and young people and (iv) promoting intercultural dialogue through all forms of learning in cooperation with other relevant policies and stakeholders ((P. 11. Joint Report, D 58: 2015, Title: New priorities for European cooperation in education and training)

Prevent radicalization

In May 2016,²³ policy makers, practitioners, local actors, academics, youth organisations and civil society members met for a High-Level Colloquium on Promoting Inclusion and Fundamental Values through Education - a Way to Prevent Violent Radicalisation in order to discuss the progress of the implementation of the Paris Declaration at EU, national, regional and local level, and to find ways to better support it (European Commission, 2016a).

In June 2016, the European Commission (2016b) adopted a communication on supporting the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism, and a few months later in November the Council of the European Union (2016c) adopted the Conclusions on the Prevention of Radicalisation Leading to Violent Extremism. A Working Group on Promoting Citizenship and the Common Values of Freedom, Tolerance and non-Discrimination was launched in February 2016 (European Commission, 2017a). The focus on radicalization also affected funding programmes. The Erasmus+ programme gave priority to fighting radicalisation through education and youth action and implementing the objectives of the Paris Declaration. Under the Erasmus+ programme € 13 million were allocated in March 2016 for projects in the fields of education, training and youth, which aim to prevent violent radicalisation and to promote democratic values, intercultural understanding and active citizenship (EPLO, 2016).

Several changes occurred. Firstly, the Paris Declaration objectives were adopted in lifelong learning policies from 2015 onwards. Following the declaration, the European Commission and the Council decided

²³ This section on radicalization has been developed by Tuparevska, Santibañez Gruber & Solabarrieta, in a paper which has been submitted to the journal *Scuola Democratica*.

to give priority to its implementation and to embed its objectives in ET 2020 (European Commission, 2017b). Thus, the Resolution on Promoting Socioeconomic Development and Inclusiveness in the EU through Education noted that:

At the same time our societies face threats from increasing radicalisation, leading in some cases to violence and terrorism. This places additional emphasis on the important roles education and training play when it comes to promoting inclusiveness, active citizenship and common fundamental values, as set out in the Paris Declaration of March 2015 (CEU, 2016b, p. C 105/1)

Secondly, the concept of radicalization started to appear in the policies. The concept could be found in the Council Conclusions on Reducing Early School Leaving and Promoting Success in School (CEU, 2015b), the 2015 Joint Report on the Implementation of the Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training (ET 2020) New Priorities for European Cooperation in Education and Training (CEU, 2015a), the communication Improving and Modernising Education (CEU, 2016e), the council conclusions Developing Media Literacy and Critical Thinking through Education and Training (CEU, 2016a), the Resolution on Promoting Socioeconomic Development and Inclusiveness in the EU through Education (CEU, 2016b), and the Conclusions on Inclusion in Diversity to Achieve a High Quality Education for All (CEU, 2017a). Furthermore, at the 3428th Council meeting in Education, Youth, Culture and Sport held in November 2015, countering radicalization was stressed as one of the main priorities of the Netherlands Presidency in the field of education alongside vocational education and training and the contribution of education to jobs and growth in the framework of the New Agenda for Skills (CEU, 2015c). The usual objectives of education and training such as promoting employability, active citizenship, democracy and equality were broadened to include preventing radicalisation (CEU, 2015c). Thirdly, there was a call for more collaboration among the education sector, the youth sector and other relevant sectors. Given the complexity of radicalisation, an integrated and cross-sectoral approach especially among education, youth work and youth-led organisations was deemed necessary in order to tackle radicalization (CEU, 2016d).

2.7.c *Educative measures*

The importance of the participation of young people has different perspectives in different documents. The document *Key competences for a changing world* (2009) clearly specifies that the main objective is that of labour market inclusion and the more personalised approach to learning for disadvantaged students is a clear trend as stated in the introductory paragraph:

Education and training are central to the Lisbon agenda for growth and jobs and a key element for its follow-up with the 2020 perspective. Creating a well-functioning 'knowledge triangle' of education, research and innovation and helping all citizens to be better skilled are crucial for competitiveness, growth and jobs as well as for equity and social inclusion. The economic downturn puts these long-term challenges even more into the spotlight. Public and private budgets are under strong pressure, existing jobs are disappearing, and new ones often require different and higher level skills. Education and training systems must therefore become much more open and relevant to the needs of citizens, and to those of the labour market and society at large (Communication, D 41: 2009, Title: Key competences for a changing world, p .2).

This is usually accompanied by specific support measures for people who are at risk of drop out of school, or have literacy problems (including migrants) or special educational needs. Motivation to learn is clearly a specific requirement. Further development needed in relation to the organisation of learning in schools is identified: “development of positive attitudes towards further learning” together with critical thinking and creativity. In relation to New Technologies, the document goes beyond management competencies and points out moral requirements necessary to protect those groups most vulnerable to the influence of new technologies:

There is a great deal of activity to equip schools with new technology and to ensure basic ICT skills as part of digital competence. However, young people increasingly learn ICT skills informally, and aspects such as critical thinking in the use of new technologies and media, risk awareness, and ethical and legal considerations have received less attention. As ICT use becomes more pervasive in people’s lives, these issues should be explicitly addressed in teaching and learning (Communication, D 41: 2009, Title: Key competences for a changing world, p. 4).

In the previous paragraph we can see how the family appears as one of the reasons for the exclusion of these young people. In order to overcome this issue, various measures are proposed. This includes changing the pattern and level of working time to reflect new work organization and job needs; adapting the incidence of taxation in ways that encourage more employment; improving the adaptability of the labour market by adjusting the regulatory framework; and improving access to the labour market, especially in less developed regions and among disadvantaged social groups. As might be expected, the set of measures planned in the European lifelong learning policies analysed also corresponds to the objectives set out and described here – focusing on basic skills training, positive partnership and stakeholder relationships, and methods that involve tailored guidance and flexibility.

The Paris Declaration also mentions the development of critical thinking. The same idea is reiterated in the Council Conclusions on Developing media literacy and critical thinking through education (2016):

young people increasingly learn ICT skills informally, and aspects such as critical thinking in the use of new technologies and media, risk awareness, and ethical and legal considerations have received less attention.

2016 Council Conclusions on Developing media literacy and critical thinking through education, express the view that:

The recent terrorist attacks in Europe and other incidents of violent extremism have raised particular concerns about the unparalleled possibilities that the internet and social media provide for extremist groups of all kinds to spread hatred and violence-inciting messages freely and to find an audience among disaffected youth. Radicalisation of the kind leading to violence often has a transnational dimension, whereby networks of extremists engage with vulnerable youth, regardless of borders.

The concern that disadvantaged groups, often without mentioning what they are, are not acting consistently with the objectives proposed in the Lisbon strategy is a constant concern in the second and, especially, in the third period. The particular measures and the overcoming of the needs of people at risk of exclusion are accentuated:

Member States are invited to focus on: — Stimulating demand, and developing comprehensive and easily accessible information and guidance systems, complemented by effective outreach strategies aimed at raising awareness and motivation among potential learners, with specific focus on disadvantaged groups, early school leavers, young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs), low-qualified adults, particularly those with literacy difficulties, and followed up with second-chance opportunities leading to a recognised EQF level qualification (Resolution, D 49: 2011. Title: Council Resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning, p. C 372/5.)

With a view to dealing with the significant impact the crisis has had on youth unemployment and the situation of youth in Europe more generally, a number of important policy initiatives have been put in place. The most important of these initiatives is reflected in the current EU Youth Strategy, that is the framework for EU youth policy cooperation for 2019-2027, based on the Council Resolution of 26 November 2018.

EU youth cooperation shall make the most of youth policy's potential. It fosters youth participation in democratic life; it also supports social and civic engagement and aims to ensure that all young people have the necessary resources to take part in society.²⁴

As Eurofound (2015) express, the measures taken can be broadly categorised into two strands: measures promoting youth employment, employability and labour market participation and more general support measures for youth participation and youth work. Ideally, these two strands complement each other by fostering improved labour market services and active labour market policies targeting young people in conjunction with youth work and welfare policies more generally supporting young people.

On other occasions, measures are presented to help the employment process. The following quotation, from the report Promoting young people's full participation in education, employment and society (2007), encourages member states to take "multilateral surveillance" measures which include approaches such as flexicurity, internships and the promotion of entrepreneurship through access to financing. It also mentions various structural funds²⁵, in coordination with national policies, as tools for developing measures to include young people in the labour market.

Your First Job Abroad" initiative for young workers to make their first mobility experience – will propose in 2008 an initiative for a European quality charter on internships – invites Member States to give more attention to youth in the National Reform Programmes and in multilateral surveillance – invites Member States to establish flexicurity strategies including a specific focus on youth employment objectives, in particular in the light of the approach set out in the June Communication on flexicurity and the further work on flexicurity in the European Council – invites Member States to promote internships with a strong link to training or study curriculum and to define adequate frames for doing so – invites Member States to promote entrepreneurship education as a key competence and to improve conditions for young entrepreneurs e.g. by promoting the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme amongst businesses and financial institutions to facilitate access to finance for the start-up of SME's by young entrepreneurs – encourages Member States to use national policies and EU funds, in particular the European Social Fund,

²⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy_en.

²⁵ Section 2.8 presents an analysis of these funds from the point of view of the selected groups and provides an overview of the funds.

the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the Rural Development Fund or any other relevant EU funds and programmes, for supporting young people's transition from education to employment and reducing regional disparities in this respect (Contribution, D 33: 2007. Title: Contribution of the Council (in the field of education) to the Spring European Council - Key messages to the Spring European Council p. C 372/5).

This example is repeated throughout the second and third periods analysed, as in the Europe 2020 Brochure Integrated Guidelines (26:390 [26:1082]) - D 44: 2010). The risk of losing benefits is clear in the document 'Key competences for a changing world':

In financial terms, by ignoring equity concerns, society loses out on the benefits of education (foregone costs) and incurs direct costs for the state. Direct costs are measurable in terms of income tax losses, health-care, crime and delinquency and public assistance costs. The most socio-economically disadvantaged are the most likely to have the lowest levels of education and they are, therefore, at increased risk of unemployment and social exclusion. Inequity in education thus also entails costs in terms of higher state insurance/health payments and welfare benefits (Communication, D 44: 2010. Title: Communication from the Commission Europe 2020, A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. COM (2010) 2020 , p. 20).

2.7.d Final comments on vulnerable youth population

Williams (2011) defines the portrait of dependence as "needing help, through education, to 'grow up' and attain full independence" (p. 457). The examples found in the ENLIVEN corpus point out that vulnerable young people have more difficulties in work-related learning, so the proposed objectives and measures tend to relate specifically to this issue. In particular, the analysis shows that access to learning is perceived as giving young people the opportunity to develop their personal, social and cultural skills. Logically, lifelong learning become an imperative for vulnerable groups more than an opportunity for personal civic, social and work development, as some authors demand (e.g. See Rizvi, 2007 or Rubertson, 2018).

The educational measures aimed at young people at risk of exclusion, or in a situation of vulnerability are analogous to those related to the 'therapeutization of education' (Brunila, 2012), with interventions aimed at supporting the development of motivation and self-esteem, overcoming possible previous experiences of school failure and favouring motivation towards learning. The aim is to improve employment possibilities, the orientation is relatively individualistic. With no intention of criticizing psychology as a science, different authors criticize therapeutization as a disciplinary form of exercising power (Nicoll & Fejes, 2008) that forges flexible individuals according to the needs of the market. With this Foucauldian base, Brunila (2012, p. 454) coined the concept of 'subjectification' to name the process of appropriation of the discourse of young participants in educational projects in Finland. She believes that this approach legitimizes interventions that ensure a more effective workforce in an increasingly competitive market.

From another angle Levitas (2004) established a typology with the lifelong learning target groups against poverty and social exclusion. The Moral Underclass Discourse (MUD) led by Levitas (2004, p. 44) focuses in a gendered way on the behaviour of the poor, rather than the processes of the wider society. The measures operate following a pattern associated with the so-called youth deficit model in relation to the education system. Without having results that would allow it to be generalized, the analysis of the

documents has made it possible to identify some measures related to this critical approach, such as the following paragraph of the Commission staff working document on efficiency and equity (2006):

Furthermore, the most vulnerable adults are often reluctant to engage in training because of their distrust of formal schemes or representatives of authority. Indeed, European research projects suggest that an important determinant in the participation and learning of the most vulnerable young people is the trust built up between “teachers” and the learner (Power, 2006). Partnership approaches and small-scale schemes can be successful at establishing such constructive relationships because they are often regarded as outside 'official' forms of intervention (Power 2006). Partnerships can also provide alternative provision for young people at risk of dropping out of compulsory education or support the most disadvantaged in their transitions to work. The flexibility of partnerships makes them well-placed to concentrate individuals and their specific needs, though this can be costly and requires sustainable funding over the medium term. (96371:97571) - D 42

The purpose of this section has been to comment on the discourses on vulnerable young people. One of the first findings is that priority is given to the transition towards the labour market. A second finding is that the relationship between citizenship education and lifelong learning has not been commented on in relation to these groups, except on two main occasions. Separated by more than 15 years, both reflect different concerns that derive from the fear not only of poverty but also of the lack of social cohesion, the need for intercultural dialogue and the possible radicalization of the most vulnerable young people. The next section focuses on the funding schemes and the main European funds aimed at overcoming inequalities and supporting vulnerable groups.

2.8 Analysis of funding schemes

The different funding schemes set up by the European Union are important mechanisms for making lifelong learning a reality within the member countries, as well as for tackling social exclusion. Framed within the social cohesion policy they have been established as one countermeasure against market imbalances (Büttner & Leopold, 2016). At the same time, they are important mechanisms for making lifelong learning a reality within the EU member countries, as well as for tackling social exclusion (Cefalo & Kapezov, 2018). A high proportion of EU policies are executed through project-based funding, drawing on funding from EU cohesion policy, social policies and rural development strategies by the so-called Structural Funds (Büttner & Leopold, 2016). In this section the European Social Fund is analysed to identify the discourse of vulnerability and the target groups identified as vulnerable, in order to contrast the target groups identified on lifelong learning policies and funding schemes.

Policies focusing on social cohesion date back to 1989, three years before the creation of the common market in 1992, and established as one of the main countermeasures against anticipated market imbalances (Büttner & Leopold, 2016). Social cohesion policy is defined as a supranational political framework of social solidarity and competitive cooperation which translates into hundreds of thousands of projects financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Social Fund. The main purpose of these financial instruments is the construction of physical and human capital so that European regions and populations affected by social exclusion can build and deploy the necessary capacities and competencies aimed at achieving a dignified and coherent socioeconomic level (Pérez Viejo & Castro

Clemente, 2016). To this end, the aim is for them to become active players in the labour market. Pérez Viejo & Castro Clemente (2016) argue that the differential element of these social cohesion policies is that, due to their legal and financial configuration, their main purpose is to act on the structural causes of social exclusion, without subsidizing poverty.

Since the 1990s EU lifelong learning policy documents have placed emphasis on the European Structural Funds and especially the European Social Fund (ESF). Addressing its third objective of fighting exclusion, the 1995 *White paper on Education and Training: Towards the Learning Society* highlighted the importance of the structural funds in funding education activities for vulnerable groups:

In order to curb this process of marginalisation, Member States have launched a series of measures, based mainly on increasing the number of training or back-to-work schemes and various measures aimed at reintegrating those facing the greatest difficulty and centring on action by local groupings. One can, thus, see the use of enterprise initiatives and workshops and other methods of re-integration through vocational activities, clearly structured and leading to a qualification. Funding such measures weighs very heavily on the public purse and the Community has made a major contribution via the Structural Funds (CEC, 1995, p. 42)

In 2000, the Lisbon strategy was crucial for the EU's system of governance. Since then, development strategies have been the central and highest priority of EU-wide policy-making activities (Büttner & Leopold, 2016). In relation to this, an important part of EU project funding goes towards fulfilling the "Europe 2020 Strategy", i.e. the promotion of a "smart, sustainable and inclusive economy" with high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion"²⁶. Based on the multi-annual EU budget, in the period 2014-2020, Büttner and Leopold (2016) estimate that

approximately EUR 690 billion is allocated to the European Union to finance the different policies initiated by the EU, of which the majority (around 70-80%) are subject to project funding worth EUR 1 billion. one way or another (p. 49)

The European Social Fund²⁷ has emerged both in the policy documents and in the interviews carried out with EU policy experts as the most important funding scheme. The social funds emerged at the end of the 1990s as a support to the welfare state in the use of public resources to promote social policies aimed at creating productive development in a system that combines social inclusion and economic competitiveness (Jenson 2010 in Cefalo & Kapezov, 2018). In 1989, the EU's cohesion policy marked a fundamental reform of European regional policy, representing a fundamental turning point in the coordination of national policies. Its origin goes back to different contributions that address the relationship between the economy and the welfare state, where education is a relevant topic to achieve the proposed social goals. While some of the policy documents do not explicitly refer to the ESF in relation

²⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm

²⁷ In this section we have analysed the ESF. The Youth Guarantee Programme and Upskilling have been deeply analysed in other ENLIVEN workpackages. For further details, please refer to Deliverable 3.2: Report on European governance, its influence on adult education markets, and the role of taxonomies and indicators by Milana and Klatt (eds) (2019).

to vulnerable groups, one of the ESF's priorities is disadvantaged groups and keeping them in work or helping them return to work (European Commission, 2016a). The ESF Regulation stipulates that:

in carrying out the tasks referred to in paragraph 1, the ESF shall support the priorities of the Community as regards the need to reinforce social cohesion, strengthen productivity and competitiveness, and promote economic growth and sustainable development. In so doing, the ESF shall take into account the relevant priorities and objectives of the Community in the fields of education and training, increasing the participation of economically inactive people in the labour market, combating social exclusion — especially that of disadvantaged groups such as people with disabilities — and promoting equality between women and men and non-discrimination (European Commission, 2016b, p. 6).

Hence, the ESF can be seen as a key reallocation mechanism aimed at disadvantaged populations. This emphasis on redistribution mechanisms for the vulnerable strengthened after Europe 2020. The economic crisis of 2007 was already affecting Europe, especially the vulnerable, and the EU turned its attention to these groups. The 2010 Council conclusions on the social dimension of education and training pointed to:

Devoting adequate resources to disadvantaged pupils and schools and, where appropriate, extending the use of the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund, in order to reduce social exclusion through education (CEU, 2010, p. C 135/7)

European Cohesion policy is fully in line with the Europe Strategy 2020 and its main objectives in various fields, including education. The policies of Social funds and Lifelong learning are relevant in the EU discourse. Lifelong learning is inherent to social policies and an investment area (Cefalo & Kapezov, 2018). Cefalo and Kapezov (2018) explain the need to differentiate between a functionalist interpretation related to the development of human capital and a broader interpretation that includes capacity building, citizenship and personal development. The authors propose a complementarity approach. Lifelong learning policies can broaden the Inclusion strategy, as they specifically address the time dimension and life cycle perspective, which remains an underestimated feature of social policies.

Europe 2020 (European Commission, 2010) referred to the structural funds, especially the ESF, as a way of funding actions on fighting social exclusion through the flagship initiative "European Platform against Poverty". The 2012 Communication Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes (European Commission, 2012) focused on the better use of funds such as the European Social Fund at raising participation of disadvantaged groups. The 2017 Conclusions on Inclusion in Diversity to achieve a High-Quality Education For All (CEU, 2017) urged a more efficient use of the European Structural and Investment Funds in order to promote inclusion.

Lifelong learning is inherent to social cohesion policies (Cefalo & Kapezov, 2018). However, some of the policies emphasized disadvantaged groups in general, some focused on specific vulnerable groups. For instance, the 2015 Council conclusions on reducing early school leaving and promoting success in school (CEU, 2015) referred to the European Social Fund as funding mechanisms aimed at early school leavers. The Education and Training Monitor 2014 (European Commission, 2014) and the Education and Training Monitor 2015 (European Commission, 2015e) focused on the ESF as funding mechanism for the young unemployed.

This section analyses the evolution of ESF in its two stages (2007-13 and 2014-20). It is based on the analysis of recent reports given by the European Union on Evaluation of European Funding Schemes. This section is grounded in the content analysis of those documents using the categories developed for the corpus based CDA. The section tries to give an appraisal of the actual state of play within the European Social Fund, covering issues related to vulnerability and vulnerable target groups. As mentioned previously, the main aim is to contrast the target groups identified on lifelong learning policies and funding schemes.

2.8.a European Social Fund (ESF)

While EU social funds have been important in many fields across Europe, they provide an opportunity to many actors and organisations which become beneficiaries of the EU in different forms (public private enterprises, research institutions, regional developmental agencies, etc). It is also relevant for lifelong learning. For the period 2007/2011, the ESF allocated more than 8 billion euros for the design, introduction and implementation of educational reforms and the modernisation of education. Overall, around 10% of the total budget (EUR 35 billion) was earmarked for education and training. In relation to youth participation, it is estimated that, by the end of 2010, a total of 5 million young people, 5.5 million low-skilled people and 576,000 older people had participated in co-financed lifelong learning activities.

The European Social Fund is the European Union's oldest fund and was established together with the Treaty of Rome in 1957, with the aim of improving job opportunities for workers and to raise their standard of living. At first, it was a relatively simple instrument for reimbursing Member States for half of the costs of vocational training and resettlement allowances for workers affected by economic restructuring. Today the ESF has become ever more targeted and strategic, focusing increasingly on systemic reforms, which can benefit as many people as possible.

The ESF is based on co-financing, with financial contributions from both the Member States and the European Commission, and sometimes also the private sector. In the current financing period 2014 – 2020, the ESF is operational in all 28 Member States with an overall budget of €124.9 billion (of which €86.4 billion comes from the EU budget).

The ESF is operating on the ground through Operational Programmes (OP). These translate the overall objectives at European level – getting people into employment, improving education, fostering social inclusion and better public services – into the specific needs of a region or Member States and their citizens. OPs are negotiated between national authorities and the Commission, while their implementation is managed by the relevant authorities in each country. This demonstrates how the ESF is based on the principle of shared management, which means responsibility at the appropriate level.

A main purpose of this financial instrument is to build physical capital and human capital for European regions and populations affected by the economic and social exclusion, to build and deploy the capabilities and competencies aimed at achieving decent and coherent socio-economic levels through their incorporation as active players in systems of production and the labour market (Pérez Viejo & Castro Clemente, 2016). What marks out the policy of European social cohesion in relation to other policies, is that its legal and financial configuration does not subsidize poverty and that its purpose is to act on the structural causes of social and economic exclusion.

2.8.b 2007-13 ESF programming period

The evaluation of the programme reveals that all 28 Member States participated in this first stage, with a total of 117 operational programmes being developed (European Commission - Press release IP/16/3984). Those operations were implemented between January 2007 and December 2015. In relation to the budget, the total allocation was EUR 115.6 billion, of which EUR 76.8 billion came from the EU budget, EUR 35.1 billion from national public contributions and EUR 3.7 billion from private funds.

Another important funding scheme introduced in the Education and Training Monitor 2014 (European Commission, 2014) was the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) with a budget of €6 billion aimed at the young unemployed and NEETs and their integration in the labour market.

The European Commission's (2015a) identified two main objectives of the ESF human capital investment for the period 2007-2013 (Table 24). The first one, improving the quality of education and training systems, makes reference to one of the main recommendations for the development of inclusive policies where staff are suggested as being a key factor in successfully incorporating vulnerable people and designing appropriate interventions (Mangano, 2015). This objective coincides with one of the measures proposed by the lifelong learning policies for vulnerable populations that most frequently appeared in the ENLIVEN corpus analysis (see 2.4).

Table 24. Key objectives of the ESF HC investment

MAIN OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
Improving the quality of education and training systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Increasing the adaptability and competitiveness of employees and businesses.- Improving labour market (policies, partnerships).- Encouraging the implementation of health and safety measures at work.- Promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment;- Reducing Early School Leaving (ESL).- Increasing Lifelong Learning (lifelong learning).
Increasing the participation in the education and training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Fostering the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).- Enhancing Innovation and Research and Development (R&D).- Increasing qualifications- Improving equality in the labour market.

The second main objective, increasing the participation in the education and training, reflects another of the main concerns of lifelong learning policies which is to include the most vulnerable groups since such policies are considered a fundamental premise for achieving an inclusive society (Edwards, Armstrong & Miller, 2001).

The European Union also points to 10 other so-called strategic objectives which relate to the economic and labour market dimension of vulnerability (see figure 2 Dynamic model of vulnerability). Some of these strategic objectives could almost, in fact, be considered as measures to increase social cohesion, e.g.

promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment or improving equality in the labour market. They are countermeasures against market imbalances (Büttner & Leopold, 2016). Other strategic objectives are focused on specific target groups, such as reducing early school leaving. Another third group refers to objectives related to educational measures, either general ones such as increasing lifelong learning or increasing qualifications or aimed at a type of training related to new technologies, such as fostering the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

The European Union in this period also proposes a series of activities (16) to achieve the above objectives. These activities can be related to the different educational measures that we have previously pointed out in the categories book used for the codification and analysis of the ENLIVEN corpus (see methodological appendix). As can be seen in Table 25, the activities refer to a variety of measures related both to people's education and their access to the labour market. Accompaniment and support strategies are also identified, as well as activities related to improving the quality of education and the organisation of teaching. Finally, we identify policy measures related to changes in the structure of the labour market or safety at work. The analysis of the documents on Evaluation of this first period do not allow us to relate key activities with any specific target group. However, as can be seen in section 2.8.d, several key lessons are presented as recommendations for different groups.

Table 25. Relationship between Key activities of ESF HC investment and categories of ENLIVEN in the dimension planned educational measures

Measures (ENLIVEN categories)	Key activities of ESF HC investment in 2007-2013
- Provide Work experience	- Work-based learning
	- Job opportunities and internships
	- Individual training activities
- Education/training	- Out of school activities
	- Individual financial incentives and support
	- Recognition of prior learning
- Employability	- Outplacement and restructuring support
	- Career guidance
- Provide support measures	- Prevention of ESL
	- Support to networks
	- Development of new or improved curricula
	- Capacity-building of teachers and training staff
- Organization of measures	- Development of quality assurance measures of E&T
	- Employer training and financial support
	- Innovative and more productive forms of work
- Political measures	- Health and safety at work

According to the evaluation of the ESF 2007-2013 programme (European Commission, 2016b), the ESF broadened the scope of national interventions and targeted groups which otherwise would have had no

access to different services, such as people with disabilities, young people at risk of early school leaving and low-qualified unemployed people, and in the area of social inclusion it helped reach new target groups which until then were neglected in several countries.

While the European Commission's (2015) evaluation of the European Social Fund (ESF) investment in human capital for the period 2007-2013 provides valuable information on the different target groups for that programming period, it does not cover only lifelong learning but has a broader range of coverage as can be seen from the main objectives and the main types of activities that ESF human capital investment focused on. This means that while the findings could apply to lifelong learning, it is not necessarily so.

In order to identify the target groups, the documents analysed are focused in the OPs, which vary according to the needs identified in each country. While the ESF is a major funder of lifelong learning across the EU27 and the ESF regulations offer explicit support for lifelong learning, there is no specific requirement for ESF to be used in this way and usually the activities funded by ESF are aligned with the national priorities (ECORYS, 2012).

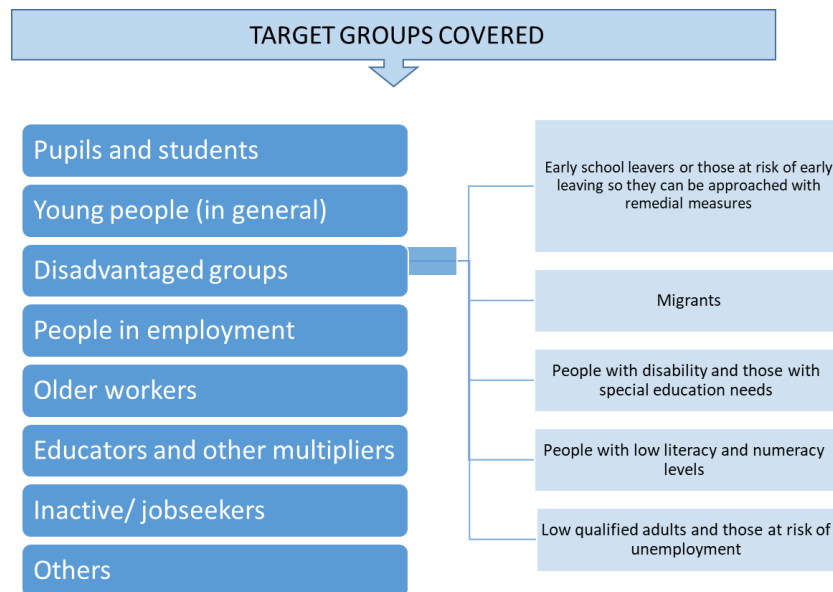
All OPs sought to promote equal opportunities and access for all pupils, students and adults to education and learning. Accordingly, a number of disadvantaged groups were identified as priority groups, including:

inactive and long-term unemployed persons, low skilled unemployed and employed persons, people from ethnic minority background (e.g. Roma), persons with disabilities, orphans, children and young persons from low income families, migrants and asylum seekers, single parents, persons returning to the workforce from home duties, victims of domestic violence, persons suffering from substance use, ex-offenders, young people in social correction establishments, and homeless people. More generally, a number of OPs stressed the importance of gender equality and active ageing in ensuring equal access to training and education opportunities and the labour market. (European Commission, 2015, p.45)

As we can see in the previous quotation, there is no clear definition of what a vulnerable group is; rather, different collectives are identified that are identified as disadvantaged and consequently are considered as priority groups. That is to say, they point out vulnerability in collective terms as vulnerable populations that refers to the concept of "embodied vulnerability" (Fineman, 2008). These groups are considered to have an internal risk factor and should therefore be protected. At the same time, there is a risk of reinforcing the exclusion process due to its possible stigmatization (Abrisqueta et al., 2015).

The evaluation of this period shows the general categories of target groups, and also gives a more specific overview of disadvantaged groups covered (Figure 9). The target groups identified are associated with different circumstances. They represent different stages of the life cycle (students, youth, adults, and older). Besides the explicit reference to pupils and young people (in general), it is also worth mentioning that they are characterised either by their relationship to the world of work (people in employment, older workers, inactive/jobseekers) or by their educative function and the capacity to exercise the multiplier effect (educators and other multipliers). That information related to target groups does not refer to vulnerable groups since there is another section where the groups considered disadvantaged are explicit. These groups are six in number - three of them are defined by their educational level or their educational difficulties and one of them by personal characteristics: migrants.

Figure 9. Most relevant target groups covered by the ESF



Source: Own elaboration based on European Commission (2015).

2.8.c 2014-20 ESF programming period

In the current programming period 2014 – 2020, the ESF is operational in all 28 Member States with an overall budget of €124.9 billion (of which €86.4 billion from the EU budget). During this programming period, the ESF focuses on a limited number of priorities to ensure maximum impact, with an emphasis on youth employment and social inclusion.

The available data (<https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/>) on achievements under the European Structural and Investment Funds for 2014-2020, shows that ESF projects are making very good progress: over 30% of projects have already been selected for funding. The projects under the Youth Employment Initiative even show a 60% implementation rate.

According to the European Commission's (2018) evaluation of the European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020 the overall performance data reported to the end of 2017 show that 15,3 million people have been supported in their search for a job, training or education or have benefitted from social inclusion measures (p.2)

In aggregate terms, the ESF and YEI programmes have already delivered the following achievements:

- 15,3 million participants supported, including 7,9 million unemployed and 4,9 million inactive participants;
- 2,8 million long-term unemployed participants supported;
- amongst all participants 1,4 million were in employment, 1,9 million have gained a qualification and 870 000 participants were in education or training thanks to ESF or YEI support.

Given that this period has not yet finished, the available documentation is less than in the previous period, but the data from the intermediate evaluation (European Commission, 2018) allows us to see that the results mainly value the improvement of qualifications in order to achieve greater labour entry, as it appears in the three thematic areas related to lifelong learning policies (see Table 26).

Table 26. Principal achievements of the European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020 until the end of 2017

KEY THEMATIC AREA	PLANNED FUNDS	ALLOCATED FUNDS TO PROJECTS	HIGHLIGHTED RESULTS
Employment	EUR 60 billion	EUR 30 billion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 7,4 million participants had been supported; - 722 000 participants had gained a qualification; - 1,1 million participants were in employment, including self-employment.
Social exclusion	EUR 63,7 billion	EUR 30 billion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3,3 million participants have been supported - 220 000 participants were in employment, including self-employment; - 152 000 participants have gained a qualification; - 164 000 inactive participants were engaged in job searching; - 42,5 million citizens are now expected to benefit from ERDF support allocated to the modernisation of health systems. - 58% of people living in rural areas are covered by over 3 400 local development strategies implemented by Local Action Groups (LAGs) that benefited from 18% of the available public funds.
Education	EUR 49 billion	EUR 25 billion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4,5 million participants have been supported; - 1 million participants have gained a qualification; - 583 000 participants were in education or training; - 1,8 million students (26% of the target) should benefit from ERDF projects investing in a schools infrastructure;

Source: Own elaboration based on European Commission COM (2018) 816 final

Regarding target groups in this period the European Commission identifies the following ones:

those with low skills represent 46% of participants; 16% were migrants, had a foreign background or were from minorities (including marginalised communities such as the Roma). The doubling of the number of ESF and YEI participants since end-2016 clearly indicates a sharp acceleration in the implementation of projects on the ground. (European Commission, 2018, p 11).

It will be necessary to wait for the next evaluation at the end of the period in order to be able to know more precisely the beneficiary groups of the ESF.

2.8.d Funding schemes and the vulnerable

With regard to the relationship between funding schemes and vulnerable groups, mainly the ESF, and especially through lifelong learning policies, two main issues must be considered. On the one hand, how vulnerable groups are identified and, on the other,, what kind of measures implemented within these groups are financed by the ESF.

Regarding the identification of groups, first of all it should be clarified that the ESF evaluations do not speak of vulnerable groups, but that within the target groups to which their funding is directed they name a series of groups that they identify as disadvantaged groups (European Commission, 2015, p. 45).

In addition to that it can be noted that is not clear what is considered as a disadvantaged group, as no definition is provided. Looking at the European Social Fund Guidance document on the programming period 2014-2020 Monitoring and Evaluation of European Cohesion Policy (European Commission, 2015d) we see that there is no common definition of disadvantaged participants at EU level and as imposing one could cause administrative burden, it may be determined at the national level but “must be well documented, sent to the Commission and, where possible, should refer to existing official (national) definitions” (European Commission, 2015d, p.20).

The European Commission also provided the following list of groups to be identified by the national policies: those who live in jobless households, those who live in jobless households with dependent children, those who live in a single adult household with dependent children, migrants, people with a foreign background, minorities, those with disabilities, homeless, those from rural areas, and other disadvantaged referring to any disadvantages not covered by the other indicators (European Commission, 2015d).

Table 27. Groups and measures identified on European Social Funding

GROUPS	MEASURES
Young learners	- offering a mix of learning activities combined with advice and guidance.
Higher education students and researchers	- providing support which meets the demand
Employed, unemployed and adults	- providing training which fills in existing gaps, is delivered in a flexible way and is connected to the labour market needs.
Disadvantaged adults (such as long-term unemployed and people with low skills)	- paying particular attention to the nature of the courses offered (which should be linked to the labour market needs and build on the existing skills of the participants) - delivering courses in a flexible and attractive way (including flexible scheduling, use of the ICT learning tools and the delivery of learning outside the classroom).

Source: Own elaboration based on European Commission 2015 (p. 11)

Regarding the measures implemented, it should be noted that the express key objective is supporting the customization of interventions to the needs of specific target groups (European Commission, 2015, p 11). This aspect has already been mentioned in the analysis of the discourse we have undertaken on planned measures (3.6) in the sense of the importance of methods that involve tailored guidance and flexibility. As we have commented, this approach is supported by authors who have highlighted the good results

obtained in those programmes in which personalised guidance and advice is given to young people (Rodríguez-Soler & Verd, 2018). It remains a controversial issue due to what could be considered a moralistic approach to young people who are represented as unable to be motivated to become involved in courses or even in the labour market (Levitas, 2006). Success has also been highlighted in those measures in which its application is tailored to the needs of each targeted group (Table 27).

2.9 Policy maker interviews

This section draws on the interviews carried out with policy makers²⁸ about the role of vulnerable groups in lifelong learning policies. The interviews were conducted in 2018. The results are structured around five issues: the relationships between vulnerable groups and the policies of lifelong learning in terms of definition of vulnerability and identification of vulnerable groups, implications and challenges for lifelong learning policies, participation of the vulnerable groups. To finish the section, some proposals are identified.

2.9.a Vulnerability and vulnerable target groups

As discussed in section 2.3. Enliven keywords on the European policy document, the people interviewed found it difficult to delimit the concept of vulnerability and pointed out a variety of terms they considered similar (disadvantaged, unemployed...). They felt more comfortable identifying groups targeted by lifelong learning policies (women, migrant, Roma...) in order to overcome social exclusion.

In fact, the people interviewed comment that there is not a clear distinction between social exclusion and vulnerability. Therefore, from their point of view the socially excluded are the vulnerable people. In the words of participants: ‘many of these terms in fact that you mentioned are synonyms, they cover the same thing, even if it’s just different terms or words’ (SP3). In the end, what is truly important is tackling these problems, doing something about it and offering actual solutions:

You know when I started to work in international adult education, we spent a lot of time on terminology. And I think today the terminology is not so important, the important thing is that work is being done, results are achieved, and we can spend all our time on discussing terminology. (SP3)

One consequence of this point of view is that lifelong learning policies have been orientated towards entry into the world of work. This causes tensions between the labour market orientation and the social orientation of lifelong learning that can be found in the economic context in the EU in the early 2000s. One of the main reasons for the disappearance of lifelong learning from the international agenda during the 1970s and 1980s was the negative impact of the economic crisis at the time which resulted in lifelong

²⁸ For further information about participants see Methodological Appendix, Annex V.

learning being conceived as a measure for continuous economic growth (Volles, 2016). Similarly, today lifelong learning for social purposes is again under the threat of being overlooked.

Participants expressed concerns that some of these objectives such as fighting social exclusion are overshadowing lifelong learning itself. Furthermore, several of the interviews emphasized the tension between employability and the social aspects of lifelong learning:

But in fact if you look at texts and so on or if you look at the subtexts of the strategies they are meant to be more general, but there has always been a bit of a tension in adult education, lifelong learning policies between a stronger orientation towards the labour market and the more general, more liberal orientation of adult education. (SP1)

2.9.b Implications for lifelong learning policies

Lifelong learning is considered an important tool for vulnerable groups to overcome social exclusion (Stenfors-Hayes, Griffiths & Ogunleye, 2008). In the interviews, lifelong learning emerged as one of the main measures against social exclusion. However, although both the policy documents and the interviews stress the role of lifelong learning in fighting social exclusion, evidence on how lifelong learning programmes can contribute to fostering social inclusion and fighting exclusion is scarce (Edwards, Armstrong & Miller, 2001). Regarding the role of social exclusion in lifelong learning, all the participants agreed that social exclusion plays an important role. In fact, it is one of the main objectives of lifelong learning in EU policy:

Well of course lifelong learning is, the whole purpose is first of all for the personal development of the individual and then for their social inclusion in life and society and then of course comes the employability and the access to the labour market, but education and training, education especially and adult learning and the sort of basic skills development that we are trying to do, it's first of all about developing the individual and their sort of integration. (SP5)

The analysis of the answers allows us to identify two main concerns of the people interviewed: firstly, they showed a concern to include the most disadvantaged groups in the projects and, this being the case, to access projects appropriate to their interests. The second refers to the concept of lifelong learning itself; in this case it has an ontological dimension since it considers whether focusing on lifelong learning as a measure to prevent social exclusion reduces the original meaning of adult education, as one of the interviewees himself points out in his reference to it being a "repair shop".

Regarding the first issue, participants refer to the difficulty of reaching the most vulnerable groups, this idea is related to the results of previous research on the Matthew effect (Bornoli and Liechti, 2018).

We should revise our criteria of what we are counting and so in the policy of social exclusion, against social exclusion I think we can also develop new criteria for the objectives, it is maybe not the objectives that people are out of the statistics with many tricks that I have got to know across Europe, how to drop adults' unemployment, how to not have them in the statistics, so they are, the government itself is excluding very often or tries to exclude those whom we should look at when we organize adult learning. (SP6)

In relation to the concept of lifelong learning, the respondents express their concern that lifelong learning becomes limited to the fight against social exclusion. Instead, they consider that the concept of social exclusion should be questioned because lifelong learning has already been swallowed up and is disappearing from policies (SP6). According to the interviewees other aims of lifelong learning such as personal development and personal growth are equally important and should not be neglected.

Adult education is more than a repair shop. In the current narrative adult education is often seen as repairing what has been done or what has been done wrong in the formal system, in the school system, and then they send people to us so we can fix them. You provide them with some basic skills, you give them some vocational training and then they get a job and everything is fine... Social inclusion is absolutely necessary but we are much more than that (SP1)

2.9.c Challenges for lifelong learning policies

Implementing a variety of measures would ensure that lifelong learning policies and systems are comprehensive and equitable (Lee, Thayer & Madyun, 2008). Another of the topics dealt relates to the evolution of lifelong learning policies towards overcoming social exclusion and entry into the world of work. This issue presents several challenges according to the interviewees. First of all, they mentioned the need for targeted measures and policy responses aimed at these objectives. Concerning measures for tackling social exclusion, a number of measures were proposed. The measures include cooperation among the different actors that are involved in lifelong learning, providing basic skills, especially digital skills and social skills, more flexible systems for recognition and validation of skills, courses that are relevant for the needs of the users, different financial incentives such as travel allowances, non-financial incentives such as training or study leave, support services and accompanying vulnerable groups, access to new technologies, better governance structures, simplifying the bureaucratic processes and paperwork, and putting in place comprehensive strategies that take into account all the actors such as the learners and providers, and that define clearly who works with whom to achieve the defined objectives.

Secondly, other measures are related to the empowerment of these groups. Using positive language, building a safe, trusting environment, and making them feel welcomed and confident were recurring themes. Moreover, it was commented that it is very important to help them find an appropriate job that gives them meaning and purpose, as well as financial autonomy.

In relation to how lifelong learning policies address those challenges the participants referred to one of the most relevant documents which is the Upskilling measures. According to the participants, an important part of the latest EU strategy, the strategy on Upskilling Pathways, is making sure that those who need upskilling are the most targeted:

what we try to do in the Upskilling Pathways is to reach out to these people, we ask the member states first of all to identify them, the target groups that would need upskilling and then to organize outreach, to raise their awareness of the benefits of learning, and the fact that if they did improve their basic skills that would also improve their lives, but then the other thing is that we feel all these people should start with is skills assessment, because of course they have talents and they have skills and these things need to be documented. It would also be a motivation for them to see that they are not starting at zero. I mean most European people have all been to school and they

have maybe broken off their schooling, but they certainly have skills and competences that can be validated and can be documented. (SP5)

When implementing policy measures, one of the first steps is to ensure that those who are excluded have access to lifelong learning. The importance of reaching out to these groups and getting them to engage with different learning activities and courses emerged in several of the interviews:

...I think an important step would be for them to put one foot into any education provision, that is the main step, sometimes they don't dare to do it, they don't know how to do it, but once they are engaging with education it's easier for them to continue and to feel more part of society. (SP4)

Another topic that appears in the interviews is the importance of promoting lifelong learning in all sectors, from health to security, especially at the local government level in order to ensure that disadvantaged and socially excluded people are offered the best possible learning opportunities and in order to have 'urban, inclusive, and sustainable development' (SP3). Furthermore, better dissemination of best practices and research findings was considered to be needed. Currently there seems to be a lack of visibility of EU research and a lot of money being spent time and again on the same issues:

...there are so many examples of good practice that are not disseminated in the right way. Just done, and then after 10 years they reinvent them because we say everything is repeated. You can tell, I've been for the Erasmus programme and I have been an expert to select programmes last year, so I thought they come again and again, why don't they learn from former projects, why don't they get informed, what is the story behind it. (SP6)

In order to overcome these limitations, some ideas appear in the interviews, such as the dissemination of research results and the sharing of good practice. Participants talked about various successful practices from the 1980s such as adding extra rooms or an extra building to schools where mothers can take up different adult education courses throughout the day while their children are at school. However, these good practices have now fallen into disuse. Furthermore, very little information is available on past projects and research, and even less information is available online on the EU's official web page:

There have been so many good things developed, but they can now ensure it is... You are reinventing the wheel because you have no documents about the recommendations, and the few books and recommendations from projects that were made are disappearing. So I asked are they on the internet? Even the recommendations from the time when I was at the Commission I cannot find any more in the internet. So they say yes, we have to be up-to-date, we have to renew the pages. I said so somebody who wants to know the history, who wants to know the achievements 10 years ago, they are bound to repeat everything. So this is such a waste of money...(SP6)

2.9.d Participation of vulnerable groups

The social inclusion of vulnerable groups and individuals should ensure greater participation in decision-making on all aspects affecting their lives. This would lead to better access to their fundamental rights (Di Nardo, Cortese & Lounsbury, 2010). Improving representation and involvement in the shaping and designing of EU lifelong learning policies and programmes would provide agency and voice for these

people and would ensure that lifelong learning is truly accessible to the vulnerable. In this regard some positive developments were pointed out because different member states across Europe are beginning to emphasize the need for a stronger learner voice in the design of EU policies:

When it comes to potential learners the tradition to consult learners themselves is now getting stronger. We know we have members in Spain that have very strong learner representatives, but also Ireland, the UK and so on, and there has now been a stronger push to, for example if there is a conference on a particular issue, that representatives of these learners are also involved. (SP1)

There seems to be a greater awareness that learners themselves need to be asked about policy and about what they need 'rather than policy makers trying to develop policies that they think they need' (SP5).

Concerning the way vulnerable groups are represented and involved in the shaping and designing of EU lifelong learning policies and programmes, there was general agreement that this is one area that still requires a lot of work and that should be improved. Being recognized and having a voice in education entails an active participation in decision-making as well as in debates about social justice and injustice. Currently, the vulnerable are represented through different civil society organizations and NGOs that work with these groups: 'I suppose it is civil society that represent those groups that can make their voice heard...' (SP4).

In the bounded agency approach lifelong learning is understood as a complex process that entails interrelations between key actors ranging from the individual learner to employers, educators, institutions, governments, and policies, and therefore policy measures need to take into account both individual as well as structural and institutional barriers (Boeren, 2011). According to the Lisbon Treaty, civil society has to be involved. It is through the dialogue between civil society and member states and other stakeholders that the needs of different vulnerable groups are brought to the attention of the European Commission. The interviews revealed different ways of lobbying and involvement from formal to very informal ones. However, most of the policy designing starts with a public consultation process where the organizations representing the vulnerable have an opportunity to express their views and to highlight their needs. Yet, it has been almost two decades since the last big consultation, the consultation on the Memorandum of Lifelong Learning, held on the topic of lifelong learning which involved numerous stakeholders:

... it is nearly 20 years ago now that we had the big consultation on lifelong learning but that was really a very systematic and very comprehensive consultation. I don't think we've had anything like that in the meantime because we published the Memorandum and then on the basis of the Memorandum there was about a year of consultation and there was a whole website around that but I don't think it is on line any more now... But there were really lots and lots of NGOs that reacted to that both at European level and at national level. There is also the ... solidarity platform and a lot of their ideas were considered in the drafting of the resolution when the Commission communication was drafted (SP5)

Nevertheless, what is missing is a transversal platform that would offer a broader view of what is happening across Europe and that would tackle the problem of vulnerability in a more comprehensive and cross-sectoral way. Currently, each organization works on a certain issue or with certain groups and tries

to lobby without having the full picture and without much contact with other organizations tackling similar and interconnected issues:

Today we consider that there is a very sectoral and very instrumental view of civil society that has been organized by vertical sectors and that today we lack a vision that is more citizen-centred, more cross-sectional view of things. But it can be said that there is a tradition of about 20 years, a tradition of dialogue between the Commission and Parliament and civil society organizations. It is not very effective, but it exists. What is missing today is a more transversal vision... (SP2)

2.9.e Proposals

The proposals set out below relate to the possibility of gaining experience through European projects and the possibility of improving their stability with more continuous funding. A recurrent theme in the interviews was that of having past research and good practices easily accessible online, which could prevent repetition and help save money that could be better used in order to tackle social exclusion and provide people with access to different learning opportunities. In this regard, some participants noted that the projects might also have a longer life span in order to ensure they are fully and properly implemented, monitored and evaluated, instead of the usual 3-year life span. Five or ten years seemed to those interviewees to be a more realistic time frame for a project to be developed and to be well established, so it is strong enough to stand on its own or for the government to take over.

The issue of funding is a growing concern (Panitsides and Anastasiadou, 2015). In the interviews it is linked to the sustainability of EU projects. Although the European Social Fund has been very good at proving support for those that are excluded and at keeping the concept of social exclusion on the EU agenda, other types of financing are considered to be needed as well:

...of course while the European Social Fund is very good, it sometimes means that member states don't invest their own funds in these groups, but then when the European funding stops then there is no continuity. Of course this is a problem for sustaining the EU provision of education and training for people in need of social inclusion, in need of upskilling for the labour market or so. (SP5)

New modes of financing would ensure that successful projects with good track records are able to continue running instead of vanishing and being forgotten as is often the case nowadays. The literature on this subject confirms a tendency to decrease public spending on education, while adult education policies focus more on models of mercantilization and utilitarianism (Panitsides and Anastasiadou, 2015). This topic has significant implications for vulnerable groups, as discussed in the previous section.

2.9.f Concluding remarks

The review and analysis of the key European level policy documents (1992-2018) in the field of lifelong learning highlights that there are several groups considered as vulnerable, at risk of exclusion or directly referred to as disadvantaged. The chapter comments that there is no definition of what is considered vulnerable, either from the bibliography or from the consultation with the experts interviewed. As we have developed a methodological process of corpus-based critical discourse analysis, one of the first stages of

the process was to identify key words related to our research issue, vulnerability. For this reason, in our case we opted for several ways (bibliographical review, interviews, previous ENLIVEN reports) to identify the ENLIVEN eight key words, which in our case correspond to the concept of vulnerability.

There are overlapping terms but they are used in different texts and paragraphs. Although the concepts vary throughout the period analysed (1992-2018), it can be seen that most of the time, in the last few years, the focus has been on the world of work (unemployed) or the level of training that allows people access under better conditions to the world of work (low skilled or under skilled). This process coincides with the Lisbon strategy and Europe 2020 when education plays a key role in development. The financial crisis of 2008 increased levels of unemployment and poverty among different sectors of the European population and there has been a pressure on policies to identify indicators to monitor progress in these fields. The groups selected for analysis as vulnerable or at risk are described in the following terms:

- Personal factors (origin, level of education, age)
- Structural factors (geographical areas, social environment, and characteristics of the global society)
- Objectives of the education proposed to them (related to employment or pre-insertion periods)
- Educational measures (work experience, personal support or organisational measures (multi-agency, educational quality))

It should be noted that in the 68 documents analysed, when they refer to the groups of people with low qualifications, young people are not usually mentioned. On the contrary, in these cases, adults without qualifications are mentioned, and above all, adults who are working and need to improve their qualifications in order not to be relegated as a result of changes in the labour market and social innovation. This situation raises the following question: whether young people rather than an age category is constructed as a social category linked to the world of work. That is to say, if when young people are mentioned it is done in relation to situations of unemployment, risk of exclusion or exclusion (mainly social), and to a much lesser extent when groups that are working are mentioned, does this mean that once they have entered the labour market, adulthood is reached?

Another related issue is that the different vulnerability actors related to different keywords, are attributed with different vulnerability factors. The two groups directly related to the world of employment are considered as at risk due to structural factors linked to an increasingly competitive and globalised society. This same macro approach appears as the first cause of vulnerability and risk. However, when speaking of disadvantaged and unemployed groups, it is characterized in relation to their origin in disadvantaged areas or communities (rural areas or degraded urban spaces). Again, in this approach, it is possible to contrast the variety of representations of the identified groups.

It seems consistent with this discourse that the training offer focuses on the training of employment-related skills, be they basic skills or new skills for employment. The review of the purpose of adult education in the European Union identifies two main objectives, linked to two visions of lifelong learning, one related to the neoliberal model connected to entry to the labour market, and the other related to the idea of justice and social cohesion, one of the main challenges of the EU. It is curious that when analysing the educational objectives for the different groups, the categories of social justice or civic participation

rarely appear. When they do, they appear to be related to the groups considered to be excluded (including young people).

When comparing these results with the analysis carried out in the target groups by funding schemes, in particular with Social Funding, it can be seen that the typology presented by the EU indicates several groups, and among them three can be related to the keywords chosen in the analysis (disadvantaged, inactive and older workers). In this case, the group called disadvantaged includes a set of subcategories related to what we call personal factors of vulnerability: early schools leavers, migrants, people with disabilities, people with low literacy and low qualified adults.

This is one of the dimensions of vulnerability. However, rarely do the other two dimensions identified in the model (figure 2) appear: the political/civic dimension and the social dimension. The citizen participation dimension rarely appears in the two main documents: Active Citizenship and the Paris Declaratio and when it appears it relates to youth groups. This is one of the results of this analysis. However, the concept of active citizenship (Mascherini, Manca, & Hoskins, 2009) does not refer only to this vital period of policy. In the interviews, this theme appears when the interviewees refer to the scant participation of vulnerable groups in the development of their own policies, despite the fact that, in theory, participation in decision-making that affects their lives is a fundamental right (Di Nardo, Cortese & Lounsbury, 2010).

On the other hand, the social dimension of relational support that allows us to face situations of vulnerability without falling into exclusion is not mentioned explicitly in the corpus analysed and social networks are rarely mentioned as one of the educational strategies.

The budget headings for the second period of the Social Fund (2014-2020), allocate a very similar budget to the two objectives related to lifelong learning: employment and social inclusion. In this case, the indicators are very similar for both themes, as the obtaining of qualifications, job search and achieving workent are repeated.

3 CONSTRUCTION OF, AND DEALING WITH, VULNERABILITY AT NATIONAL LEVEL

3.1 Introduction

Considering the selected dimensions explored above, this chapter will provide an overview of responses to youth vulnerability across European countries (and Australia). Then, it will discuss the national level policy measures vis-à-vis social inclusion and exclusion, focusing on how the policy targets have been constructed as vulnerable. In doing so, however, we need to point out to the limitations of the selected approach.

First of all, empirical data from public sources, which we rely on in this exercise, are only available according to the effective definitions used in those datasets. As these definitions are constructed according to the ideals of the users of this data -usually policy makers and other stakeholders – it is inevitable that there is more information available on the economic dimension of social exclusion, and less on the other dimensions.

Thus, in this section, we will bring back in the narrower concept of social inclusion and social exclusion, reminding the reader that those defined as vulnerable are in between social inclusion and exclusion, or on the margins of social inclusion, as discussed in the conceptual sections of this report. Still, the more narrowly economical take on social exclusion is rather characteristic of European policies.

In the EU, the concept of social exclusion was introduced at the end of the 20th century when European countries had to admit that poverty, which was believed to have been eradicated for good by the post-Second World War Keynesian welfare state, had not vanished. There was a need to develop appropriate vocabulary for dealing with increasing, often long-term unemployment, people living on low incomes, homelessness and other features of poverty. In the 1990s, the start of the European Social Model (the ESM - described for the first time in the EC White Paper on Social Policy in 1994²⁹) and European Employment Strategy (EC White Paper of on ‘Growth, competitiveness, employment: the challenges and ways forward into the 21st century’ in 1993, Essen Strategy in 1994, Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997^{30, 31}) can be located. The ESM brought along notions of social inclusion, solidarity and social cohesion. The notion of social exclusion, however, was born earlier than the European social model. The concept entered the EC from France, where it was already in use in the 1960s and 1970s. In France, it was used with a different meaning – it referred to ‘outsiders’ from mainstream society, who were not necessarily poor. The European Commission adopted the concept in the 1980s and in European circles it acquired a meaning through being a constituent part of the European Social Model.

The European Social Model can be thought of as a response to recognizing the existence of poverty and social inequality. From the very beginning, social exclusion was conceptualised as a multidimensional

²⁹ <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/eurwork/industrial-relations-dictionary/european-social-model>

³⁰ <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/eurwork/industrial-relations-dictionary/european-employment-strategy>

³¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=101&langId=en>

process. The state of social exclusion referred to a situation of decreased or denied access to one or several social institutions that are central to wellbeing: labour market, political system, legal system, welfare system, community and family. Such separateness develops over time, by the way of gradual development and accumulation of separation from each of the institutions (Atkinson 2000, p. 1037-1043). In the beginning, the concepts of social inclusion and exclusion distinguished between 'in'-s and 'out'-s rather than between poor and rich. Analytically speaking, rich people can also be excluded, although in everyday life denying them access to the main institutions would not be common practice. Social exclusion started to refer to poverty only later, in the European usage. The concept was used for framing the situation of limited consumption of goods and services, and of limited access to social welfare only in the 1980s. In 1990s, the EU (more concretely, the EC) adopted the term in connection with the fight against poverty and social inequality. In the 2000s, it had become one of the central concepts in the vocabulary of the European Union. This, and accession of new states into the EU, raised the possibility that policy interventions that formerly were addressing specific target groups (e.g Roma people) were being replaced with the rhetoric of social exclusion (Silver 2007).

In contemporary social policy thinking, social exclusion is a phenomena which has several aspects (Helemäe 2016). Firstly, social exclusion and vulnerability are conceptualised as multidimensional phenomena. There are several factors which increase the risk of poverty and, according to Eurostat, the most significant factors in 2016 were:

- Being unemployed,
- Having been born outside EU-28,
- Low level of education, but especially low level of parents' education,
- Belonging to age group 18-24 year olds,
- Having some activity limitation.

Being unemployed is the most significant risk factor of poverty, by far (the difference between EU-28 average and unemployed was 44 percentage points in 2016). The second largest difference is between native and immigrant populations (16) and the third largest difference between having only lower secondary education (11). Being in age group 18-24 year olds (7) and having an activity limitation (6), too, are factors explaining the difference in the risk of poverty (Eurostat³²).

Secondly, individual factors may combine, and often this is the case. This leads to increased risk of exclusion in certain sections of society, like unemployed people with low level of competences, young people not employed, not in education, not in training and young immigrants with low level of educational attainment.

Thirdly, social exclusion is conceptualized as a process rather than as a status. This viewpoint guides us to look for different degrees of social exclusion. The risk of social exclusion might be only relatively mild, as it might be in the case of young people who have chosen to take a gap year and spend it trying out different volunteering options. Or, it might take the form of severe material deprivation in the case of young unemployed immigrants with low levels of education and poor language skills. In the case of a combination

³² Europe 2020 indicators - poverty and social exclusion.

of different factors, disadvantages accumulate, and this is a powerful element in increasing the risk of exclusion.

Fourth, a causal model and causal mechanisms describing how people from a particular societal category slip into social exclusion is necessary. A black-box model simply stating that a particular societal category is at risk of poverty or in severe material deprivation is not enough because for developing and implementing effective policy measures, causal links between societal circumstances and categories need be described.

An adequate model of how social exclusion develops and how it can be reduced gives a more solid base for developing interventions that effectively target social exclusion.

Therefore, when moving on to empirical analysis of vulnerable target groups prioritised in national level policy measures to enhance social inclusion, the analysis will more often derive from these narrower concepts related to economic dimensions of social inclusion, and from this background, vulnerable target groups are defined as those at risk of that kind of social exclusion. This is due to the fact that policy is framed in these ways in European countries we consider, and that is useful to remember when we head towards empirical sections.

The choice of countries and the empirical methodology is explained in the Methodological annex.

The section is organized as follows. First, statistical insight will be provided on European countries across the range of dimensions and factors of vulnerability. Second, national policy portraits on constructing and addressing vulnerability are presented. Then, a comparative section contrasting the national cases is presented and results discussed.

3.2 Vulnerable Europeans: social inclusion and exclusion of young people across national contexts

Young people are often identified as a vulnerable group suffering inequality in social status (García Carrión, Molina-Luque, & Molina Roldán, 2018). However, European education systems have not effectively addressed education and labour market inclusion policies, especially for the most vulnerable groups, such as those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds or from migrant backgrounds. As a consequence, there is a difficulty for participation in social life and in the productive economy (Gottuck & Otto, 2014). It seems evident that transitions to adulthood have become more prolonged, which is reflected in a longer period of vulnerability, with limited opportunities to become "stakeholders" in their society (Furlong & Cartmel, 2007). The contribution of this section is to analyze the conditions that might expose young European to insecurity in different European countries.

To start with, we have chosen a few words by Beck about the vulnerability of today's youth from an interview about life in a risk society that the sociologist offered to the journalist Wimmer and Quandt (2006). Beck highlights that the risk of exclusion of today's young people has a different quality in relation to other age groups as well as previous generations. This situation is observed in Europe and elsewhere. The author points to the development of the labour market as the main reason for their exclusion from the labour market and centres of power, which gives them a feeling of being left to their own devices:

There is an ongoing process in the job market, where unskilled or low-qualified jobs are outsourced or replaced by machines, so that the low-income groups in society do not have any opportunities for getting a job. Thus, they do not experience integration into society and identity building through work anymore, and they fall into a category of people that are left over and irrelevant. They form a group of people where the old differentiation between work and capital, rooted in industrialized modernity and its class society, does not have the same meaning anymore. These people exist outside the job market, and society does not need them anymore: the economy can prosper without them, the governments can be elected without them. These new groups of marginalized people are excluded from the rule and power system of the first modernity. This leads to a huge potential for conflict, challenging the very basis of modernity itself. So one part of the events can be explained by the processes described in the concept of reflexive modernization: we do not experience a linear modernization, but a reflexive one, where a successful working society already carries the seeds of its own dissolution, of its own change through unwanted side-effects. And this reading of the events is not limited to France or Europe, but it can be applied to other parts of the post-industrialized world as well.” (Beck in Wimmer, J., & Quandt, 2006).

Observed around the world, the situation described by Beck draws the attention of politicians, researchers and social practitioners to the conditions of today's youth, which will be the basis for the future. The traditional model of youth built on the linear and evolutionary logic of emancipation that provided a stable and socially recognized identity has been transformed into a new way of being young based on experimentation and uncertainty (Benedicto, 2016). In this section we present an analysis of the state of European youth, based on secondary data. For this we use the main facets associated with vulnerability which were identified in the previous section. These include: poverty and social exclusion, employment, education, the relational sphere and active citizenship.

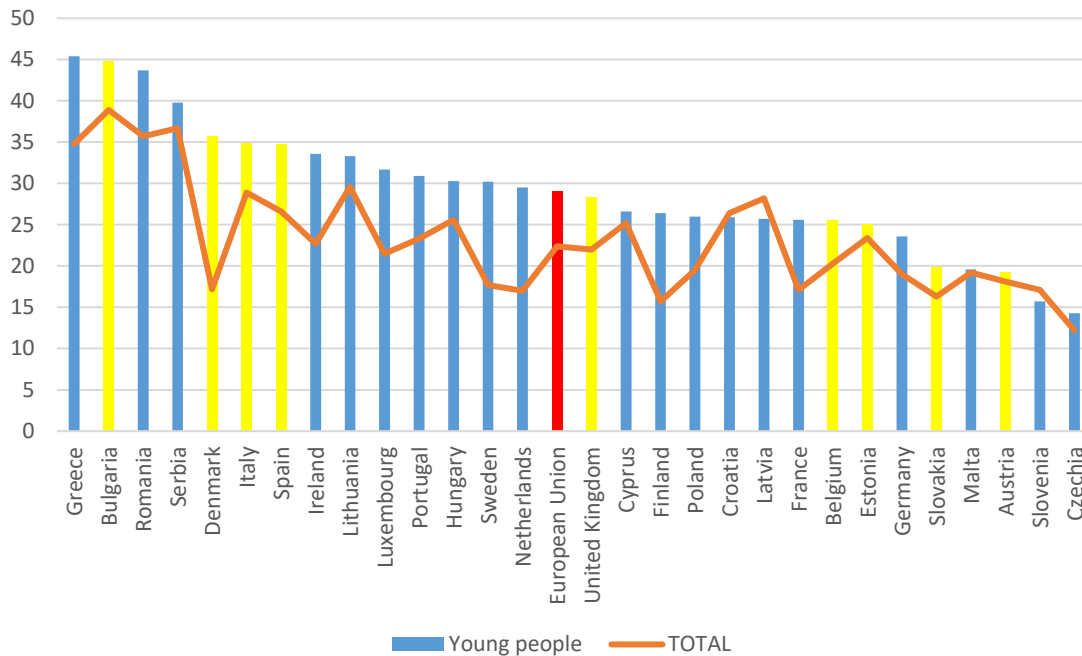
3.2.a Poverty and social exclusion

If young people's participation in formal education is essential to their current and future well-being, socio-economic status continues to be the most powerful factor in their performance in the educational process and thus in future processes of inclusion and exclusion (Vandekinderen, Roets, Van Keer & Roose, 2018). Poverty and social exclusion represent a complex phenomenon and their measurement requires a multidimensional approach. Therefore, the EU uses a set of indicators to assess progress towards the EU poverty reduction target. The headline indicator measures the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion. This condition is defined using three main sub-indicators: at-risk-of-poverty (relative or monetary poverty), severe material deprivation and households with very low work intensity. People are considered at-risk of poverty or social exclusion if they suffer from at least one of the three described dimensions of poverty.

The poverty and social exclusion results at EU level (29%), calculated as a weighted average of the national results, hide considerable differences among Member States (see Figure 10). In 2017, more than a third of the youth population in nine Member States was at risk of poverty or social exclusion: Greece (45.4%), Bulgaria (44.8%), Romania (43.7%), Serbia (39.8%), Denmark (35.7%), Italy (34.8%), Spain (34.7%), Ireland (33.6%) and Lithuania (33.3%). It is possible to see countries from different geographical zones, the south

most affected by the economic crisis, but also countries from the east and even from the north such as Denmark. In contrast, the lowest levels were reported in the Czech Republic (14.3%), Slovenia (15.7%), Austria (19.2%), Malta (19.6%) and Slovakia (19.8%).

Figure 10. Percentage of people from 16 to 24 years at risk of poverty or social exclusion (2017)



Source: Eurostat database [ilc_peps01])

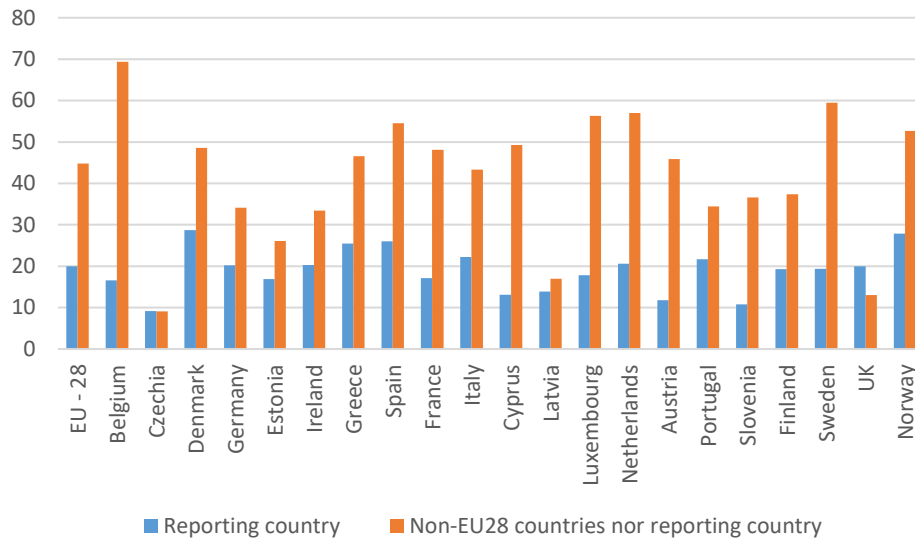
With regard to the risk of poverty and social exclusion, it is also important to observe how the origin of people is an important factor to take into account when analysing the phenomenon of vulnerability. The situation of the non-EU-born population in the EU is especially relevant in light of the increasing need to respond to the inflow of asylum seekers.³³

In 2015, the risk of poverty or social inclusion for the non-EU-born was estimated at 39.1% — almost twice the risk of the native born population (21.6%). In the same way, in 2017, non-European Union citizens were at a higher risk of poverty than national citizens. Across the whole of the EU, 44.8 % of non-EU citizens were assessed to be at risk of poverty compared with 20 % for national citizens (see Figure 11).

Among the EU Member States (according to the available data), the at-risk-of-poverty rate recorded for non-EU citizens was the highest (69.4 %) in Belgium, followed by Sweden (59.5 %), Netherland (57%), Luxembourg (56.3%) and Spain (54.5 %).

³³ For more information on this subject consult Migrant integration statistics - at risk of poverty and social exclusion. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Migrant_integration_statistics_-_at_risk_of_poverty_and_social_exclusion

Figure 11. Percentage of people from 16 to 29 years at-risk-of-poverty by citizenship (2017)



Source: Eurostat database [ilc_li31]

3.2.b Employment

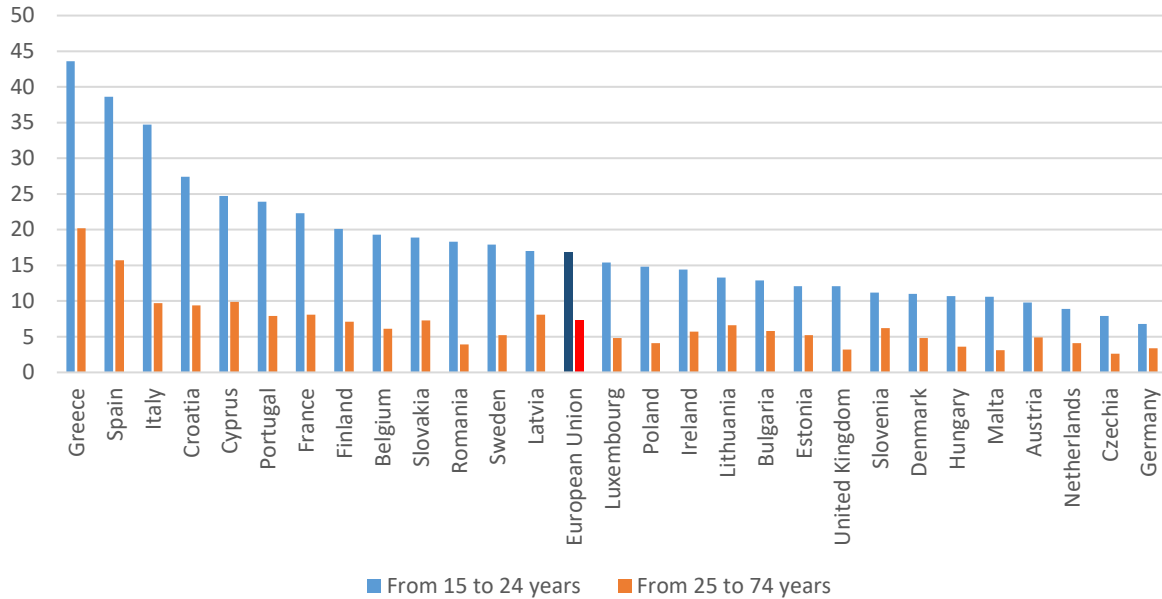
Inclusion in the labour market constitutes a basic support in the social structure (Castel, 2000). With regard to youth unemployment, it should be noted that approximately 3.8 million young people (15-24) are unemployed in the EU today (down from a peak of 5.7 million in January 2013). The youth unemployment rate in the EU has decreased from a peak of almost 24% in 2013 to 16.8% in 2017, but it is still 0.9 pps higher than it was in 2008 (15.9%)³⁴.

The youth unemployment rate is the percentage of unemployed in the age group 15 to 24 years old compared to the total labour force in that age group (which includes both employed and unemployed young people but not the economically inactive, i.e. young people who are not working and not available or looking for work).

Ten Member States faced a youth unemployment rate of above 20%: in 5, the rate was even over 30% (Greece, Spain, Italy, Serbia and Montenegro). For 15 Member States (Poland, Ireland, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Estonia, United Kingdom, Slovenia, Denmark, Hungary, Malta, Norway, Austria, Netherlands, Czechia and Germany) the rates were lower than 15%. The dispersion of youth unemployment within the EU 28 ranges from a low 6.8% in Germany to a very high 43.6% in Greece (see Figure 12). The special impact of the economic crisis on youth employment in some European countries, such as Spain, is based on the operational structure of the labour market, which is tremendously fragmented between permanent jobs and a large proportion of people, mainly young people, in temporary jobs. In this sense, they constantly leave and enter the labour circuit (Megías & Ballesteros, 2016). Felgueroso (2012) puts forward how the application of the LIFO rule (last in, first out) mainly affects young people.

³⁴ European Commission, European semester thematic factsheet: youth employment (2017). Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/file_import/european-semester_thematic-factsheet_youth_employment_en.pdf

Figure 12. Percentage of people from 16 to 29 years at-risk-of-poverty by citizenship (2017)



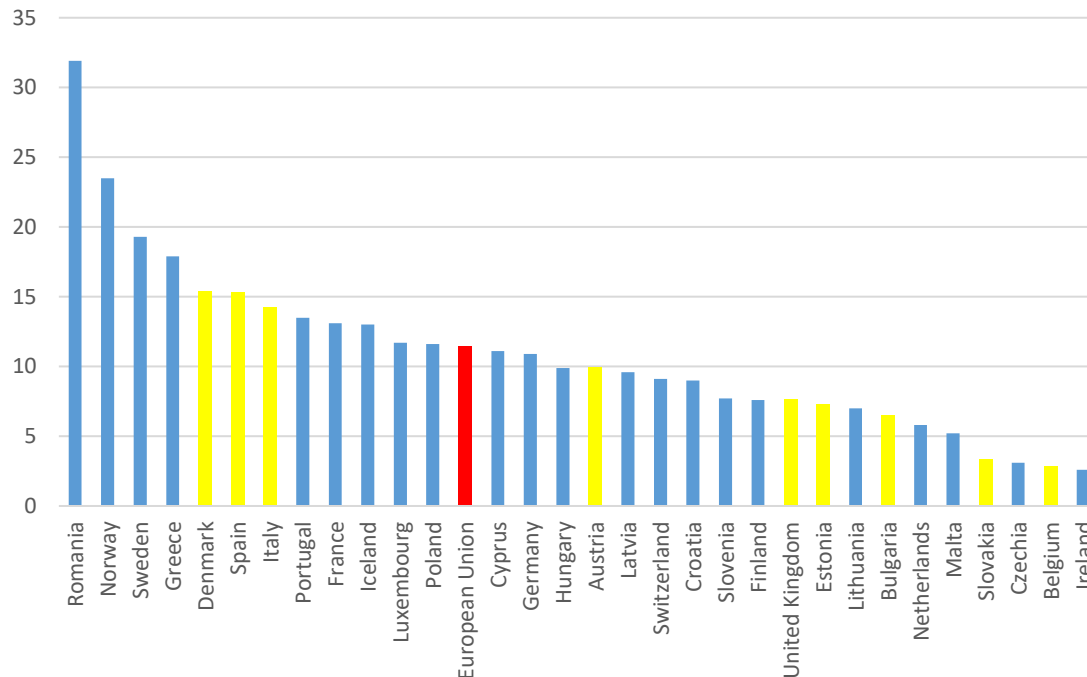
Source: Eurostat database [tipsun20]

Although youth unemployment is a very representative indicator, it should also be stressed that work activity does not always accompany the possibility of escaping from vulnerability. In this way, it is also very important to take account of the Social Scoreboard, under the European Pillar of Social Rights³⁵, which embraces the multi-dimensional approach of Europe 2020 and adds additional indicators to measure poverty, such as the in-work at-risk of poverty rate.

This indicator measures the proportion of young people who are at work and have an equivalised net disposable income below the risk-of-poverty threshold, set at 60% of the national median (after social transfers). The results at EU level (11.4%), calculated as a weighted average of the national results, hide considerable differences among Member States (see Figure 13). As can be seen, in 5 Member States, the rate was over 15% (Romania, Norway, Sweden, Greece, Denmark and Spain). Again the geographical dispersion, north and south, is another of the characteristics of this process. The dispersion of this rate within the EU 28 ranges from a low 2.6% in Ireland to a very high 31.9% in Romania.

³⁵ European Commission, STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Social Scoreboard accompanying the document Communication from the Commission Establishing a European Pillar of Social Rights, 2017.

Figure 13. Percentage of total population from 15 to 24 years in-work at-risk-of-poverty (2013)



Source: Eurostat database [yth_incl_130]

3.2.c Education

Youth unemployment has always been a factor closely linked to the training and education of young people. In this sense, low achievement in basic skills³⁶ attainment, but also in transversal skills³⁷ is a severe obstacle to employability. Many Member States still have high proportions of low achievers in mathematics, reading and scientific literacy.³⁸

Young people who leave education and training prematurely are bound to lack skills and qualifications. As a result, they are likely to face serious and persistent problems on the labour market. In this way early school leaving is an obstacle to economic growth and employment. It hampers productivity and competitiveness, and fuels poverty and social exclusion. With its shrinking workforce, Europe must make full use of its human resources. Young people who leave education and training prematurely are bound to lack skills and qualifications. They face a higher risk of unemployment, social exclusion and poverty (Scarpetta, Sonnet & Manfredi, 2015).

The Europe 2020 strategy has set the goal of reducing the proportion of 18- to 24-year-olds leaving education and training early to below 10%. **Early school leavers** are defined as people aged 18 to 24

³⁶ Skills needed to live in contemporary society, e.g. listening, speaking, reading, writing and mathematics.

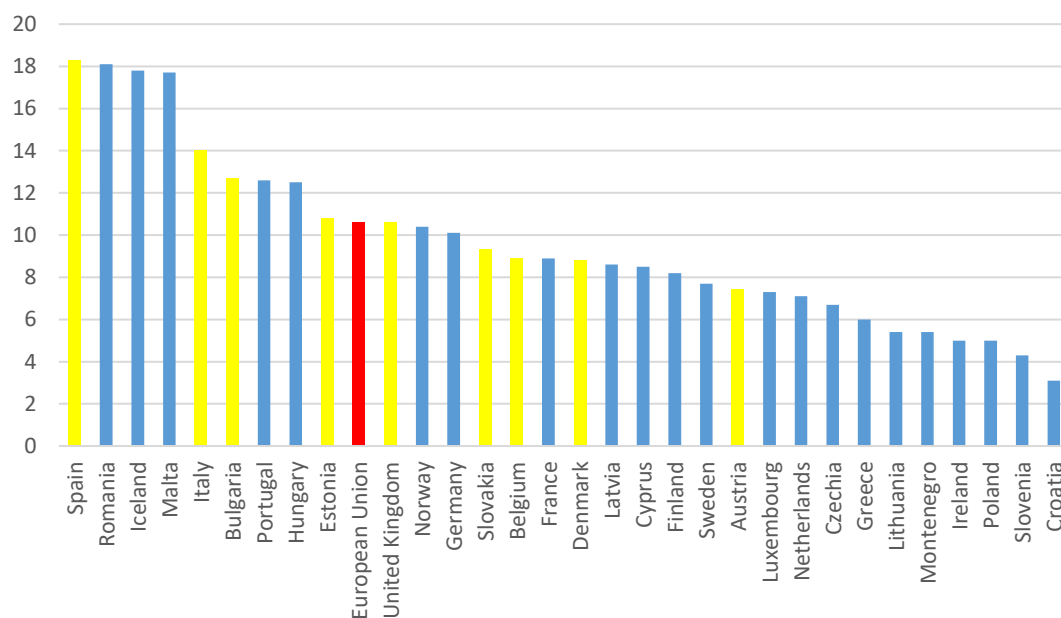
³⁷ Skills that are typically considered as not specifically related to a particular job, task, academic discipline or area of knowledge and that can be used in a wide variety of situations and work settings (for example, organizational skills).

³⁸ European Commission, European semester thematic factsheet: youth employment (2017). Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/file_import/european-semester_thematic-factsheet_youth_employment_en.pdf

fulfilling two conditions: the highest level of education or training they have attained is ISCED 0, 1, or 2; and they did not receive any education or training in the 4 weeks before the survey. The reference group for calculating the early school leaving rate is the total population aged 18 to 24 (EU Labour Force Survey).

The EU average rate of early leavers from education and training in 2017 was 10.6% (see figure 14). Nineteen Member States have already achieved the Europe 2020 headline target of below 10%. Two more — Germany (10.1%) and Norway (10.4%) — are very close to it. Among the rest of the countries still above the EU target, four are very far of reaching it (Spain 18.3%, Romania 18.1%, Iceland 17.8% and Malta 17.7%).

Figure 14. Percentage of early leavers (18 to 24 years) from education and training (2017)

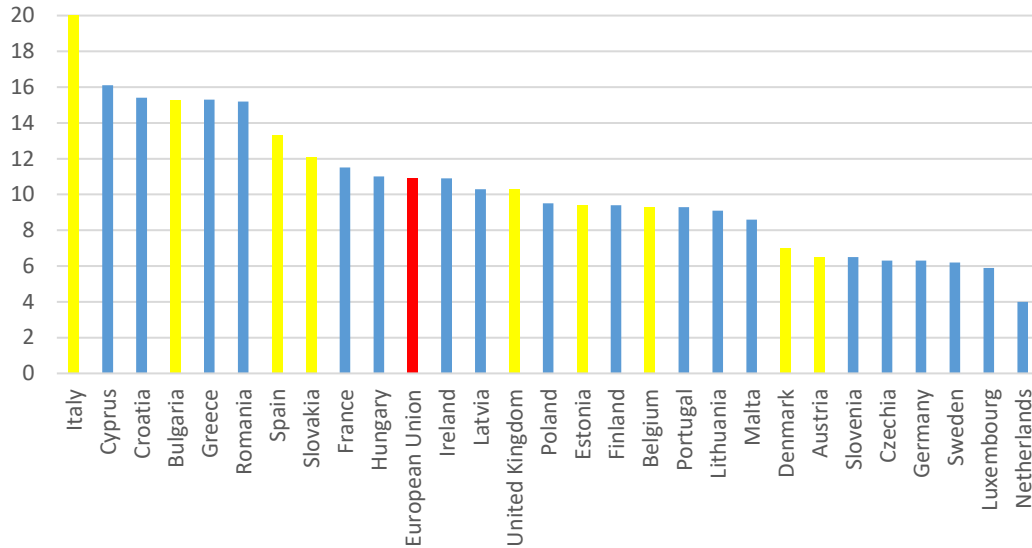


Source: Eurostat database [edat_ifse_14]

In addition to school drop-outs, there is a considerable proportion of young people aged 15 to 24 in the EU who are economically inactive. For some, this is due to continued education and training. Others, however, have simply left the labour market, or have not entered it after leaving the education system.

This aspect of young people's situation is captured by **the youth NEET rate** which corresponds to the percentage of the population aged 15-24 not in employment, education or training. The NEET rate for young people (15 -24 years) has been included as a headline indicator in the Social Scoreboard and is therefore central to the delivery of the Pillar of Social Rights. In 2017, the EU average rate of 15-24-year-old youth that are NEET was 10.9% similar than in 2008 but down from a peak of 13.2% in 2012. In 2017, the NEET rate among those aged 15-24 was the highest, at over 15%, in Italy, Cyprus, Croatia, Bulgaria, Greece and Romania (see Figure 15).

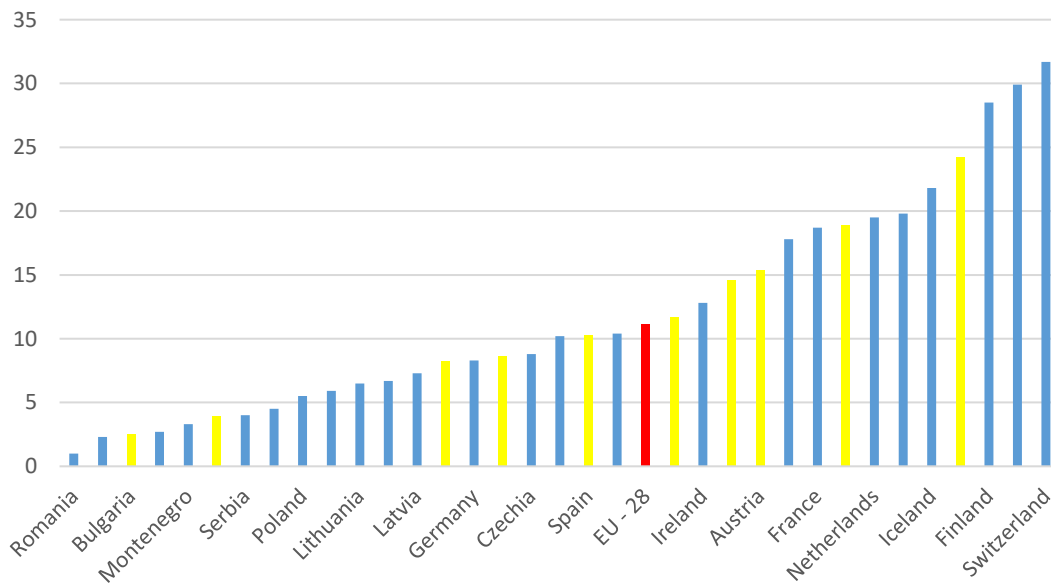
Figure 15. Percentage of young people neither in employment nor in education and training (NEET rates) (2017)



Source: Eurostat database [yth_empl_160]

Furthermore, as figure 16 shows the participation rate in education and training sample in the adult population is a low rate (11.1%), and shows a very high dispersion among the various European Union countries, from those with rates below 3% such as Romania, North Macedonia, Bulgaria and Croatia, to countries with higher participation rates such as Finland (28.5%), Sweden (29.9%) and Switzerland (31.7%).

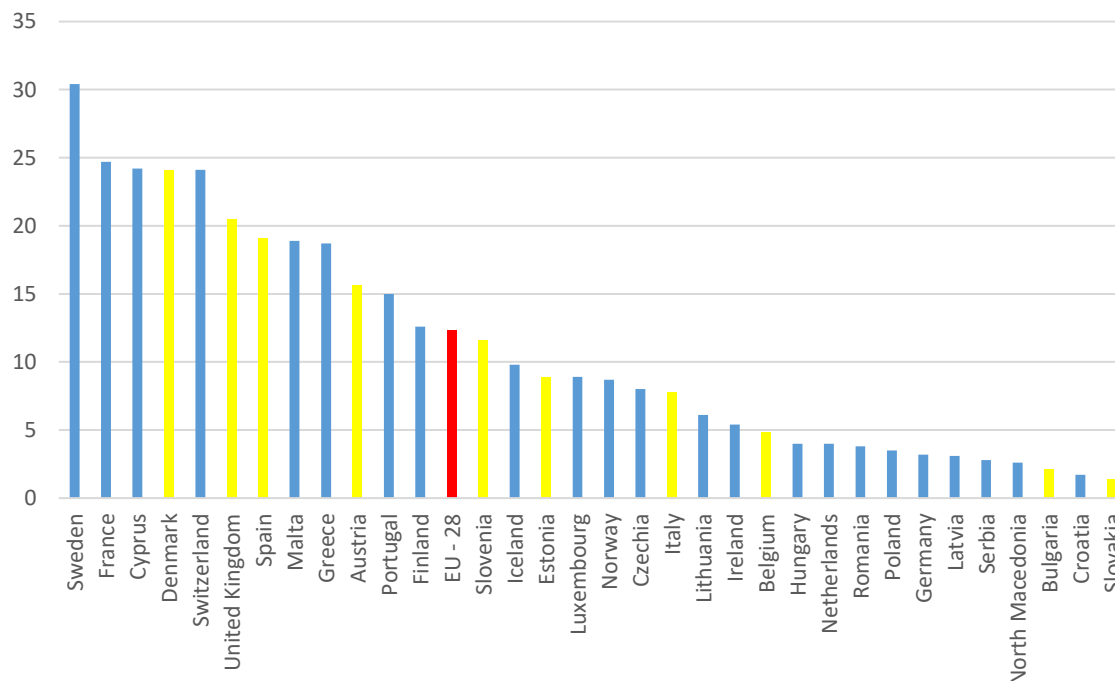
Figure 16. Participation rate in education and training (from 25 to 64 years) (2018)



Source: Eurostat database [trng_lfse_03]

To conclude the description of the educational situation of young people, we also collect here the data on the participation rate in non-formal education and training (figure 17) (12.3%), which shows great variability across the countries of the European Union, from those with rates below 3%, such as Serbia, North Macedonia, Bulgaria, Croatia and Slovakia, to the countries with higher participation rates, such as Denmark and Switzerland (24.1%), France (24.7%) and Switzerland (30.4%).

Figure 17. Participation rate in non-formal education and training (From 15 to 24 years) (2017)

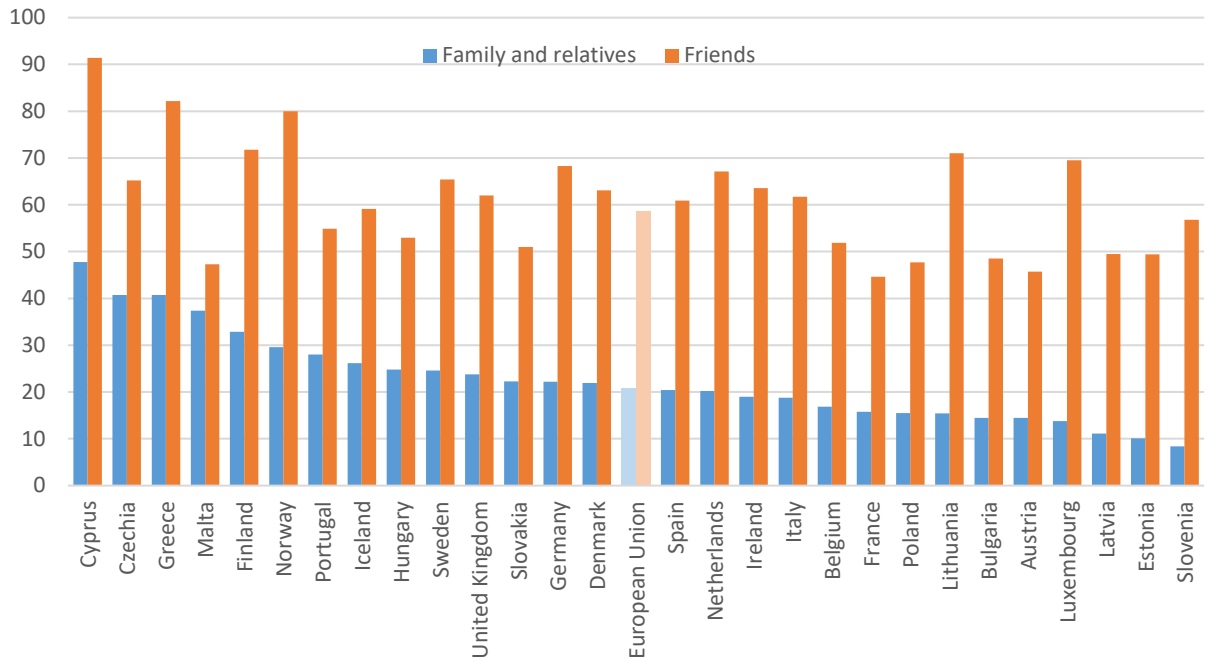


Source: Eurostat database [yth_educ_060]

3.2.d Relational sphere and active citizenship

Finally, we present results related to the **social and political dimensions of vulnerability**. Emerging adulthood is also a critical period for social development, when participation can have relevant consequences on inclusion processes (Eurofound, 2012). In relation to this point, Castel (1995) argues that participation in sociability networks and social integration systems protect against vital risks. In this regard, it is worth noting two indicators that show the importance of social relations and what the environment means as a factor for inclusion and quality of life for young people. First, we can observe (figure 18) the frequency of contacts with relatives or friends. If we look at the distribution of this indicator in the category of highest frequency (every day) we can see that the average daily contact of citizens of the European Union with their family and relatives is 20.8%, and 58.6% with their friends. It should be noted that in all Member States the percentage of daily contact with friends is higher than with the family environment.

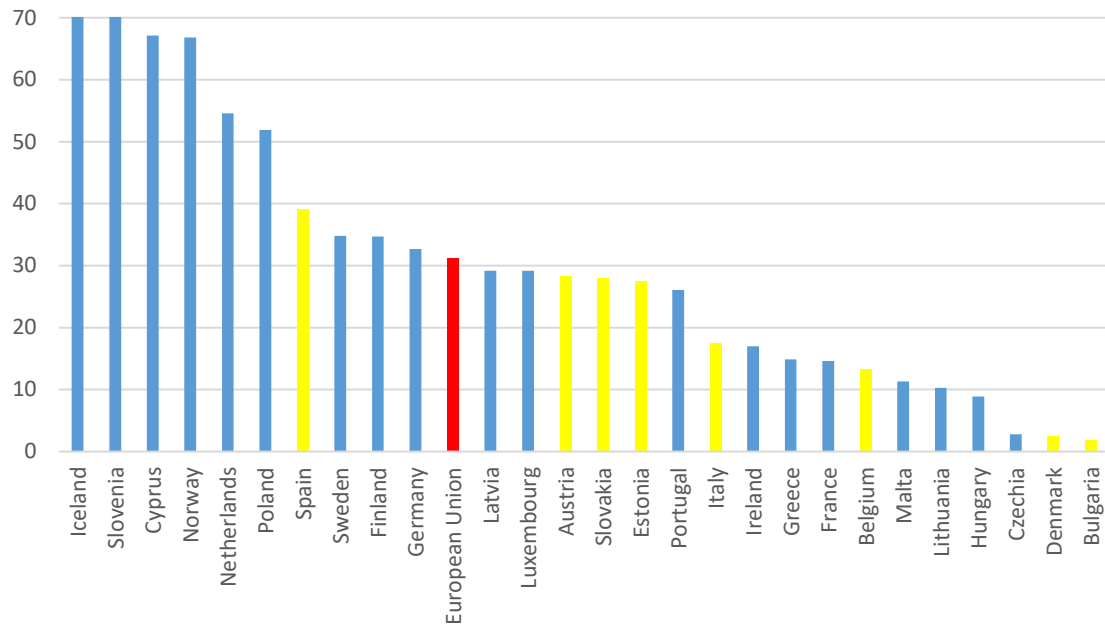
Figure 18. Percentage of every day contacts with relatives or friends (2006)



Source: Eurostat database [yth_part_020]

Also noteworthy is the decline in the existential horizon of unemployment, which affects not only people's economic status, but also their future prospects, emotions, attitudes and lifestyles (figure 19). Together, the situation of vulnerability related to unemployment can affect independence and the exercise of collective responsibility (Megías & Ballesteros, 2016). If we observe figure 19, the active citizenship of young Europeans, we can see that 31.2% **participate in informal voluntary activities**, and this exceeds 50% in countries such as Iceland, Slovenia, Cyprus, Norway, Netherlands and Poland.

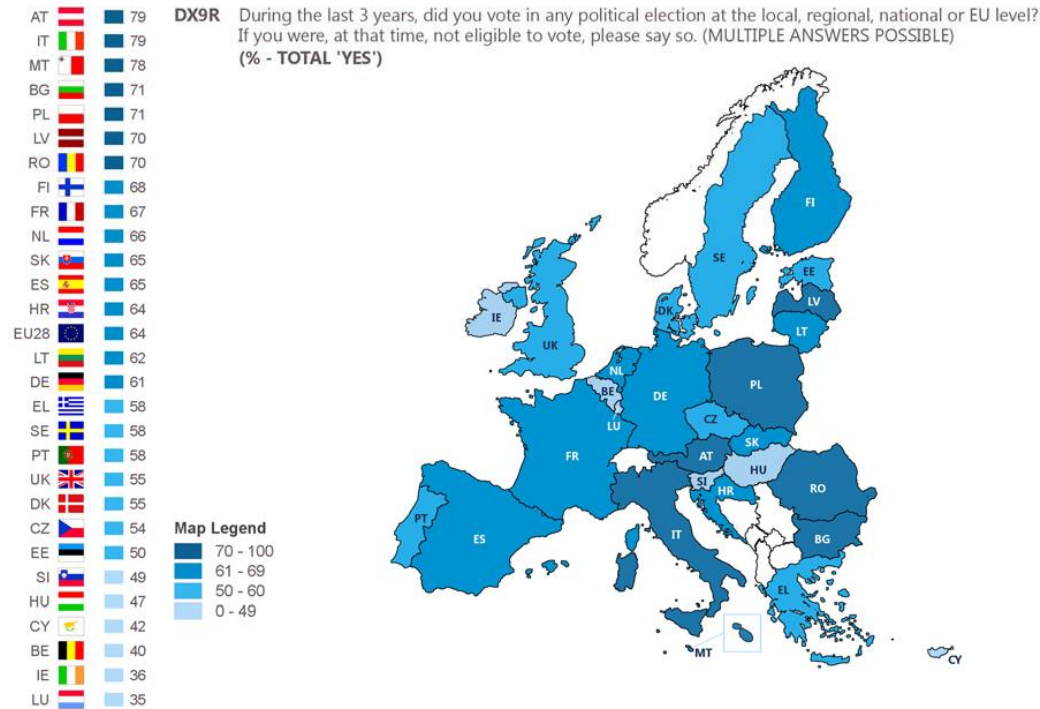
Figure 19. Percentage of every day contacts with relatives or friends (2006)



Source: Eurostat database [yth_volunt_010]

Finally, it is also important to explore the political participation of young people through voting in political elections. In this sense, participation in elections has increased markedly since December 2014 according to Eurobarometer data and by 2017 already a large majority of young Europeans (64%) claim to have voted in a political election in the last three years, whether at local, regional or national level (Figure 20).

Figure 20. Voting in political elections



Source: Flash Eurobarometer 455 European Youth

Voting behaviour among young Europeans varies greatly from country to country. Austria, Italy (79%) and Malta (78%) have the highest turnout, while young people in Luxembourg (35%), Ireland (36%) and Belgium (40%) have the lowest turnout³⁹.

3.2.e Vulnerable countries?

Our first conclusion here is that the statistical data is not collected with the concept “vulnerability” at its core, and thus we had to shift from concepts of vulnerability to capture different aspects of social inclusion and social exclusion.

Across the eight countries we considered various dimensions of vulnerability, namely those related to material and labour market exclusion; the education system; and social/political participation. Clearly countries do differ here, for example, on how many vulnerability dimensions have become more relevant. In the time periods we are comparing some of the countries we are examining – namely Italy, Spain, Bulgaria - are more often below the EU28 average in terms of the levels of vulnerability and risk of social exclusion. On the other hand, Austria is doing better than the EU28 average according to all the ten variables, and the UK and Estonia according to six of these. So the countries represent diverse levels of youth vulnerability and social exclusion.

³⁹ In some EU countries voting is compulsory (Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, and Luxembourg)

It is also interesting that the countries fare worse in the categories related to the dimension of educational systems, where five countries underperform per each dimension and altogether seven of the eight countries have performed below EU28 in at least one of these dimensions. In contrast, in the work-and-poverty related dimension, only five countries appear to be below the EU28 in at least one category.

Table 28 Factors of vulnerability according to the three main dimensions, by selected European countries

	<i>Below EU28</i>	EU 28	IT	ES	BG	SK	BE	EE	UK	AT
Risk of poverty or social exclusion, 16-24 (adult)	4	29 (22)	35 (29)	35 (29)	45 (39)	19 (16)	25 (20)	25 (23)	28 (22)	19 (18)
Unemployment, 15-24 (25-74)	4	17 (7)	35 (10)	39 (16)	13 (6)	19 (7)	19 (6)	12 (5)	12 (3)	10 (5)
In work, at risk of poverty, 15-24	2	11	14	15		3	3	7	8	10
Participation in education and training, 25-64	5	11	8	10	2	4	9	19	15	15
Participation in NFE, 15-24	5	12	8	19	2	1	5	9	21	16
Early school leavers, 18-24	5	10	14	18	13	9	9	11	11	7
NEET	4	11	20	13	15	12	9	9	10	7
Participated in activities by groups or clubs, 15-30	5	53	62	50	39	30	58	41	50	61
Contacts with relatives & friends (2006)	3	31	18	39	2	28	13	28		28
Voted, last 3 years, 15-30	3	64	79	65	71	65	40	50	55	79
Below EU28—all 10 variables across three dimensions			8	7	7	6	5	4	3	0

For Spanish and Italian youth, social and political participation seems to provide a way to feel more socially included. In other cases, it is also possible that below-EU28 average performance in some dimension may be compensated with successful performance in another dimension. How this difference manifested in national approaches to lifelong learning policy will be the subject of the next chapter.

3.3 Targeting vulnerability across national lifelong learning policies

Next, we will provide a country-based overview of how vulnerability is targeted in policy measures.

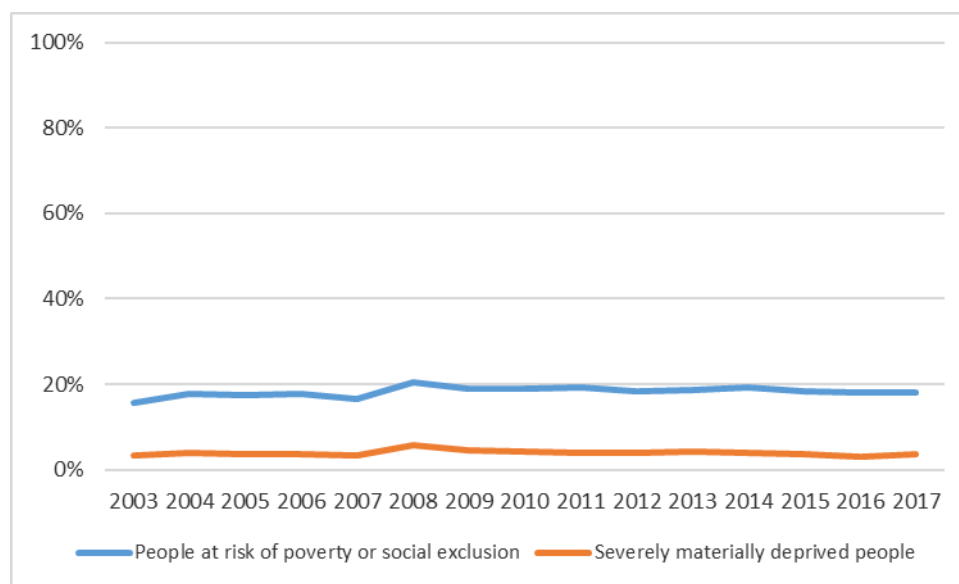
3.3.a Austria

Inequality in Austria

Between 2005 and 2017, the percentage of severely materially deprived people has been around 4% (from 3,0% in 2016 to 4,2% in 2013), except during the years of the Great Recession when in 2008 it increased to 5,9% (Eurostat⁴⁰). Compared to the European Union, the percentage of the population living in material deprivation in Austria has been 1,5 to 2,5 times lower than the EU average.

Relative poverty has fluctuated between 16% (2003) and 19%, but increased to 21% in 2008 (Eurostat⁴¹). On the average, 18% of population has been living at risk of social exclusion or poverty. Also relative poverty has remained below EU average where the respective percentage has been 24%.

Figure 21. The risk of social exclusion and severe material deprivation (Austria)



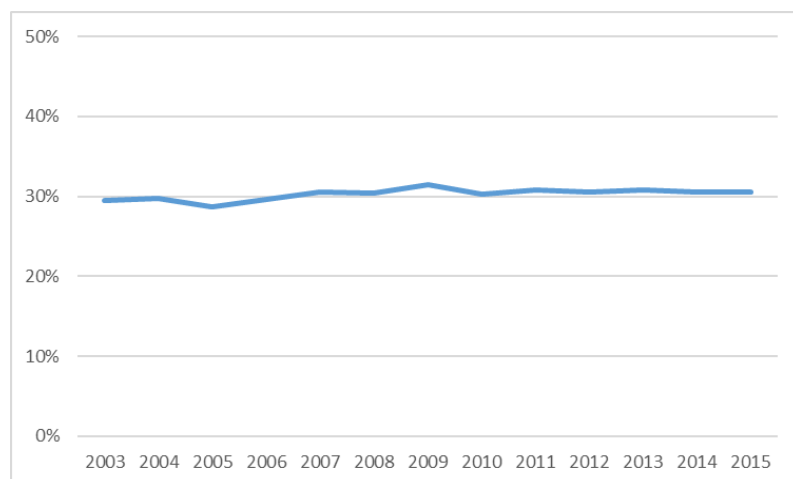
Source: Eurostat

Income inequality as measured by Gini index has been relatively low – around 30% - and it has not changed significantly between 2003 and 2015.

⁴⁰ Eurostat, table Code: t2020_53.

⁴¹ Eurostat, table Code: t2020_50.

Figure 22. Gini index (Austria)



Source: World Bank

Dimensions of social exclusion

As was shown above, the level of material deprivation and poverty in Austria has been low, considerably lower than that of the European Union.

Combating poverty and social exclusion is among the Austrian federal government's core priorities. Social inclusion and poverty in Austria is measured using a general overall system of indicators; there is no youth specific concept of poverty or social exclusion. In general, poverty is addressed in a complex way, implementing policy measures in a range of policy areas: education, training, qualification campaigns for less educated workers, health and the creation of a framework for high-quality care services for children and adults requiring care. The country has stable social policy systems with long-term goals and implements numerous social inclusion and poverty reduction interventions. Regarding the social inclusion of young people, there is no strategy on social inclusion relating only to young people. A youth focus is included in the national action plans which are part of the National Action Plan (NAP) for Integration, first adopted in 2010 (Youthwiki⁴²). Analysis of policies indicate that the main target groups include (Boeren et al 2017; Kersh and Toiviainen 2017; Markowitch et al 2007; Pot and Kazepov 2016; Unt and Jeliaskova 2018):

- Foreigners (immigrants, asylum seekers), who need language courses to learn German⁴³,

⁴² European Commission, EACEA NATIONAL POLICIES PLATFORM, Youthwiki, Youth Social Inclusion in Austria, <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/4-social-inclusion-austria>

⁴³ The population of Austria was 8.8 million in 2018. Austria's immigrant population (i.e. foreign-born population) started to increase rapidly in the mid-1990s: it increased from 10,3% in 1990 to 19% in 2017, or in absolute terms from 793 000 to 1 660 000, that is more than twofold. In a country with population of 8,8 million inhabitants, this is a high share of foreign-born population. The largest countries of origin have been mostly neighbouring or nearby countries: Germany (15%), Serbia (13%), Turkey (12%), Bosnia and Herzegovina (10%), Romania, Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Croatia, Russian Federation and Italy constitute approximately 75% of immigrant population in Austria in 2017 as well as over the period 1990-2017. Over that period, the proportions have not changed notably

- NEET youth; policies take into account complex internal structure of the group,
- Early school leavers and young people in risk of dropping out from school,
- Inactive young people who are looking for educational opportunities,
- Youth looking for / needing to enrol to an apprenticeship programme,
- Disabled young people.

Vulnerability and vulnerable groups

The preceding overview indicates the main dimensions that are assumed in policy discourses to make people vulnerable and thus help policy makers to identify vulnerable groups.

- *Immigrant background* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability in Austria. People who were born in a non-German speaking country constitute a category, which is in the status of a vulnerable group in Austria.
- *Labour market status* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being unemployed is the vulnerable group.
- *Level of skills and competences* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being characterised as having low level of skills is the vulnerable group.
- *Age* is factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being young, as well as old – in general outside of prime working age of 30 and 50 years – means being in the vulnerable group.
- *Degree of ability*, both physical and mental, is a factor that is identifiable as a factor that influences vulnerability. Being disabled is the vulnerable group.

Combinations of factors

In Austria, factors that co-vary with social exclusion are used both individually as well as in combination. Mostly, two factors are combined. A review of interventions identified the following combinations:

- Age and labour market status (young unemployed),
- Age and education system status (young school dropouts, young people with low level of skills),
- Labour market and education system status (low level of skills and unemployed or in risk of getting unemployed).

3.3.b Belgium (Flanders)

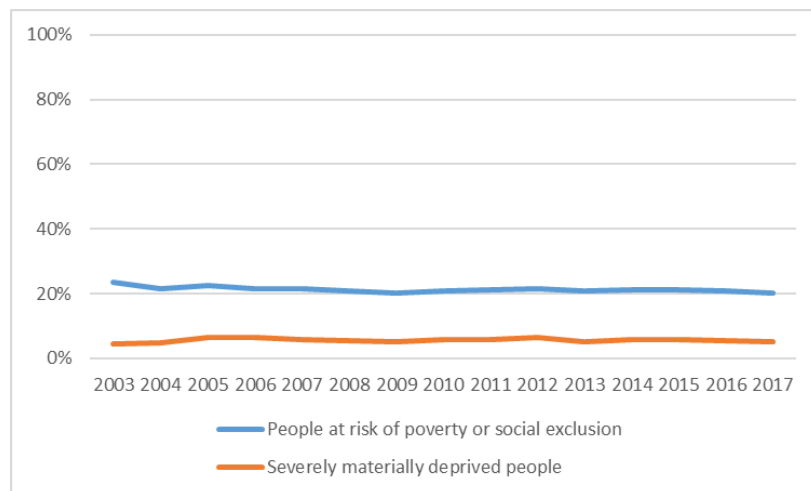
Belgium is a country which is divided into regions (Wallonia, Flanders, Brussels), language communities (Dutch, French, German) and administrative areas (largely overlap with regions). Part of the section on Belgium looks on Belgium as a whole, part only on Flanders, which is the northern region of Belgium where people speak Dutch.

(MPI). Only approximately 5% of immigrants entered the country with work permit in 2015, 2016. Majority – 68% in 2015 and 56% in 2016 – entered as free movement. From 2007 to 2016, the unemployment rate among immigrants was slightly more than two times higher than that of native population – approximately 3,9% among native population and 9% among foreign population (OECD 2018: 215).

Inequality in Belgium

In Belgium as a whole, the percentage of people in severe material deprivation has been approximately 6%. This percentage of people is below the EU average, constituting approximately two thirds to three quarters of EU average (8%).

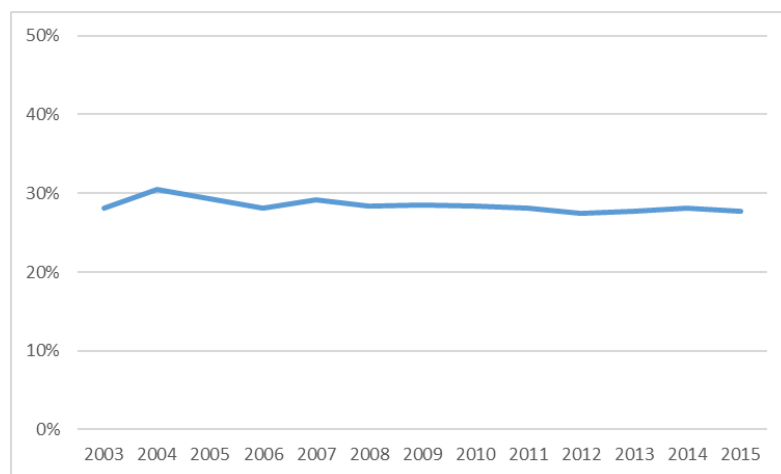
Figure 23. The risk of social exclusion and severe material deprivation (Belgium)



Source: Eurostat

It has been stable over time, the years of the Great Recession did not change it significantly (Eurostat⁴⁴). The percentage of people in risk of social exclusion and poverty has been approximately 21%, hence too below the EU average, and it has been stable too (Eurostat⁴⁵).

Figure 24. Gini index (Belgium)



Source: World Bank

⁴⁴ Eurostat, table Code: t2020_53

⁴⁵ Eurostat, table Code: t2020_50

Over the period 2003-2015, average value of income inequality as measured by Gini index was 28%, which is the lowest value of the countries involved in the project. It has been stable or slightly decreasing.

Dimensions of social exclusion

In most Flemish policy areas the following groups are referred to in the context of policies on social inclusion:

1. Persons living in poverty
2. Low-skilled people
3. People of non-Belgian origin
4. People with functional limitations (long-term illness, handicap, ...)

The risk of poverty is not significantly different across age groups, although it is highest for older age groups (50+).

Among young people, the same subcategories are characterized by higher risk of social exclusion:

- Young people who live in poverty
- Young people with no or limited educational qualifications
- Young people coming from lower cultural backgrounds (e.g. with lower educated parents)
- Young people with functional disabilities: poor health, long term illness, physical disabilities, ...
- Young people with a foreign origin

There is no youth-specific anti-poverty program. Poverty and social exclusion in Flanders are addressed in a cross-sectoral manner, meaning that every Flemish Minister, also the Minister of Youth, has the responsibility to devote attention within their policy area to reducing poverty. In the period 2015-2019, anti-poverty efforts are taken using the *Flemish Poverty Reduction Action Plan* or *VAPA (Vlaams actieplan armoedebestrijding 2015-2019)*. The VAPA includes specific objectives formulated for each of the fundamental social rights (participation, social services, income, family, education, leisure, work, housing and health). In terms of target groups, the focus of VAPA is on families with young children, more concretely on:

- increasing participation in society of families with young children living in poverty,
- access to quality services for families with young children,
- improve the income situation of those families and
- making children, young people and parents stronger (Youthwiki).

What concerns lifelong learning, then in the beginning of 2000s the most important driving force was the employability of people and the second most important was personal development in the context of active citizenship. Employability as well as personal development and active citizenship were seen as helping to stimulate social integration and cohesion. Lifelong learning in Flanders was given a very wide meaning, it included a range of courses and activities. To emphasize its role in self-development, a term life-wide learning was taken into usage to emphasise that learning serves more than only utilitarian aims. However, in practice lifelong learning very often meant job trainings and learning in formal educational institutions (Rick 2007). Also in mid-2010s, much of life-long learning was taking place in the workplace contexts. The categories in society, who were addressed, included “usual suspects” (Boeren 2017; Kersh and Toiviainen 2017; Unt and Jeliaskova 2018):

- asylum seekers, immigrants. Their personal background is not very helpful for integration into Belgian society in general, neither to labour market. For integration, this group needs language training, cultural courses as well as courses which provide also basic literacy and numeracy training, and job trainings. They are offered second chance education opportunities (secondary education and vocational education). Many of immigrants are young people.
- unemployed people, including long-term unemployed. They are offered second chance education opportunities (secondary education and vocational education) as well as post-secondary VET opportunities and participation in arts, drama, music and dance courses.
- People with a disability. They are offered second chance education opportunities (secondary education and vocational education) as well as post-secondary VET opportunities and opportunities to participate in arts, drama, music and dance courses.
- Adults under 25, in connection with the expectation that they undertake the transition to labour market. They are offered specifically post-secondary VET opportunities. Also, this group is eager to participate in arts, drama, music and dance courses which is less directly linked to labour market, albeit they might have a link.
- People who have been staying on welfare transfers for a longer period, are given opportunities to participate in arts, drama, music and dance courses.
- Early school leavers, people with low level of skills and competences are given opportunity to finish their studies and get more fit for participation in labour market.
- Young people in NEET-status.

Vulnerability and vulnerable groups

The preceding overview indicates the main dimensions that policy makers assume to make people vulnerable and thus help to identify vulnerable groups.

- *Immigrant background* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability in Belgium.
- *Labour market status* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being unemployed is the vulnerable group.
- *Level of skills and competences* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being characterised as having low level of skills is the vulnerable group. In Belgium, attention is directed toward low skilled individuals as well as toward individuals who have acquired secondary or postsecondary vocational education.
- *Age* is factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being young means being in the vulnerable group.
- *Degree of ability*, both physical and mental, is a factor that is identifiable as a factor that influences vulnerability. Being disabled is the vulnerable group.

Combinations of factors

In Belgium, a range of interventions and policy measures address categories, which are defined as being on the crossroads of several factors. Quite frequently three factors are combined: age, labour market status and educational status:

- NEET status combines age, labour market status and education status.
- Early school leavers and young people with low educational attainment combines age and education participation and competence level.
- Young unemployed are defined as a combination of age and employment status.

- Young immigrants is a category defined by combining age and immigrant background.

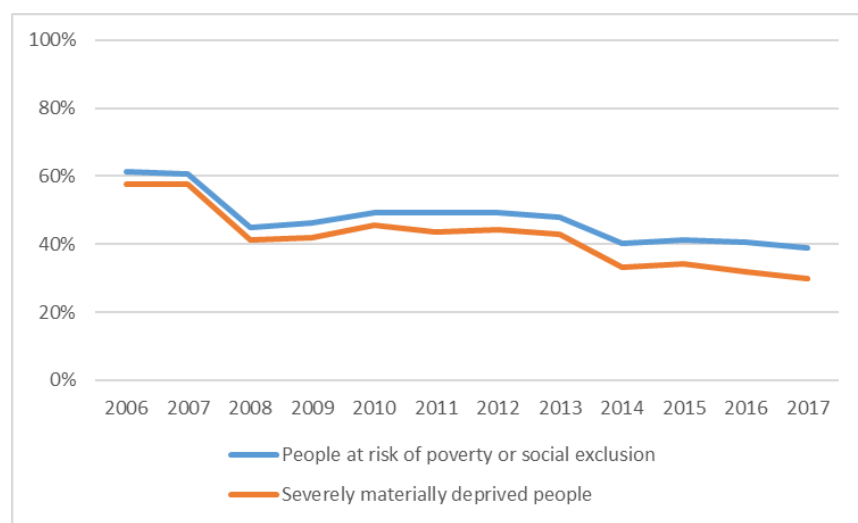
3.3.c Bulgaria

Inequality in Bulgaria

In Bulgaria, the percentage of people in severe material deprivation has been high over the period 2006 to 2017 – on average, 42% of population has been living in the condition of severe material deprivation. Compared to other European Union countries, this has been approximately 5 times higher than the EU average (8,5%).

In Bulgaria, poverty is concentrated mainly in two groups following the age dimension. One is that of people aged over 65, and the second group is among young people with low level of education and not stable employment (Stoilova 2018).

Figure 25. Risk of social exclusion and severe material deprivation (Bulgaria)



Source: Eurostat

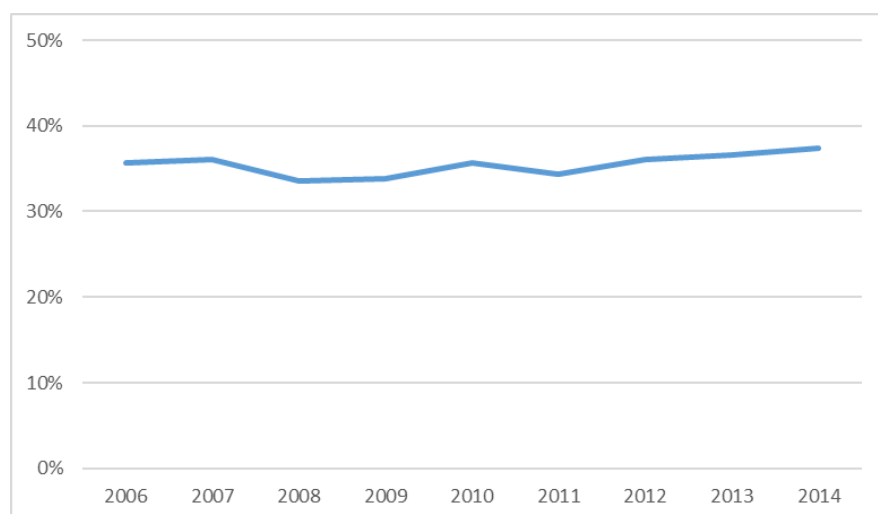
The situation has improved significantly though, as the percentage dropped nearly two times over the period of 10 years when it decreased from 58% in 2007 to 30% in 2017. However, since the percentage has dropped also in the EU, Bulgaria has not progressed in comparative terms (Eurostat⁴⁶).

Relative poverty has been only marginally higher than severe deprivation. This too has been decreasing, from 61% in 2007 to 39% in 2017 (Eurostat⁴⁷). Also relative poverty has been 2 to 3 times higher than in the EU on the average.

⁴⁶ Eurostat, table Code: t2020_53.

⁴⁷ Eurostat, table Code: t2020_50.

Figure 26. Gini index (Bulgaria)



Source: World Bank⁴⁸

Income inequality as measured by Gini index is relatively high – in years 2006 to 2014 it was between 35% and 40%. It has not been decreasing but rather increasing starting from 2008-2009.

Dimensions of social exclusion

Bulgaria is characterised by exceptionally – in comparison to other EU countries – high levels of social exclusion and inequality. According to Youthwiki⁴⁹, Bulgaria has been paying a lot of attention to reducing poverty and promoting social inclusion since the country joined the EU in 2007. To that end, National Strategy for Poverty Reduction and Promotion of Social Inclusion 2020 has been adopted and is being implemented. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) is also developing Strategic Plan by 2021 according to which the development of the policy on social inclusion is a multisectoral policy. Promotion of social inclusion and the reduction of poverty among vulnerable groups of population is a significant part of the Plan.

Lifelong learning themes are integrated into a range of policy fields and policy documents. The documents describe a wide variety of policy goals, target groups and policy measures and provide also programme theories. Analysis of the policy programmes' target groups shows that Roma people⁵⁰ have remained the

⁴⁸ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI?end=2015&locations=BG-AT-EE-AU-BE-GB-SK-ES-IT&start=2015&view=map>

⁴⁹ European Commission, EACEA National Policies Platform, <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/4-social-inclusion-bulgaria>, visited 19.2.2019

⁵⁰ Historically, Bulgaria has a sizable Roma minority, which differs from the main population on the social exclusion dimension – Romas are more likely to be socially excluded as their level of education is notably lower and unemployment rate is higher (Dimitrova 2011). The number of immigrants i.e. people born outside Bulgaria, is small as the total number of immigrants in Bulgaria in 2017 was 2,2%. The largest country of origin was Russia with 20% of all immigrants (UN 2017).

main theme in policy programs addressing poverty in Bulgaria⁵¹. Other important target groups include unemployed people – young as well as not so young – and people with low level of skills and competences and with low level of formal education. Participation in labour market and in education system are the two main foci of public policy in Bulgaria. Within these large categories, “traditional” subgroups are distinguished (Boeren et al 2017; Kovacheva et al 2016; Kersh and Toiviainen 2017; Unt and Jeliaskova 2018; Boyadjieva et al 2012):

- NEETs,
- Long-term unemployed,
- Discouraged unemployed,
- Low-skilled unemployed,
- Young unemployed,
- People with low level of skills, early school leavers, people needing skill upgrade,
- Pupils in schools at risk of dropping out,
- disabled people.

Gender is an important factor for vulnerability (Bøhler et al, 2019). Women with low education and from Roma ethnic background are a specific vulnerable group in Bulgaria, which is not mentioned in the document. Intersectionality between gender, ethnicity and class tends to burden agency of young people very strongly (Stoilova et al, 2017). Young women, from Roma origin with basic education are extremely vulnerable in Bulgaria. Early births lead to insecurity and risks through the interruption and prolongation of education. Especially for single parents, the lack of institutional support leads to extreme job insecurity and to difficulties in raising children.

Addressing social inclusion is also included in the National Youth Strategy 2010-2020. The strategy outlines nine priorities for youth development and social inclusion is included in the section "Prevention of social exclusion of disadvantaged young people". The section mentions the following groups of young people as being in disadvantageous situation:

- young people in specialized institutions, and those in risk of getting there;
- young people with disabilities;
- young people leaving specialized institutions;
- young people suffering from different addictions;
- former prisoners and
- other groups at risk.

A range of policy programmes are being implemented that address vulnerable young people in education system and in labour market. In policy contexts, youth in Bulgaria now lasts until age 29 and specific attention is directed toward inactive young people: young people who do not work, do not study and are not registered with the Labour Office Directorates. An assessment of the active labour market measures of 2015 in Bulgaria has indicated the comparatively high net effect (15%) of programmes for adult training.

⁵¹ Bulgaria has been addressing the Roma minority but not immigrants in general. In early 2000s, Bulgaria had put in place programmes addressing the Roma minority in Bulgaria (Boyadjieva et al. 2007). After joining the EU, specific focus on Roma minority was dropped and programmes with focus on poverty and social exclusion occurred.

Two recommendations made in the assessment were: to continue the programmes and measures for acquiring a professional qualification that is in demand on the labour market; and to continue the training programmes for unemployed persons, through which they can obtain knowledge and skills corresponding to labour market demands (Atanassov, 2015).

As a member of the EU, Bulgaria implements European Youth Guarantee. The National Youth Guarantee of Bulgaria provides that every young person aged 15 to 29 will receive a decent job offer, continuing of education, apprenticeship or internship within 4 months of being out of work or leaving the formal education system (Youthwiki).

Vulnerability and vulnerable groups

The preceding overview indicates the main dimensions that are assumed to make people vulnerable and help policy makers to identify vulnerable groups.

- *Ethnic background* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability in Bulgaria. Roma population are the ethnic groups which is in the status of a vulnerable group in Bulgaria.
- *Labour market status* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being unemployed is the vulnerable group.
- *Level of skills and competences* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being characterised as having low level of skills is the vulnerable group.
- *Age* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being young, as well as old – in general outside of prime working age of 30 and 50 years – means being in the vulnerable group.
- *Degree of ability*, both physical and mental, is a factor that is identifiable as a factor that influences vulnerability. Being disabled is the vulnerable group.

Combinations of factors

The factors pointed out above do not work in isolation as none of the programmes addressed just particular value of one factor, like all young people, all Roma population, all disabled persons. Instead, policies address combinations of the factors. Mostly values of two factors are combined, and one of the factors is age: young unemployed, young disabled persons, young people with low level of skills (school dropouts).

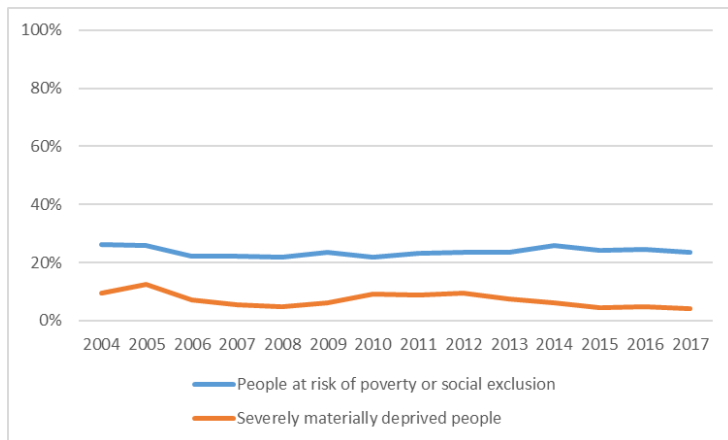
3.3.d Estonia

Inequality in Estonia

On average, over the period 2004-2017, the percentage of people in severe material deprivation in Estonia was approximately 7%. It was 5% in 2008, again in 2015-2016 and 4% in 2017. In 2005 it was as high as 12% and in 2010-2012 it was 9%. It has been fluctuating more than in most other countries. It has been somewhat higher than in the EU on the average (8%) (Eurostat⁵²).

⁵² Eurostat, table Code: t2020_53

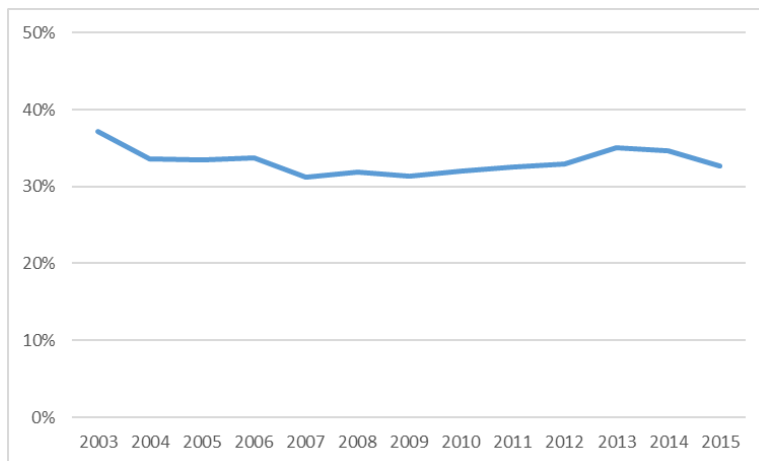
Figure 27. Risk of social exclusion and severe material deprivation (Estonia)



Source: Eurostat.

Over the same period, 24% of population has been living under the line of risk of poverty or social exclusion. The percentage was the lowest in 2006-2008, 2010 (22%) after which it started to increase and reached to top in 2014 (26%), and then decreased again. It has been the same as in the EU on the average (Eurostat⁵³).

Figure 28. Gini index (Estonia).



Source: World Bank estimates⁵⁴

Over the period 2003-2015, the average value of income inequality measured by Gini index was 35%. Over the period, it has been slightly fluctuating but in general it has been decreasing as in the beginning its value was 37% and in the end 33%.

⁵³ Eurostat, table Code: t2020_50

⁵⁴ World Bank estimates, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI?end=2015&locations=BG-AT-EE-AU-BE-GB-SK-ES-IT&start=2015&view=map>

Dimensions of social exclusion

At the level of national government, social inclusion and social welfare related goals and measures are included in the document Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023. The document is based on the principles of a social and welfare state, the framework of fundamental and social rights, and social protection principles. Social welfare services are offered both by municipalities (e.g. part of social welfare services) and local branches of centralized institutions (e.g. labour market services). In addition to the general strategic development plan, there are many lower level documents that frame and regulate provision of welfare services.

There is no single body responsible for social inclusion of young people. Inclusion of young people addressed in several policy areas, which have established different division of tasks between different ministries and between local and central level. There are two strategies that consider children and young people as the most relevant target group:

- The Development Plan for Children and Families for 2012–2020
- The Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020.

The main challenges directly related to social exclusion and addressed in welfare policies include the following:

- Participation in labour market,
- Economic coping,
- Health.

The goals and measures addressing social exclusion of young people are included in the Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020, which focuses on age group 7-26 year olds and in the Development Plan for Children and Families 2012-2020, which focuses on age group 0-18 year olds and also on young families.

With the goal of supporting youth social inclusion, several policy programmes have been and are being implemented since early 2010s. They have been targeting the following groups:

- 7-18 years olds in education, to support finishing formal education programmes and prevent early dropout
- 7-26 years old in youth work, to support personal development, provide opportunities to acquire skills useful in schools, labour market, civil society organization.
- 0-18 in child protection, to provide welfare, support development and protect from risk of poverty and social exclusion.
- 7-18 in crime prevention and justice system.

In addition, policy activities aiming to increase intercultural awareness, awareness of young people's rights, safeguarding democracy and preventing radicalisation leading to violent extremism are being implemented (Youthwiki).

Special programmes are being implemented for particular target groups.

- For people at least 17 years old and having not acquired secondary education, specially arranged courses offered by educational institutions are available to aid them in acquiring secondary education. Adult learners need specially designed forms of learning to succeed.
- For non-Estonians, language courses are offered. Estonia has a sizable group of population of non-Estonian origin, who speaks mainly Russian (Russians, Byelorussians, Ukrainians). Also, other minorities live in Estonia but their number is relatively small. Also, in recent years the number of immigrants from other countries has been increasing.
- Unemployed as well as employed people are offered a range of job trainings to meet their needs for either acquiring new skills and competences to start a new job or for updating skills in their present job.
- Young people in NEET-status or in the risk of NEET-status are the target group of Youth Guarantee implementation plan in Estonia. This currently includes 8 different activities which address young people in age range approximately 15-26 years.

All young people have access to non-formal and informal learning activities that are expected to increase their social and personal skills and through this, support their participation in education, labour market and civil society (Boeren et al 2017).

Pata et al (2017) point out several categories of young people who are in a vulnerable position:

- Caretakers for children or other family members,
- Young people with illness or disability,
- Young people in NEET-status,
- Young people with regional constraints on access to education,
- Young people with low level of education preventing them from access to higher levels of education,
- Young people with language constraints on access to education (refugees, other nationalities),
- Young people with legal constraints on access to education because of absence of Estonian citizenship.

Project Except reports that the following categories are seen as risk groups in the context of youth labour market participation (Unt and Jeliaskova 2018):

- Young unemployed,
- NEETs,
- Young people without qualification,
- Young people with low skills.

Vulnerability factors and vulnerable groups

The preceding overview indicates the main dimensions that are assumed to make people vulnerable and thus become useful to help to identify vulnerable groups.

- *Ethnic background* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability in Estonia. Non-Estonian population, mainly of Slavic background, needs support to learn Estonian language that would help to participate in education, labour market as well as in civil society.

- *Labour market status* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being unemployed is the vulnerable group.
- *Level of skills and competences* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being characterised as having low level of skills is the vulnerable group.
- *Age* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being young, as well as old – in general outside of prime working age of 30 and 50 years – means being in the vulnerable group.
- *Regional differences* tend to have a clear pattern with the degree of vulnerability. In Estonia, significant differences are found between living in North-Eastern part of the country (mainly non-Estonian population, high unemployment, lack of educational opportunities) and in other parts of the country. Also, differences between cities and towns on the one hand and rural areas on the other hand are significant.
- *Degree of ability*, both physical and mental, tends to take on qualitatively similar values with the degree of vulnerability. Being disabled tends to increase vulnerability so that people with disabilities are in the vulnerable group.

Combinations of factors

The factors pointed out above mostly do not work in isolation as none of the programmes addressed just particular value of one factor, like all young people or all disabled persons. Instead, policies address combinations of the factors. Mostly values of two factors are combined, and there are also variants of programs which would combine three factors; for instance, youth unemployment in a certain region or young unemployed disabled persons:

- NEET-status combines age, employment status, and status in relation to educational participation.
- Youth unemployment is a combining of age and employment status and has been addressed over a long period in Estonia.
- Age and level of skills – young school dropouts, young people in risk of dropping out from school.

3.3.e Slovakia

Inequality in Slovakia

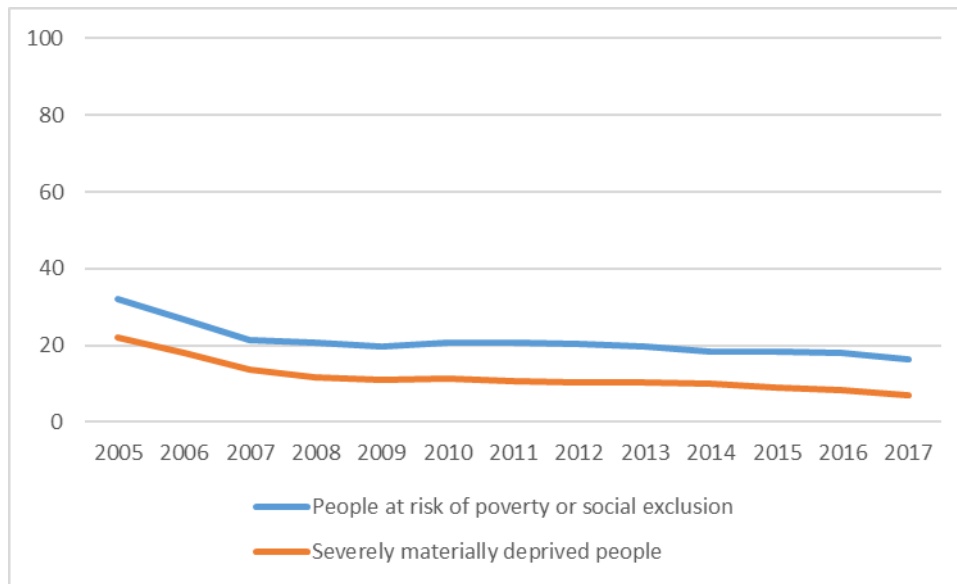
On average, over the period 2005-2017, the percentage of people in severe material deprivation in Slovakia was approximately 12%. It has been constantly decreasing – the percentage of people living in severe material poverty was as high as 22% in 2005 but by 2017, it was only 7%. Because of this drop, it makes little sense to compare its average value to the EU average but on the average over that period, it has been higher than in the EU on the average (8%) (Eurostat⁵⁵).

Over the same period, 21% of population has been living under the line of risk of poverty or social exclusion. Also the percentage of people living in the risk of poverty has been constantly decreasing – the percentage was as high as 32% in 2005 but by 2017, it was only 16%. On average, it has been somewhat lower than the EU average (24%) (Eurostat⁵⁶).

⁵⁵ Eurostat, table Code: t2020_53.

⁵⁶ Eurostat, table Code: t2020_50.

Figure 29. People at risk of poverty and severe material deprivation (Slovakia)



Source: Eurostat

Dimensions of social exclusion

The Slovak Republic has made notable progress in reducing social inequality. There is no national strategy on social inclusion, but instead strategies that address specific disadvantaged groups have been put in place. Social inclusion of young people is addressed in the Slovak Youth Strategy for 2014 – 2020, among other policy topics. The Youth Report provides definition of social inclusion of young people, which to a large degree focuses on supporting young people with fewer opportunities, possibly in socially exclusion or in risk of social exclusion. The goal is to achieve a situation whereby they have opportunities and possibilities to fully participate in economic, social and cultural life of a society and live their everyday lives (Youthwiki⁵⁷).

Lifelong learning in Slovak Republic has a long history going back to mid-19th century but it has gone through several major interruptions. The latest have been becoming an independent state in 1993 and joining EU in 2004. These events have influenced significantly lifelong learning activities and policies. Because of the abrupt changes, lifelong learning sector itself seems to be in a relatively vulnerable state and vulnerable groups that are addressed within the sector, are hard to identify. Since 1990s, adult education and lifelong learning has been subjected to the needs of the labour market and job training. The majority of learning opportunities that are available outside formal education system come as a component of the active labour market. Characteristic to Slovakia has been the policy focus on dealing with unemployment. Only in recent years, also on account of demographic changes and labour shortages, has there been increased awareness of support needed for employees and workers who need to adjust to rapidly changing working environment and technologies. Age is of high significance when it comes to identifying vulnerable groups. The list of vulnerable groups in Slovakia includes:

⁵⁷ <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/4-social-inclusion-slovakia>

- 15-24 year old young people (in some programs, up to 29 years old may be included),
- Older people (50+),
- Persons with disabilities,
- Unemployed.

Youth Guarantee is implemented in Slovakia, it addresses young people not in employment, education or training until 29 years of age (Scholze et al 2017; Boeren et al 2017). Among young people, several target groups can be distinguished:

- Roma young people, who are at risk of social exclusion because they face multiple disadvantages: low level education achievements, hidden/open segregation in education, high unemployment rates, societal discrimination, inherited poverty, etc.
- Young grown-ups leaving the orphanages, re-educational institutions, foster families who may face barriers mostly when it comes to housing and employment.
- Disabled young people (including young people with visual and hearing impairments) have been considerably disadvantaged while ensuring equitable access to education, employment, own housing, etc.
- Young asylum seekers and young homeless people as being among the groups of young people at the highest risk of poverty and social exclusion (Youthwiki).

Have the policies been effective and successful? In general, it seems that there is little evidence to support the claims that effectiveness and outcomes of lifelong learning policies and support measures, in the context of labour market and job training, is high. Participation in training and learning opportunities seems to take place mostly outside those policies and independent of them. Learning activity itself, however, is an important factor for labour market success (Ederer et al 2015: 113-118).

Vulnerability and vulnerable groups

The preceding overview indicates the main dimensions that make people vulnerable and help to identify vulnerable groups. In general, lifelong learning policies of the Slovak Republic leave an impression of a high degree of social cohesiveness and no large differences. There are only few groups that can be pointed out as being in vulnerable status.

- *Ethnic background* is a factor that is seen to co-vary with the degree of vulnerability in Slovakia and Romas are the ethnic group, which is in the status of a vulnerable group.
- *Labour market status* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being unemployed is the vulnerable group.
- *Level of skills and competences* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being characterised as having low level of skills is the vulnerable group. However, a bulk of lifelong learning opportunities in Slovakia address employed people, to assure that they are and stay competitive on labour market.
- *Age* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being young, as well as old – in general outside of prime working age of 30 and 50 years – means being in the vulnerable group.
- *Degree of ability*, both physical and mental, is a factor that is identifiable as a factor that influences vulnerability. Being disabled is the vulnerable group.

Combinations of factors

The factors pointed out above do not work in isolation as none of the programmes addressed just particular value of one factor, like all young people, all Roma population, all disabled persons. Instead, policies address combinations of the factors. Mostly values of two factors are combined, and one of the factors is age: young unemployed, young disabled persons, young people with low level of skills (school dropouts).

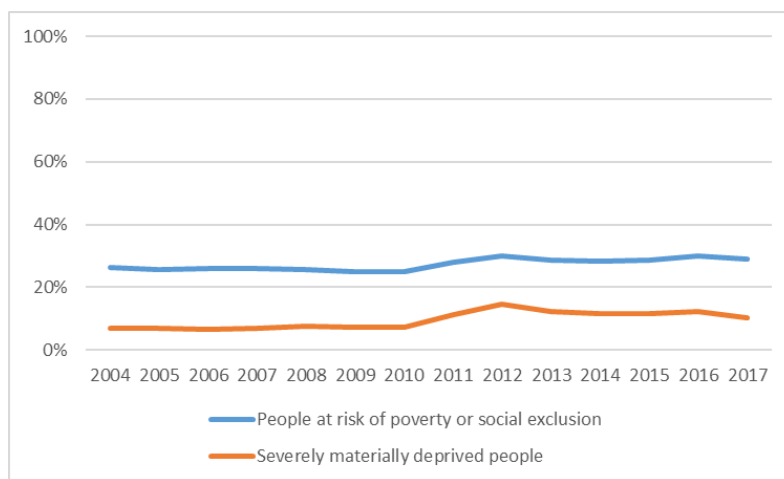
In the case of Slovakia, it is hard to identify other combinations of factors than those with age. There is one exception – that is the Youth Guarantee programme, which addresses young people not in employment, education or training, thus combining three dimensions (age, labour market situation and a relationship to learning). This comes from the NEET-status definition that combines three factors: age, labour market status and education system status.

3.3.f Italy

Inequality in Italy

Around 2010, the percentage of people in severe material deprivation in Italy was approximately 7%, the same percentage as it was in the EU on average. Between 2011 and 2016, the percentage increased notably, reached 15% in 2012 and then decreased to 10% by 2017 (Eurostat⁵⁸).

Figure 30. Risk of social exclusion and severe material deprivation (Italy)



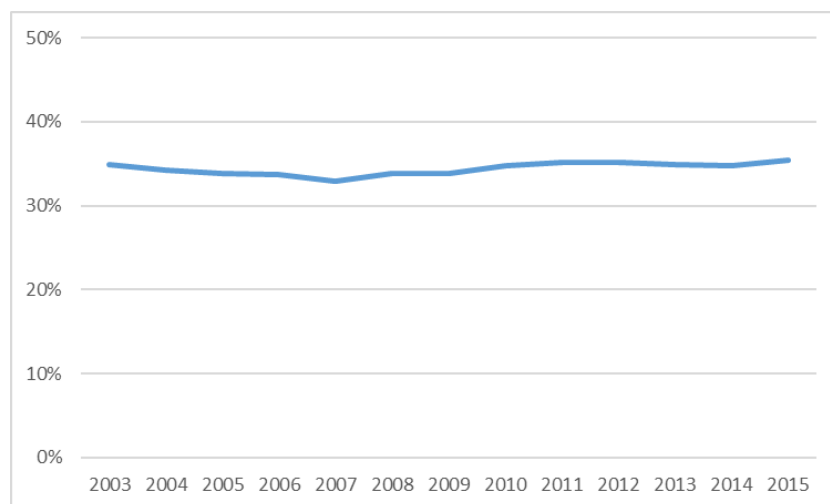
Source: Eurostat.

The percentage of people living in the risk of poverty followed the same pattern. Until 2011, it was approximately 26% and at the same level with the EU average but it increased later somewhat (Eurostat⁵⁹).

⁵⁸ Eurostat, table Code: t2020_53.

⁵⁹ Eurostat, table Code: t2020_50.

Figure 31. Gini index (Italy)



Source: World Bank

Over the period 2003-2015, the average value of income inequality measured by Gini index was 34%. It has not been decreasing between 2006 and 2014 but rather increasing starting from 2008-2009. It stayed rather stable over this period, no fluctuations or significant increase or decrease can be observed.

Dimensions of social exclusion

In Italy, among the main target groups of adult education are the unemployed women who have not completed their formal education at the primary, secondary and higher diploma levels; employees regarded as 'at risk'; and immigrants. Each target group has its specific needs (Zarifis et al 2017).

Immigrants need support to integrate to labour market and to society in general. Hence they are offered courses for linguistic and social integration.

Employees regarded as at risk need to update and acquire skills, knowledge and competences that keep them competitive in labour market. For them, there is a wide variety of general as well as job training courses offered in all types of adult education and lifelong learning institutions, at different educational levels. Functional literacy courses (IT, literature, foreign languages, etc.), training and refresher courses for workers are examples of those courses.

Unemployed women often need to upgrade their education and obtain either elementary or mid-level education. For them, also a range of courses are offered.

In general, adults with low level of education – perhaps having not acquired primary education yet – are seen as a target group. They are offered a range of opportunities to acquire at least primary education. In terms of labour market, young people and women are in less secure situation – they tend to be working at secondary labour market where jobs are relatively insecure, compared to primary labour market, where mostly men work. Also Southern-Italy is characterized by poor labour market situation, compared to North.

Youth unemployment is one of the significant problems in Italy since 1970s (Eurostat⁶⁰). Nowadays, the younger generation is the most disadvantaged part of society, to a large extent because of their poor labour market situation.⁶¹

Young people aged 15-29 have a range of educational offers that are expected to help their successful transition to labour market. There are offers at different educational levels, from primary to tertiary, in different types of adult education providing organisations.

Age group 15-29 years old is entitled to receive support from Youth Guarantee measure. They have access to a range of programmes including job placements via an employment contract, apprenticeships or traineeships, or training or coaching to start a business (Boeren et al 2017).

The list of youth groups recognized as 'risk groups' in the context of labour market participation, includes (Unt and Jeliaskova 2018):

- Young unemployed,
- All young people,
- Early school leavers,
- Higher education graduates,
- NEETs,
- Migrants/Ethnic minorities.

Vulnerability and vulnerable groups

The preceding overview indicates the main dimensions that policy documents see as making people vulnerable and thus help to identify vulnerable groups.

- *Immigrant background*⁶² is factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Immigrants are in a worse situation compared to people born in Italy.
- *Labour market status* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being unemployed is the vulnerable group.
- *Level of skills and competences* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being characterised as having low level of skills is the vulnerable group.

⁶⁰ Unemployment rates in southern part are significantly higher than in the northern part. Also, overall unemployment rate is high. Italy is among the top three EU countries both in terms of overall unemployment rate and differences of unemployment rate. Unemployment rates of 15-24 year olds in three regions were amongst the highest in European Union: Calabria 55,6%, Campania 54,7% and Sicilia 52,7% (Eurostat).

Eurostat. Unemployment statistics at regional level. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics_at_regional_level#Regional_variations_in_youth_unemployment, article update in April 2018, visited 16.2.2019.

⁶¹ In age group 20-29 years old, employment rate is below the EU average (20-24 year old in 2015: Italy 27,6%, EU27 49,8%, 25-29 year olds:52,2% and 72%) and unemployment rate is above the EU average (20-24 year old: 37,4% and 18,9%, 25-29 year old: 22,4% and 12,4%). In 2015, NEET rates were respectively 25,7% and 14,8% (Palumbo et al 2016)

⁶² In 2017, Italy had population of approximately 60 million and 2,7 million of them were immigrants. Between 2010 and 2017, the number of immigrants has been fairly stable, approximately 2,7 million immigrants. 20 years earlier, in 1990, it was only 0,6 million; hence, in 20 years it increased by approximately 2 million (UN 2017).

- *Age* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being young, in age group 15-29 years old, means being in the vulnerable group.
- *Gender* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Women are in a significantly more vulnerable position than men.

Region is another factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. There is a notable difference between the southern part of Italy and the northern part with the northern part being significantly better in terms of employment (higher) and unemployment (lower) rates.

Combinations of factors

The factors pointed out above do not work in isolation. None of the programmes addressed just the particular value of one factor, like all young people, all Roma population, all disabled persons. Instead, policies address combinations of the factors. Mostly values of two factors are combined, and one of the factors is age:

- young unemployed,
- young disabled persons,
- young people with low level of skills (school dropouts).

3.3.g United Kingdom

Inequality in the UK

In the UK, the percentage of people in severe material deprivation has been estimated as being at approximately 5%; this percentage is approximately two-thirds of the EU average figure (Eurostat⁶³). The percentage of people at risk of poverty is estimated at approximately 23%. This percentage has remained relatively stable and at roughly the same level as the EU average (Eurostat⁶⁴). Income inequality in the UK, as measured by World Bank Gini index, was stable or slightly decreasing during the period 2004-2015 (it was fluctuating around 35%).

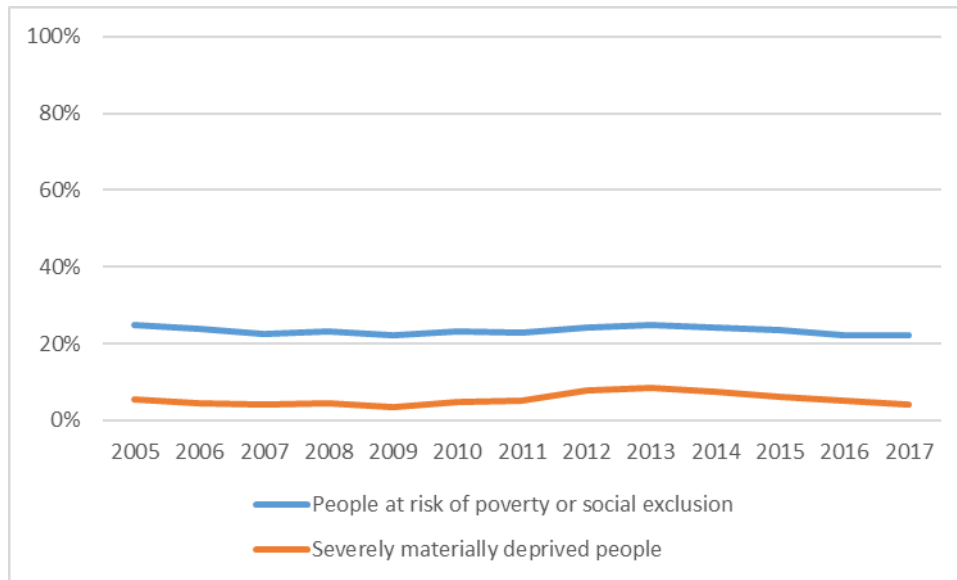
The European Commission's headline statistics demonstrate that the overall employment rate for the economically active UK population (aged 20-64) rose steadily between 2012 and 2017, by which time it had reached a new high of 78.2%. This exceeded the EU aggregate of 72.2% (Eurostat⁶⁵). At 4.2% unemployment in the UK was at its lowest level since 1975 (European Commission, Country Report United Kingdom 2018). However, the Ecorys full country report on the UK identifies a range of issues connected with employment, despite the relatively high employment rate. These include 4.5 million people on unemployment benefits and disjointed back-to-work and in-work support, which has resulted in a significant number of people being stuck in a 'low pay, no pay' cycle" (Ecorys 2017: 7). In addition, there is the growing issue of in-work poverty, with 5 million people recorded as in work being paid below the UK Living Wage (ibid.).

⁶³ Eurostat, table Code: t2020_53.

⁶⁴ Eurostat, table Code: t2020_50.

⁶⁵ Eurostat, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Europe_2020_indicators_-_United_Kingdom

Figure 32. Risk of social exclusion and severe material deprivation (UK)



Source: Eurostat

Reports in 2018 from the Social Metrics Commission (2018) and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2018) provide evidence that 14 million people, roughly one-fifth of the UK population, now live in poverty. Four million people live more than 50% below the poverty line (Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2018), and 1.5 million are destitute: unable to afford basic essentials, such as food and heating (Social Metrics Commission 2018: 97).

Around 85% of the UK's population, output and workforce live in **England**. Within the UK, England has the highest disposable income disparity between the richest area (Inner London) and the poorest (West Midlands) in the whole of Western Europe (Inequality Briefing 2015). Over the last two decades, the rate of poverty in England has generally been higher than for Scotland and Northern Ireland (but lower than for Wales). Although the English rate began to decline around 10 years ago, it has been rising again since 2015, now standing at around 22% (Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2018: 15).

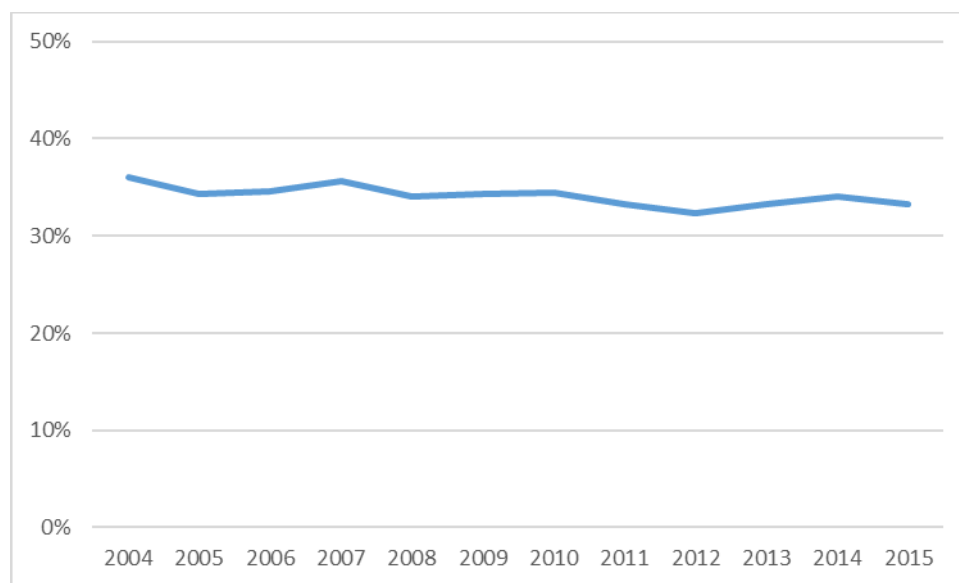
In **Scotland**, the rate of relative poverty⁶⁶ decreased between 1998 and 2015 but started to increase again in 2016. In 2014-2017, the percentage below the relative poverty line was 19%. In the group of working age people, the percentage was 19% and this has been fairly stable since 1998. The absolute poverty⁶⁷ rate

⁶⁶ Relative poverty - individuals living in households whose equivalised income is below 60 percent of median income in the same year. This is a measure of whether those in the lowest income households are keeping pace with the growth of incomes in the economy as a whole. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/poverty-income-inequality-scotland-2014-17/pages/7/>

⁶⁷ Absolute poverty - individuals living in households whose equivalised income is below 60 percent of inflation adjusted median income in 2010/11. This is a measure of whether those in the lowest income households are seeing their incomes rise in real terms. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/poverty-income-inequality-scotland-2014-17/pages/7/>. Hence, absolute poverty is not similar to the material deprivation index used by Eurostat.

has been consistently decreasing since 1998, and over the period 2014-2017, 17% of population lived under the absolute poverty line. In 2014-17, 14% of working-age adults were in absolute poverty before housing costs, and 18% after housing costs. Income inequality has been fluctuating; it decreased from 2008 to 2015 but increased from 2015 to 2017 (Scottish Government 2018).

Figure 33. Gini index (UK)



Source: World Bank⁶⁸

Dimensions of social exclusion

In **England** overall youth unemployment rates for those aged 15-24 have improved, now standing at 13% (European Commission 2018). According to the Office for National Statistics, for July to September 2018, the unemployment rate for those aged 16-24 years was 11.1%: this is, however more than double the general unemployment rate for all people, which was 4.1% in the same period (ONS 2018). The rate of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET), aged 15-24, at 10.9% also demonstrates that education and employment trends are on an improving or stable path (European Commission 2018). The Institute for Employment Studies suggested that too many young people in England still fall into the NEET category, estimating that figure at 700,000 (Wilson 2018). There are also substantial regional differences in youth unemployment rates across England. Over the year ending November 2016, the average unemployment rate for 16-24 year olds in the North East of England was 18%, compared to 10% in the South East. There is also wide variation between areas in the number of young people claiming unemployment benefits. There are also stark differences in youth unemployment by ethnic group. In the year to June 2016, the unemployment rate among 16-24 year olds was 30% for black people, 26% for people from a Bangladeshi or Pakistani ethnic background, and 13% for white people (House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee 2017: 11). Young people who are or have been in care make up 12% of 16-18 year olds, but 24% of people in that age group who have been NEET for over six months (Audit

⁶⁸ World Bank, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI?end=2015&locations=BG-AT-EE-AU-BE-GB-SK-ES-IT&start=2015&view=map>.

Commission 2010: 20). Disabled young people have a lower employment rate than their non-disabled counterparts. In mid-2016, 56% of non-disabled 16-24 year olds were employed, compared to 38% of disabled people in the same age group (House of Commons 2016: 8).

The **English** education system now requires young people born on or after 1 September 1997 to be in education or training until the age of 18. In addition, increasing access to Higher Education means that “England’s six million young people stay in education for longer than previous generations” (Evans and Egglestone 2018). Social disadvantage remains a persistent inequality issue affecting access to higher education. An ongoing decline in government-funded part-time educational provision, in both further and higher education, also seem indicates fewer opportunities for the most vulnerable young adults – whose participation is influenced by other factors such as childcare, low-paid work, disabilities and elder care.

In **Scotland** during the mid-2000s, tertiary education was valued as a factor that would support the economic competitiveness of individuals as well as the nation as a whole. Under-represented social groups were also seen as potential beneficiaries of educational activities, in order that they might develop a skills-base compatible with the growth of a knowledge economy and to encourage more socially cohesive communities. Lifelong learning was seen as developing the capacities of personal fulfilment and enterprise, employability and adaptability, active citizenship and social inclusion. The category of 16-19 year olds who were NEET, perhaps from low income families, was considered problematic; government support was needed in order for this group of young people to stay in education (Weedon et al 2007).

In the mid-2010s, low skills and early dropout from formal education continued to be viewed as the main dimensions that increase vulnerability and as a significant cause of social exclusion, along with factors such as being unemployed and being from a non-UK background. In addition, a history of offending and other disadvantages were factors increasing vulnerability and significant causes of social exclusion. Age (being in the younger age bracket) appeared an important cause of social exclusion, though often in combination with other factors, rather than on its own (Boeren 2017; Huegler and Kersh 2017; Unt and Jeliaskova 2018).

Vulnerability and vulnerable groups

The preceding overview indicates the main dimensions that policies assume to make people vulnerable and help to identify vulnerable groups.

- *Immigrant background* is associated with a degree of vulnerability within the UK generally and in both England and Scotland. Immigrants in general are in a vulnerable position, partly because of their poor English language skills.
- *Labour market status* is seen a factor causing vulnerability. Being unemployed means belonging to the group of vulnerable people.
- *Level of skills and competences* is one of the main factors associated with the degree of vulnerability. People with low levels of skill, with low competences, and who have finished only primary education, are vulnerable. However, high levels of education, skill and competence are perhaps the main features associated with success in the labour market. In addition, more highly-educated people need to keep their skills updated in order to stay competitive within the labour market.

- *Age* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. In general, being young means being in the vulnerable group. However, it is generally a factor in vulnerability in combination with other factors.
- *Low income family* background too is seen as one of the factors that increases vulnerability and risk of social exclusion.

Combination of factors

Patterns of employment both reflect and reinforce the social gradient and there is inequality of access to labour market opportunities. Rates of unemployment are highest among those with no or few qualifications and skills, people with disabilities and mental ill health, those with caring responsibilities, lone parents, those from some ethnic minority groups, older workers and, in particular, young people. When in work, these same groups are more likely to be in low-paid, poor quality jobs with few opportunities for advancement, often working in conditions that are harmful to health. Many are trapped in a cycle of low-paid, poor quality work and unemployment (Marmot 2010: 68).

One focus of policy attention for decades – though with varying success – in both England and Scotland has been NEET status: the combination of age, labour market and educational participation.

Another important combination of vulnerability factors is that of skill level and labour market position: low skilled, unemployed, people are seen as being at risk of social exclusion. They have often been the target of public policy interventions.

In addition, immigrant background and age combine in the vulnerable category of young immigrants. Low levels of skill in English also increases the vulnerability of this group.

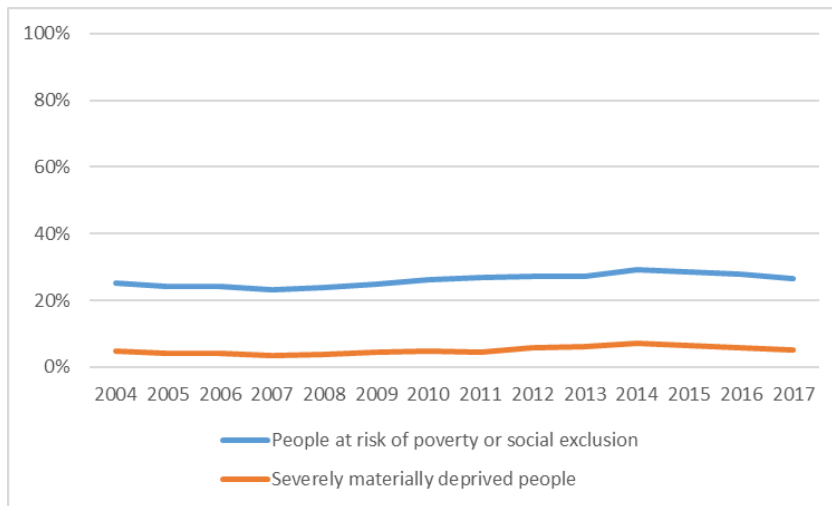
3.3.h Spain

Inequality in Spain

On average, over the period 2005-2017, the percentage of people in severe material deprivation in Spain was approximately 5%. It was at its low in 2004-2008 – 4% – and increased to 7% in 2014, after which it decreased to 5%. It has been notably lower than in the EU on the average (8%) (Eurostat⁶⁹).

⁶⁹ Eurostat, table Code: t2020_53.

Figure 34. People at risk of poverty and severe material deprivation (Spain)

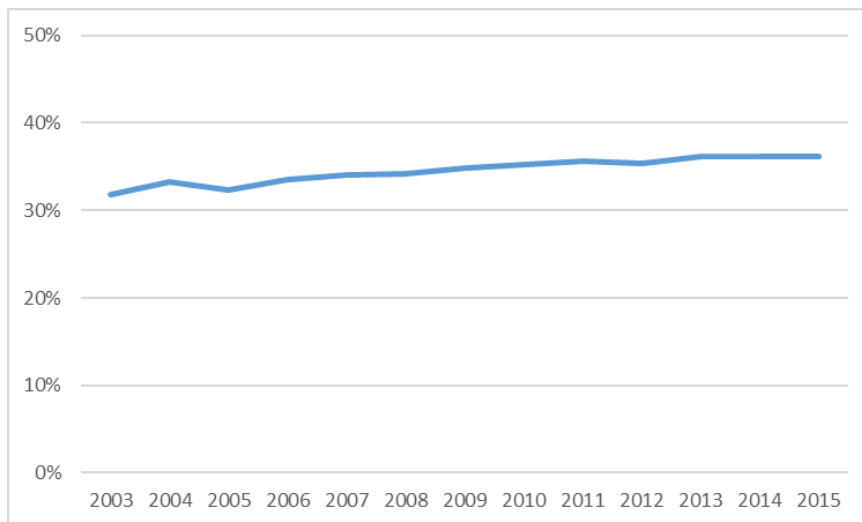


Source: Eurostat

Over the same period, 26% of population has been living under the line of risk of poverty or social exclusion. The percentage was the lowest in 2007 (23%) after which it started to increase and reached to top in 2014-2015 (29%), after which it has decreased. It has been somewhat higher than in the EU on the average (Eurostat⁷⁰).

Over the period 2003-2015, the average value of income inequality measured by Gini index was 35%.

Figure 35. Gini index (Spain)



Source: World Bank⁷¹

⁷⁰ Eurostat, table Code: t2020_50.

⁷¹ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI?end=2015&locations=BG-AT-EE-AU-BE-GB-SK-ES-IT&start=2015&view=map>

Spain is one of the few countries, where income inequality increased – it moved from 32% in 2003 to 36% in 2015.

Dimensions of social exclusion

In Spain, the rights related to ensuring inclusion in society and the exercise of full citizenship are included in basic legal documents like the Spanish Constitution, where the right to decent employment, housing access to the health system are guaranteed). There is no legislation or regulation for social inclusion in general, neither is there regulation for social inclusion of youth. Increasing social inclusion in general has been pursued using National Plans of Inclusion. These are tri-annual plans, which were launched in 2001 for the first time. The National Plan for Inclusion itself does not define young people amongst “most vulnerable” groups although also young people are among target groups of social inclusion interventions. For young people, two areas of interventions are particularly relevant:

- Employment, as youth unemployment has been high in Spain so that there is a need for specific measures⁷²;
- Education, more concretely supporting school participation and prevention of early school-leaving, promotion of vocational education, encouraging adults, who left school prematurely, to return and finish their education.⁷³

Also housing and health related measures bear relevance for young people in risk of exclusion. Young people in NEET-status pose obviously a serious social exclusion problem in Spain as their share is relatively high.

The main strategic policy document specifically in the field of youth is the Youth Strategy 2020 (Estrategia Juventud 2020). The strategy is implemented using national action plans for the periods 2014-2016, 2016-2018 and 2018-2020. In terms of the main goals, the Youth Strategy does not differ significantly from the National Plan of Inclusion. Both point out two groups of young people:

- young people with disabilities and
- Roma youth.

⁷² Labour market situation of young people has worsened over the period 1995 to 2015. In 1995, the employment rate of 20-24 year old was 37,5% and it decreased to 31,4% in 2015, while it was at its top height of 55,9% in 2005. The unemployment rate in the age group increased from 39,2% to 44,6%, with a low level of 17,0% in 2005. The rate of temporary employees in age group 15-29-year-old has decreased from 63,2% in 1995 to 54,3% in 2015, with the lowest level in 2010 (45,1%). It has been significantly above EU average (Palumbo et al 2016, Table 1, Table 3, Table 5). In 2017, the overall unemployment rate was 17,2% and unemployment rate among 15-24-year-old was 38,6%, which are among highest figures in the EU. Also, regional differences in unemployment rates locate the country are among three countries with the highest differences (Eurostat).

Eurostat. Unemployment statistics at regional level. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics_at_regional_level#Regional_variations_in_youth_unemployment, article update in April 2018, visited 16.2.2019.

⁷³ In Spain, youth unemployment rate of 15-29 year olds, compared to other European countries, has been notably higher: over the period 2009 to 2017 it was 35,2% in Spain and 16,5% in EU. Also NEET-rate has been higher, but not this much as unemployment rate as it has been 18,4% in Spain and 14,6% in EU over the period 2006 to 2017. Source: Eurostat, tables yth_empl_160 and yth_empl_090

These groups are targeted using specifically developed measures. Amongst challenges to be addressed in the future are the following four ones (Youthwiki⁷⁴; Unt and Jeliaskova 2018):

- The economic inclusion of disadvantaged young people in the information society,
- Integration, cohesion and social and democratic participation,
- Reverting the aging trend of the population pyramid in Spain through an increase of the birth rate among young Spaniards,
- Strengthen the European identity of young Spaniards and their democratic spirit.

Non-formal learning outside formal education system in Spain is developed relatively poorly, as it is common in Southern-European and Mediterranean countries (Zarifis et al 2017). Although there is a wide variety of offers for adult education, it is not on the main political agenda. Also, its role in society is not clear and funding rates are low (Boeren et al 2017). Over the period 1985 to 2013, spending on training has stayed below 0,2% of GDP, mostly fluctuated around 0,1%. Compared to other big European countries, Spain has been amongst countries with low level of spending (Young Adullt report on Spain, 2016). Spending on labour market changed markedly in Great Recession, when it jumps from 2,2% of GDP in 2007 to 4,0% in 2010, and then decreased to 2,5% by 2015 (OECD⁷⁵). Because of relatively weakly developed non-formal learning sector, its role in addressing social exclusion cannot be too significant.

Vulnerability and vulnerable groups

The preceding overview indicates the main dimensions that policy makers assume to make people vulnerable and help to identify vulnerable groups.

- *Ethnic background* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability in Spain. Roma population are the ethnic group, which is in the status of a vulnerable group in Spain.
- *Labour market status* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being unemployed is the vulnerable group.
- *Level of skills and competences* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being characterised as having low level of skills is the vulnerable group.
- *Age* is factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being young, as well as old – in general outside of prime working age of 30 and 50 years – means being in the vulnerable group.
- *Degree of ability*, both physical and mental, is a factor that is identifiable as a factor that influences vulnerability. Being disabled is the vulnerable group.

Combinations of factors

The factors pointed out above do not work in isolation as none of the programmes addressed just particular value of one factor, like all young people, all Roma population, all disabled persons. Instead, policies address combinations of the factors. Mostly values of two factors are combined, and one of the factors is age: young unemployed, young disabled persons, young people with low level of skills (school

⁷⁴ European Commission, EACEA National Policies Platform, <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/43-strategy-social-inclusion-young-people-spain>

⁷⁵ OECD. Public spending on labour markets. % of GDP 2000-2006, <https://data.oecd.org/socialexp/public-spending-on-labour-markets.htm>, visited 25.2.2019.

dropouts). However, NEET-status combines three factors: age, labour market status and education system status.

3.3.i Australia

Inequality in Australia

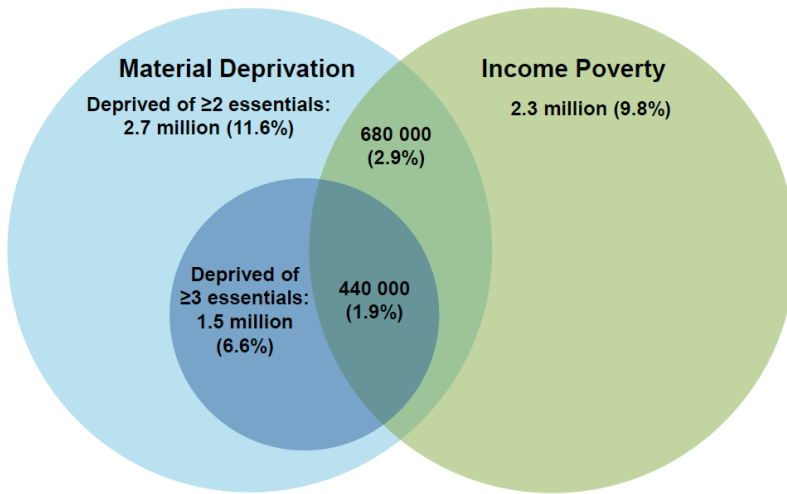
Although the governance and political reality of the EU is hard to compare with the Australian policy space, there are some parallels to be drawn between in terms of economic and social policies and developments. Interesting lessons in policy development and governing lifelong learning may be drawn from the actions of the EU institutions towards building common policy objectives and stronger policy coordination in lifelong learning and education policy in Australia.

In 2018, Adult Learning Australia (ALA), the Australian peak body for adult and community education (ACE), called for “integrated lifelong learning policy” which, against all international trends, does not exist in Australia (Adult Learning Australia 2018). A review of Australian academic literature and policy shows there has been little interest in the concept of lifelong learning - it is under conceptualised, under researched and non-existent in policy discourse, with some decade-old exceptions (Chapman et al 2005; Cornford 2009; Watson 2004). This is in contrast with international developments in lifelong learning policy and adult learning, where lifelong learning became an essential element of operating social and economic policies. The reasons for such a different approach lie in the relatively high post-compulsory education participation rates, steady economic growth and low unemployment rates however there are growing concerns that such approach is not sustainable (Adult Learning Australia 2018; Cornford 2009) as wealth inequality and disadvantage continues to persist, especially in specific low SES areas, for disabled, and indigenous Australians.

Inequality in Australia

What distinguishes Australia from many of the developed countries is that it has a 25-year period of uninterrupted economic growth (PC 2018). Therefore, the average wealth and income growth have been increasing and unemployment decreasing. Nevertheless, economic disadvantage exists, and 2.2 million Australians lived below the relative income poverty line in 2015-2016 which remained a steady average of the last three decades (Productivity Commission 2018). In Australia, the overlap between material deprivation and income poverty is very small (see figure 37). It means that a very small proportion of people experiencing income poverty experience material deprivation at the same time.

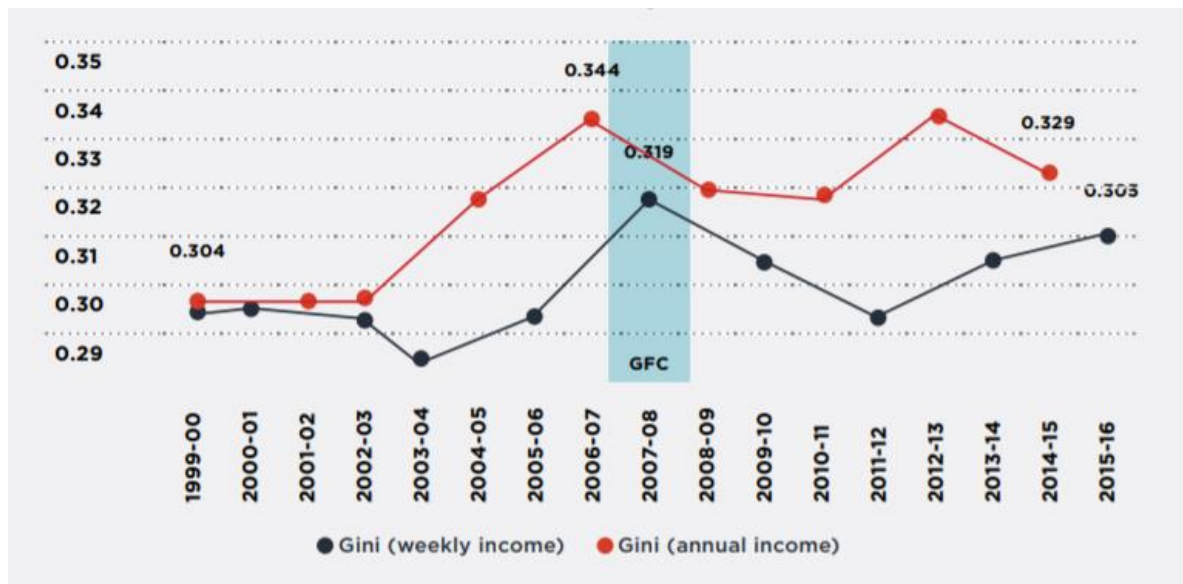
Figure 36. The overlap between material deprivation and income poverty in Australia (2014). Percentages show a proportion of entire population.



Source (PC 2018, p.132).

The average value of Gini index over years 2003, 2008 and 2010 was 35% (World Bank⁷⁶). Compared to other countries of the project, this is an average value.

Figure 37. Overall trends in income inequality from 1999-2000 to 2015-2016 (Gini coefficients for weekly & annual income).



Source: ACOSS (2018) Inequality in Australia. <https://www.acoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Inequality-in-Australia-2018.pdf>.

⁷⁶ Gini Index. World Bank estimates. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI?end=2015&locations=BG-AT-EE-AU-BE-GB-SK-ES-IT&start=2015&view=map>

Dimensions of social exclusion

The social policy governance in Australia is highly correlated with the objectives and ideologies of changing federal and state governments and therefore institutions and policies frequently change or take new forms. In 2008, the Australian Labour Party government created the Australian Social Inclusion Board as an advisory body on how to achieve better outcomes for most disadvantaged which was followed with the Government Statement on social inclusion titled: *A Stronger, Fairer Australia*, released in 2009, which set out the Government's vision and strategy for social inclusion. Nevertheless, it was criticised for its human capital approach and a narrow 'welfare to work' agenda (Dee and Marson 2015). The change of government in 2013, brought an overhaul of the policy disbanding the Board, focusing on market-driven policies and cutting welfare support. The policies introduced more accountability for welfare payments and focused on employment activation initiative such as the Transition to Work (TTW) program funded through the Youth Employment Strategy, targeting Australians aged 15-21.

There have been changes in youth education and workforce participation over past decades. The structural change in the economy and the reformed labour market has increased non-standard jobs, which has impacted young people's labour market participation.

In Australia, young people with low level of skills and low level of formal education are offered foundation level and vocational courses with language, literacy and numeracy integrated in their programmes (Boeren 2017). But engaging young people and early school leavers into VET can be difficult. Since 2012 the number of students in VET aged between 15 and 19 years has been declining, with about 58% completion rates in 2015 (Dommers et al 2017). Disengagement, non-completion and lack of interest in completing vocational training are main concerns of policy-makers and researchers as these issues may lead to social exclusion for this group.

While increasing access to university for students from low SES backgrounds has driven government reforms since the 1990s with increased funding and activation initiatives at universities there remains a disparity in the access to university between young people from low SES backgrounds and higher SES (Kemp and Norton 2014).

In Australia educational attainment is one of the best predictors of a person's successful future as the link between higher literacy and social outcomes like health, participation in democratic life is stronger in Australia than in most other countries surveyed by PIAAC (OECD 2013). Education and skills development have been on top of the agenda of national governments and international organisations in recent decades as a response, and a solution, to global economic pressures. In Australia, the recent decade has seen unprecedented reforms in school curriculum development, assessment, national standards and funding as well as unparalleled reforms of post-compulsory vocational education and training. Nevertheless, high numbers of Australians face significant challenges in upskilling, employment and democratic participation: over 20% of young people do not complete Year 12 (ACARA 2017), just 54% of Indigenous people aged 15-24 were engaged in education or work in 2008 (Australian Social Inclusion Board 2012) while over 1 million of adult Australians do not have basic literacy skills (ABS 2018). These apply specifically to the vulnerable adults such as low-SES, with disability, or living in regional areas (ABS 2008).

Vulnerability and vulnerable groups

The preceding overview indicates the main dimensions that is assumed in policy documents and measures to make people vulnerable and help to identify vulnerable groups.

Indigenous background is a factor that co-varies⁷⁷ with the degree of vulnerability in Australia. People with Indigenous background are more likely to be in a worse situation in education and labour market. Over half (52.2 per cent) of Indigenous people aged between 15 and 64 years were not employed in 2012-2013 (Australian Government 2014). The national imprisonment rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults is 15 times higher than that for non-Indigenous adults (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2014). The gap between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians exist across variety of indicators: education access, and achievement, access to transport, health and facing discrimination (BSL 2012).

Labour market status is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being unemployed is the vulnerable group. The latest Australian Bureau of Statistics data indicate that the unemployment rate of 15–24 year olds in the labour force is much higher than the unemployment rate for all ages. The youth unemployment rate in January 2018, 12.2 per cent, was more than twice the overall rate of 5.5 per cent, and three times the rate of those aged 25 and over (4.1 per cent). On average, it takes 4.7 years for young people to move into full time work from leaving full-time education (Foundation for ...2015). Many young people especially those without qualifications and skills, find difficulties in securing pathways that build satisfying and productive adult lives. There are insecure jobs on the rise, with young people more likely to be in casual and part time jobs (Brotherhood of St Laurence 2017). In the past 15, years the average gap has widened between the actual working hours of young underemployed people and the hours they would like to work.

Past studies revealed that most young people who face the greatest challenges to both labour market and secure/long term employment are those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background (Schultz, 2013), lower socio-economic backgrounds (Circelli & Oliver, 2012), youth with disabilities (Yu, 2010), newly arrived migrants (Centre for Multicultural Youth, 2009), those with poor education outcomes, such as leaving school early and not undertaking further education or training (OECD, 2013).

- *Level of skills and competences* is a factor that co-varies with the degree of vulnerability. Being characterised as having low level of skills is the vulnerable group. Attention is directed toward low skilled individuals as well as toward individuals who have acquired secondary or postsecondary vocational education.
- *Regional differences* covary with the degree of vulnerability. In Australia, significant differences remain between those in city, regional and rural locations – lack of access to education, health and transport being the most problematic.

⁷⁷ In this section of the report, the term co-vary is used as referring to co-variation of the values of two concepts (variables) in the qualitative sense, in the sense of patterned distribution of values (e.g. when values of both variables increase and decrease together, then they co-vary. Exact degree of this co-variation – the quantitative aspect – is not determined. This option was adopted because of the qualitative nature of the variables.) It is not used in the sense of statistical analysis where the covariance is defined as the expected product of deviations of two jointly distributed real-valued random variables from their individual expected values.

Combinations of factors

In Australia, a range of interventions and policy measures address categories, which are defined as being on the crossroads of several factors. Quite frequently three factors are combined: age, labour market status, educational status and Indigenous background.

Also Australia has a category which roughly corresponds to European NEET-category: young people who are looking for a job and have not completed their studies. Early school leavers and young people with low educational attainment combine age and education participation and competence level. Young unemployed are defined by a combination of age and employment status.

3.3.j Comparing notes: constructing vulnerability in a unique or a universal manner?

Vulnerability and vulnerable groups

Analysis of lifelong learning as well as few other neighbouring policy fields in the reviewed countries, reveals that in these countries the following dimensions are commonly linked with vulnerability (see Table 29): labour market status, level of skills and competences, age, gender, physical or mental ability, social and cultural background, and regional differences.

Labour market status – in all countries considered, it is the **unemployed** that are seen as more vulnerable, and while the category is also extendable to note larger group of those not employed, policy interventions are specifically targeting those who are active in labour market - supposedly assuming that this might bring about social inclusion without the need for reversing dispositional barriers that might hold one from participating in the labour market altogether

Level of skills and competences – in all countries, the somewhat vague category of **low level of skills** (often including early school leavers) is considered something that is important to target by policy interventions, indicating the underlying mechanism that those with high (enough) skills are able to seek social inclusion with the help of those skills. However, in some countries, the groups that are targeted because of their skills and competences specifically include those with **only primary education** (in UK), perhaps more specifically addressing early school leavers but also various segments in migrant population (owing to cultural varieties and different education system) and those with secondary or postsecondary **vocational education** (in Belgium, and also in Australia), possibly in the context of low returns to VET education compared to other types of general education. Specific category highlighted for UK includes those with **higher levels of education** who (at least at discursive level) need constant upskilling to remain competitive in the labour market – and increase the competitiveness of the country. This aspect also enables provision of education to the otherwise relatively advantaged segments of population, possibly contributing to increase in skill gaps in the longer run.

Age is a relevant dimension for designing policy interventions targeting social inclusion and in all countries considered **young** are constructed as generally more vulnerable. In the UK, not all young are considered vulnerable but youth **combined with other categories** may lead to a vulnerable position. Still it is important to note here that there are some countries, which see **both young and old** alike as being vulnerable to social exclusion, compared to those in prime working age, perhaps between 30 and 50 years. In those countries – in our sample, Austria, Bulgaria, Estonia, and Spain – intervention measures target both age groups, while in Belgium, Italy, UK, and also Australia see young as a specific vulnerable category.

Belonging to a **minority group** based on being of indigenous descent, of specific ethnic group, or having a migration background is another category that deserves attention in all the countries. In some countries it is **migration** background, or being born in another country, that is targeted by policy measures (such as the case in Austria, in Belgium, in Italy and in UK). In other countries the focus of such measures is more likely on an **ethnic** minority group that has no immediate migration experience (such as Roma in the case of Spain, Slovakia or Bulgaria, or Russian-speaking minorities in Estonia), and in Australian case – the **indigenous** peoples.

Table 29 Dimensions of vulnerability that dominant policy interventions in the field of lifelong learning targeting social inclusion address

	Italy	Austria	Estonia	Bulgaria	Spain	Slovakia	Belgium	UK	Australia
Labour market status	Unemployment	Unemployment	Unemployment	Unemployment	Unemployment	Unemployment	Unemployment	Unemployment	Unemployment
Level of skills and competences	low level of skills	low level of skills	low level of skills	low level of skills	low level of skills	low level of skills employed, to stay competitive	low level of skills (post-) secondary vocational education	low level of skills primary education higher education youth, combined with other factors	low level of skills (post-) secondary vocational education youth
Age	youth	young and old	young and old	young and old	young and old	young and old	youth		
Background (indigenous, ethnicity, migration)	immigrants	immigrants <i>non-German speaking countries</i>	ethnic minorities <i>of Slavic background</i>	ethnic minorities <i>Roma</i>	ethnic minorities <i>Roma</i>	ethnic minorities <i>Roma</i>	immigrants	immigrant <i>poor English language skills</i>	indigenous peoples <i>in labour market</i>
Degree of ability		physical or mental disability	physical or mental disability	physical or mental disability	physical or mental disability	physical or mental disability	physical or mental disability		
Regional differences	South		North-East rural					poverty rate lower in Scotland, London, N. Ireland compared to Wales, West Midlands	
Other	women							low income background	

It is relevant to distinguish here that in the case of migrant population it is most often (lack of) **language** (skills) that is constructed as a problem, a barrier in the way of social inclusion; in case of Estonian second- and third-generation migrant population of Russian-speakers, it is as well constructed to be language, even if there are other important factors also at play to perform a barrier for social inclusion. In cases concerning other groups, such as Roma or indigenous peoples, the very different aspects seem to be openly constructed as problems to be solved by targeted intervention measures.

Physical or mental disability, that can hinder social inclusion, is acknowledged on policy level as needing specific measures in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia and Spain. [..]

While in the UK specific measures are in place to target individuals with **family backgrounds** of lower income and lower education, Italy makes special efforts to include **women**.

Regional differences, the only dimension in this list pointing to structural rather than individual factors driving social exclusion and hindering better inclusion, are recognised on policy intervention level in Estonia, Italy and also in UK. Still, **being unemployed** may be also considered rather a structural feature and not individual.

Interestingly, the countries could be seen as belonging to the types according to how prominent to vulnerability they see the role of (1) disability (not relevant for Italy, UK/Scotland, and Australia); (2) having moderate to high skill level (important only for Slovakia, Belgium, UK/Scotland, and Australia); (3) seeing youth more vulnerable than older ages (the case for Italy, Belgium, UK/Scotland, and Australia); (4) seeing new immigrants as more vulnerable than other ethnic groups (the case for Italy, Belgium, Austria, and UK/Scotland).

The groups of similar countries thus may emerge according to those lines, core groupings formed by

- Italy, Belgium, UK (intermittently joined by Australia, Slovakia, or Austria)
- Bulgaria, Spain, Slovakia (with Roma inclusion the main problem with ethnic group) + Austria, Estonia, UK (with language as prominent problem for immigrant vulnerability)

Combinations of factors

The factors pointed out above mostly do not work in isolation as none of the programmes addressed just particular value of one factor, like all young people or all disabled persons. Instead, policies usually address combinations of the factors.

In Austria, factors that co-vary with social exclusion are used **both individually** as well as **in combination**. Mostly, **two factors** are combined. A review of interventions identified the following combinations: age and labour market status (*young unemployed*), age and education system status (*young school dropouts*, *young people with low level of skills*), labour market and education system status (*low level of skills and unemployed or in risk of getting unemployed*).

In **Belgium**, a range of interventions and policy measures address categories, which are defined as being on the crossroads of several factors. Quite frequently **three factors** are combined: age, labour market status and educational status. This is the case with *NEET status* which combines age, labour market status and education status; *early school leavers and young people with low educational attainment* combines age and education participation and competence level. Two factors are

combined when *young unemployed* are defined combining age and employment status, or *young immigrants* defined by combining age and immigrant background.

The factors pointed out above **for Bulgaria** mostly values of **two factors** are combined, and one of the factors is usually age: *young unemployed*, *young disabled persons*, *young people with low level of skills* (early school leavers).

In Estonia mostly values of **two factors** are combined, and there are also variants of programs which would combine **three factors**; for instance, youth unemployment in a certain region or young unemployed disabled persons. *NEET-status* combines age, employment status, and status in relation to educational participation. *Youth unemployment* is a combining of age and employment status and has been addressed over a long period in Estonia. Age and level of skills are combined when singling out *young school dropouts* and *young people in risk of dropping out from school*.

For **Slovakia**, it is common that age is one category used when different dimensions are combined to define policy target groups. Mostly this results in combinations of **two factors**: young unemployed, young disabled, etc. But especially for distinguishing NEET status and Youth Guarantee target group, three dimensions are combined (age, labour market status, and status in education system).

In **Italy**, also, mostly values of **two factors** are combined, and one of the **factors is age**: young unemployed, young disabled persons, young people with low level of skills (early school leavers).

One of the combinations that has been addressed in the **UK** is that of age, labour market and education participation: NEET status. This group has been on policy makers' radars for decades. Another important combination of vulnerability factors is that of skill level and labour market position: low skilled unemployed people are seen as at risk of social exclusion and they are targeted by public policy interventions. Also immigrant background and age combine into the vulnerable category young immigrants. Low level of skills in English is another feature which combines with this group and increases its vulnerability.

In **Spain**, mostly values of two factors are combined, and one of the factors is age: young unemployed, young disabled persons, young people with low level of skills (school dropouts). However, NEET-status combines three factors: age, labour market status and education system status.

In Australia, a range of interventions and policy measures address categories, which are defined as being on the crossroads of several factors. Quite frequently three factors are combined: age, labour market status and educational status. Also, Australia has a category which roughly corresponds to European NEET-category: young people who are looking for a job and have not completed their studies. *Early school leavers* and *young people with low educational attainment* combines age and education participation and competence level. *Young unemployed* are defined by a combination of age and employment status.

Such consistent use of a combination of more than one factor when addressing vulnerability by policy measures across the countries indicates that, indeed, the heterogeneity within the group of young is widely recognised and is also considered helpful for policy makers to target groups in need of attention because of their social exclusion or their being vulnerable to social exclusion.

Discussing this from the point of view of social exclusion concepts, it is important to note that while labour market status, or, more specifically, being unemployed is one of the clearer signs of being at risk of social exclusion, and thus policy measures need to be supporting inclusion via helping people gain employment, the unemployed are indeed already participating in the labour market. Therefore their exclusion is not complete: they are not employed, but they are, at least, connected to the labour market to search for work.

For all the other dimensions, the relationship to the labour market in itself is not the defining dimension, but it may be worthy of special attention in terms of risk of vulnerability if other disadvantages accumulate.

In and by themselves, having low skills levels here is seen as a problem that can be fixed, to enable more fruitful and stable social inclusion and to support a move away from vulnerability. References abound to the ever-increasing demands of increasing one's human capital. A question also remains relating to how conditions of gender and disability, as well as being from a poorer family background can be compensated for and will this lead to temporary exit from vulnerability – or permanent? Similar questions can be posed on other background-related disadvantages: how to overcome the potential risk of vulnerability that stems from being from a migrant background, particular ethnic origin or indigenous group. This is not just rhetoric, even if language is one of its most visible aspects.

Regional differences, that point to the need to fix structures and institutions rather than individuals – may seem like a harder task to approach. Compensating for these structural disadvantages by require additional dedicated measures in tackling specific youth issues.

In conclusion: policy priorities at intersections

This exercise reveals that across countries, *unemployment* and *low skills* are seen as the main factors increasing the risk of social exclusion, and also the social exclusion of young people. It is interesting to point out, however, that while being low skilled is a relevant aspect everywhere, it is not so prominently prioritized in Slovakia, perhaps pointing to the policy level awareness that social exclusion is not exclusive to this group, nor do high skills levels protect one from social exclusion.

Young immigrants have become a more explicitly-targeted vulnerable group since the mid-2010s, and to support their social inclusion, basic skills and language courses are offered to this group. However, *Roma* people are a pronounced vulnerable group, especially in Spain, Bulgaria and Slovakia.

The importance of regional differences and the role of regional governments varies across country, being especially relevant in Italy and the UK, but the issue is also visible at a targeted policy level in smaller countries with large structural inequalities, such as Estonia.

By way of conclusion, it seems *young people in general* are not seen as a problem for policy measures, but youth can be seen as problematic in combination with factors that predict the risk of vulnerability and social exclusion. Young people as a group are seen as heterogeneous, and youth is only a problem from the point of view of intersectional approaches. Therefore, the potential danger of taking a riskier path is not recognized as a general feature of being young, and instead, national level specific social inclusion policies target only those young people who are in a disadvantaged enough position to be constructed as being at risk. There are no specific social inclusion schemes targeting only young people; rather, the young are included in sectoral and regional schemes, and collaboration across measures is sought.

There are different interventions specifically addressing *youth vulnerability*, and policy measures across countries tend to focus on these main activities:

- Reducing school dropout
- Providing second chance opportunities
- Dual education systems to allow for the acquisition of relevant labour market experiences

The Youth Guarantee is one of the most innovative European policy measures to ensure that vulnerable young people are targeted for social inclusion. NEET young people are seen as the main target group for Youth Guarantee, but also others at risk of social exclusion, such as those with low skills and early school leavers. On the other hand, the Youth Guarantee is important in some countries but not present or mentioned in others. Does this mean that the usual target group of youth guarantee is not addressed, or is considered to be insignificant? Most likely, there are other measures for the same task. In many countries, the Youth Guarantee means that existing and functioning policy measures are funded from ESF and YEI, and possibly also extended.

The specific changes occurring between the 2000s and mid 2010s centre on a shift towards using EU concepts of social exclusion and inclusion, with less emphasis on specific vulnerable groups. The question remains: how will individual countries, and their policy makers, respond to this shift in rhetoric and approach?

4 KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Aims and approach

In this report, we have discussed both the vertical and horizontal dimensions of policy, and political, discourses on vulnerabilities, and we have been able to uncover the process of emerging concepts in political discourses. As we explained in the introductory section, WP1 is concerned with the construction of vulnerable groups in lifelong learning policies at European and national level, and in Australia. The main aim of this report was established:

To explore the discursive construction of target groups among the European policies of lifelong learning both synchronically and diachronically over a period of 1993-2018, using EU lifelong learning documents, national documents and interviews with stakeholders involved in the EU policies.

We have presented a vulnerability model that has guided the European Lifelong learning policy analysis through the corpus based CDA. As has been explained, the concept of vulnerability cannot be understood without relating it to concepts of exclusion and social inclusion. Due to personal and structural factors, people and social groups advance through the life course in an unstable state of equilibrium where their capacities and the opportunities open to them play a key role. The report examines the discursive construction of young people in European documents of lifelong learning, identifying the discourses aimed at young people in contrast with other vulnerable groups that emerge from the body of European policies related to lifelong learning. Combining critical discourse analysis with corpus-based tools, we have examined 68 documents published by the EU during the period 1992-2018, amounting to more than a million words. Taking a corpus-based approach, the data were analysed not only as a whole, but also with regard to synchronic variation, by carrying out concordance analyses of keywords which occurred within documents and diachronic change, although mainly approached from a longitudinal perspective through the investigation of the evolution of the concordances and the frequency of the usage of specific terms over time.

The identification of, and comparison between, the national policies of the countries involved in the ENLIVEN consortium, seven European countries and Australia, has been carried out through the analysis of source data and secondary data from previous European research and from the ENLIVEN project itself.

4.2 Key findings

The analyses point to a number of categories of representation of vulnerability of the different groups including young people. The results show that while there are major similarities in the categories used in representations of these groups in these three periods, the overall messages communicated are not similar. Some concepts such as marginalization or exclusion tend to disappear from the discourse while terms related to skills for the world of work are enhanced. In particular the focus on people with low qualifications or in a situation of unemployment becomes much more prominent.

The review of national lifelong learning policies reveals some priorities across countries, in particular the importance given to people with low qualifications or who are unemployed. These results coincide with those of the analysis of European policies and the European Social Fund.

The results of this work highlight the importance given to the formation of human capital in lifelong learning policies, at national and European level. This is a subject that is the focus of discussion in many of the publications consulted for the bibliographic review of this report. In this case, the contribution comes from the analysis carried out. Most of the previous research has analyzed lifelong learning policies, their objectives, approaches and proposals. In the case of European policies, most of the authors argue that these policies propose objectives aimed at enhancing social cohesion and justice as well as improving competitiveness. This report, without denying this approach, brings a new perspective: that of targets and measures aimed at vulnerable groups. From this approach, most of the measures aimed at these groups are related to improving the level of education or the development of work skills to facilitate people's integration into the world of work. For this reason, we suggest the results highlight the fact that beyond the discourse on the objectives of lifelong learning policies, the approaches have a very direct bias towards the development of human capital.

Incorporation into the labour market is a subject of great importance and complexity in a society characterized by the strength of highly competitive global markets, especially for some groups such as young people without work experience and people with low educational levels. However, in this section we would like to point out that the contrast between lifelong learning policies, which combine the economic and social dimensions in their objectives, when detailing measures and objectives for vulnerable groups, leave social aspects in second place. We consider this to be a relevant issue, since if vulnerability is characterised as being a complex and multidimensional process, measures aimed at vulnerable groups should not be aimed solely at improving their economic status. This risks underestimating the relevance of the other two dimensions - social relations and political and cultural participation.

4.3 Conclusions

In light of these findings, a number of issues and questions arise, which are discussed below, most important of these being: vulnerability as a concept; youth, and vulnerability, in Europe across the life-course and lifelong learning as a tool to combat vulnerability.

4.4 Conceptualizing vulnerability

Over the last few decades, conceptualizations of inequalities in society have evolved markedly. Contemporary analytical frameworks build on the concept of vulnerability when addressing the topic of inequalities in society. Vulnerability means that the well-being of a person – of each person, as all people are vulnerable at some point – is susceptible to shifts. A person's position in society may change from a socially inclusive status - having a job that provides stable and guaranteed engagement with work, a level of income that assures consumption opportunities in accordance with commonly agreed standards and membership in formal and informal networks - to a status of vulnerability and exclusion. In this state, conditions for economic, social and political participation are broken down and an individual is largely, if not entirely, excluded from the main social institutions. Such downward shifts may occur as a result of external events and/or external structural conditions when these are not matched adequately with the capabilities of the individual. Hence, an individual with a low level of

capabilities is more vulnerable than another individual who is better equipped for addressing negative external circumstances.

Resilience, the ability to cope with negative external circumstances, is the opposite to vulnerability. The model is dynamic, meaning that an individual's position on the social inclusion – social exclusion ladder may change as a result of a range of factors. Among factors which support an upward shift on the ladder are public policy interventions in the sphere of lifelong learning. Provision of learning opportunities is expected to support an increase in an individual's human capital and through this, to enhance the likelihood of them finding a job, prevent them losing a job, or enabling them to find a better job than their current position. Different groups have particular educational lifelong learning needs depending on their background and a one-size-fits-all approach is not a viable solution here. For instance, whilst people with a migration background might benefit from language classes, and possibly also from an introduction to local and national culture, then school dropouts might need to acquire work experience and job-specific skills to find a job.

Social science and educational research has taken an interest in the idea of 'vulnerability', as a notion that allows progress in knowledge and social intervention policies. However, it must not be forgotten that the very designation of the label 'vulnerable' is conducive to generalizations about specific groups and runs the risk of reinforcing stigmatization of particular groups and individuals. In addition, it is a complex term, with considerable nuances, which can be abused and used for social control - to increase coercive vigilance and discipline and to reinforce feelings of helplessness in people considered "vulnerable".

While looking for data on vulnerable groups, we returned to discussing social exclusion and social inclusion, largely due to the inadequacy of the available, collected data on vulnerability. We propose to advance the current state of play, so that new research techniques and indicators can be developed to enable systematic and comparable information on vulnerability to be gathered. Sitting **between social exclusion and social inclusion**, one of the issues that arises is how social vulnerability can be measured. There are at least three issues that make this problematic:

- most of the variables that are used to identify vulnerability factors correspond to factors of poverty or social exclusion (poverty, unemployment, educational level), making it unlikely that the dimensions can be recognized at a practical level.
- the relationship between factors of vulnerability and the dimensions in which it manifests itself (lack of participation in the economic, social or political sectors) makes it difficult to distinguish between cause and consequence.
- the process nature of social factors of vulnerability makes everyone exposed to risk, or vulnerable, therefore, measures would be expected to prevent risk, rather than to only fix the problems that are already visible.

This is the most important aspect of *vulnerability*: while certain groups are seen to be more likely to be at risk of social exclusion, no social group is entirely vulnerable, and there is no social group that is by definition free of risk. Perhaps, in our risk society narrative this is less widely recognized: if risks are acknowledged, they may be bringing advantages that accumulate across the life course, but they also may be realized in negative ways. If vulnerability is viewed as a static term, it would apply conceptually to everyone. Although labelling the most vulnerable groups is generally considered useful for policy measures and tools, this understanding may be helpful in **avoiding stigmatizing** vulnerable young people, and other vulnerable groups generally.

4.5 Vulnerability and lifelong learning

What, in this context, could the relationship be between vulnerability and lifelong learning? To mitigate against vulnerability, some authors focus their attention on designing and maintaining structures and strategies within societies and addressing the intrinsically unequal elements of societies. This approach focuses on an increase in capacities, particularly in education, such as the capacity for decision-making. From an approach to capacity education, the United Nations Development Programme argues that there is a relationship between capacity building and the ability to act freely. Here, vulnerability will be contrasted with agency, whereas lifelong learning as a tool would support those with agency to build additional resources, and those who lack agency to build agency.

Would it be possible for lifelong learning, in equipping the vulnerable with what they lack in order to become successfully included, to become the tool for such inclusion? Following the **bounded agency approach**, it is important to recognize the combination of barriers that a vulnerable person needs to overcome, even providing their agency to feel able to do so. This points to the need to target structural rather than individual level barriers in the first instance.

In this study of policy documents, the interplay between structural factors and personal elements related to skills and abilities, is perceived as important from the labour market perspective.

If *unemployment* is seen as the main dimension of vulnerability in national policies, individuals are seen as having a *low level of employability*, rather than being subject to unfavorable hiring practices in the labour market. The solution is sought in defining the unemployed in terms of *low skills* – if not in a general context, then at least in the more concrete context of the local labour market. Here, lifelong learning should be available to enable a low skilled unemployed person who is at risk to develop into a socially integrated, appropriately skilled and potentially employed person.

However, the concept of vulnerability with its dynamic status points to the fact that one will remain at risk of becoming vulnerable, as a result of being part of the risk society in general or of labour market downturns in particular. Thus, the clearly instrumental view of lifelong learning as a means of facilitating social inclusion via the economic dimension is questionable.

A more emancipatory approach to lifelong learning, a much less prominent aspect in terms of policy discourse, could enable the empowerment of the most vulnerable in society and those at risk of being vulnerable. Related to critical and emancipatory learning, such an approach could enable the achievement of social inclusion via other, alternative spheres. Namely, social inclusion via social, cultural and political participation, as well as social participation via education as an activity, may support the vulnerable individual and highlight alternative resources they may be able to develop – to the extent that they may become much more dependent on their own capacities than on external labour market conditions.

4.6 Addressing vulnerability across lifelong learning policies

Accounting for macro-economic and social contexts for lifelong learning policymaking, while considering developments within Europe and in individual countries, both within their specific settings as well as comparatively, enables us to distinguish the outcomes of different strategies for inclusion.

Formulating suggestions relevant for policy making in the future, one needs to consider the question of the feasibility of analysis of past policies to inform future choices. In some countries, in particular, recent political changes have shifted policy focus away from earlier priorities, making it likely that at least some earlier narratives will not be considered viable for the future.

It is clear that developments in lifelong learning policies have followed institutional patterns across countries, while reflecting EU level developments. We suggest this combined approach, paying attention to both aspects – lifelong learning policies more generally and youth-specific measures and environments – provides a novel understand of policy efforts targeting youth inclusion. It highlights the connections between the two fields as well as their occasional spillover effects. Nevertheless, despite the commonalities, their differences serve an important purpose in legitimising the needs for the social inclusion of young people. Successful navigation between the terrains of youth work and lifelong learning is an important dimension when considering ways to enhance the social inclusion of young people.

4.7 Youth as vulnerability and young people as a vulnerable group

Across all the countries we studied, in the EU as well as Australia, unemployment, alongside low levels of skills, were the most prevalent dimensions of vulnerability targeted by policy, followed by recognizing young people – and, in some countries also older people outside prime working age – as vulnerable. **Immigration background** or **belonging to an ethnic group** are seen as contributing to one's vulnerability across all countries. **Disability**, or being differently abled, is also recognized as a dimension of vulnerability. While most policy measures target young people alongside other groups among the most vulnerable, clearly the more prominent idea is bringing the vulnerable into the labour market.

Specific measures target various vulnerabilities, while **attempting to define or identify something that vulnerable people lack as a skill to be developed**. We conclude by critically discussing the discourse on **youth** in relation to situations of unemployment and risk of (mainly social) exclusion, since participation in the economic system, especially in the labour market, is constructed as the main category of access to adulthood. Related to **'young people at risk'**, national policies tended to combine more than one criterion: thus youth in general is not seen as adding a layer of vulnerability. However, if someone is already carrying another of the dimensions related to vulnerability, their youth becomes an additional factor, serving as a form of cumulative disadvantage. The reverse is also true: being young, accompanied by another vulnerability factor, may turn youth itself into a dimension of risk.

We would emphasise that the analysis covered vertical and horizontal dimensions of policy discourses on vulnerabilities, studying European policies across time and comparing national policy measures. What emerged is the processual nature of the concept of vulnerability, within an individual life course and relating to social changes across time. We explored the degree of **intersectionality** inherent in policy concepts on vulnerability; this makes it less likely that a group can be defined as homogeneously vulnerable. In the case of youth, perhaps more often than with other vulnerabilities, empowerment as a way to secure social inclusion is considered: but in general, employability is seen as the main, although mostly not a fully reliable, measure. Every episode of lifelong learning may be seen as an opportunity to seek empowerment, in addition to employability. However, every episode of lifelong learning may also serve as a context for social inclusion – compensating for the lack of other dimensions and contexts for social inclusion elsewhere in a person's life.

5 METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX

5.1 Introduction

This Appendix describes the methodological process that underpins the development of Deliverable 1.1. The report is based on the particular questions and concerns addressed in WP1. Several techniques have been used in order to answer the research questions. For this reason, this appendix begins with a presentation of the objectives and research questions and continues to present the methods and techniques used to answer the different research questions.

WP1 concerns the construction of vulnerable groups in lifelong learning policies at European and national levels. The following aim was established:

To explore the discursive construction of target groups among the European policies of lifelong learning both synchronically and diachronically over a period of 1993-2018, using EU lifelong learning documents, national documents and interviews with stakeholders involved in the EU policies.

The report concerns **two tasks**:

- Task 1.1 Analysis of European policies and funding schemes to promote the social and economic inclusion of vulnerable groups.
- Task 1.2. Analysis of national policies and funding schemes to promote the social and economic inclusion of vulnerable groups. By means of analysing national policies, we will identify particular national/subnational interpretations and preferences regarding the needs among vulnerable groups, and the role of adult education and lifelong learning in reversing inequalities.

Objectives of the report (D1.1):

- Identify the narratives towards vulnerable groups that emerge from the body of European policies related to Lifelong learning (1993-2018).
- Contrast target groups identified on lifelong learning policies and funding schemes
- Cross-country analysis of construction of *vulnerable* in lifelong learning policies and funding schemes in Europe.
- Compare the consistencies and inconsistencies among the EU's narratives of vulnerability for lifelong learning and which, if any, are the consistencies and inconsistencies in the referred narratives among the policies, funding and the discourse of the stakeholders.

Research questions (D1.1):

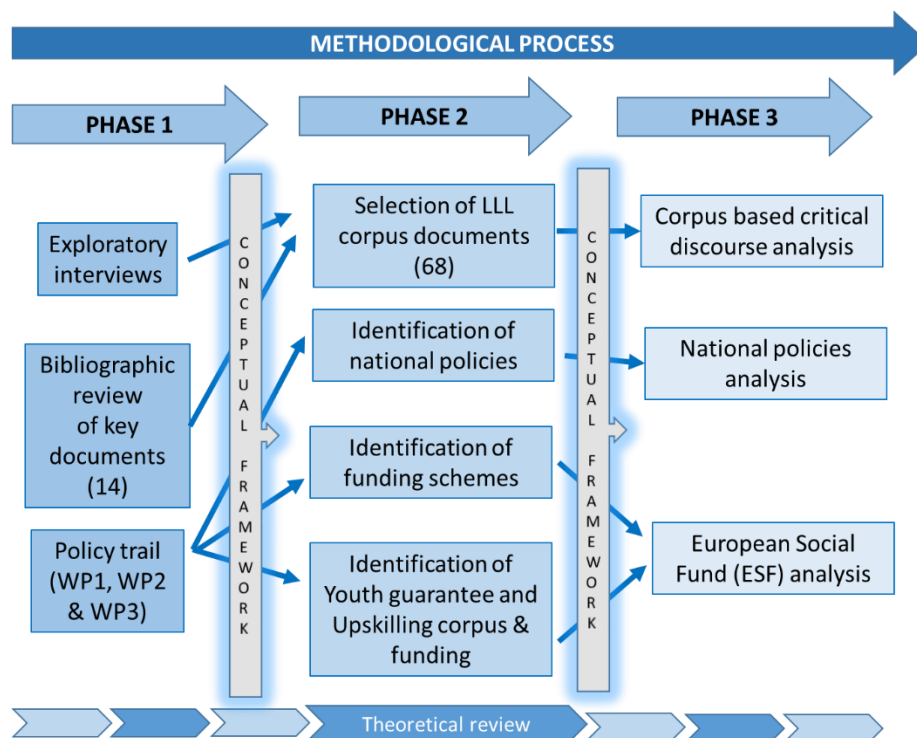
- What is the role of vulnerable groups during the process of the policy drafting in lifelong learning policies, according to the stakeholders involved in the design and development of European lifelong learning policies? How have they perceived the issue of being involved in those processes? How are the interests and necessities of vulnerable groups reflected?
- How do they those stakeholders conceptualize social exclusion & inclusion and other related terminology? What do they think about the role of lifelong learning and proposed measures for addressing social exclusion?
- What are the frequent topics of, or issues discussed in, policy documents relating to vulnerable groups and other related key words (marginalized, low skilled, etc)?
- In what ways are vulnerable groups defined and constructed?
- Which specific groups are considered vulnerable within the specific socio-political context?
- Which vulnerable groups are reflected in the allocation of European Funding?

- How do national policies reflect vulnerable groups?
- Are there differences in terms of the narratives of vulnerable groups among European policies and national policies? if so, what are these?

The methodology (Annex I) enabled the team to address the different questions identified. Through a systematic review and analysis of policy texts with high political significance, at EU and national level, and by contrasting these with interviews with stakeholders, this WP seeks to explore narratives and identify interrelations between EU lifelong learning policy and funding.

A number of techniques have been developed to answer different approaches in conducting risk and vulnerability analysis (Figure 1).

Figure A38. ENLIVEN Deliverable 1.1. Methodological process



5.2 Corpus based critical discourse analysis

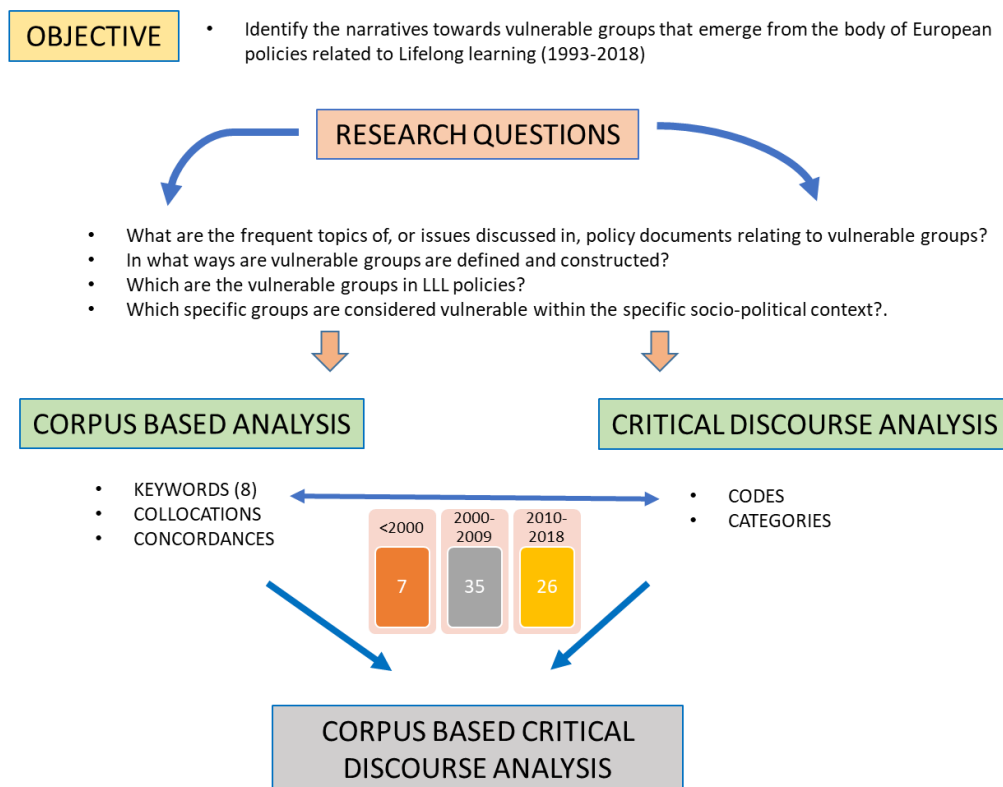
Task 1.1 involved developing a conceptual and methodological framework to support empirical analysis of the narrative concerning vulnerable groups in EU lifelong learning policies. We collected the research corpus (68 policy documents published since 1992) and we subdivided them into three periods to allow comparison over time.

After this selection we developed methodology for its analysis, including preparing a framework document for corpus-based discourse analysis. The decision to incorporate a computer-based method for analysing large body of text is relatively recent (Muldering, 2011). In our case, it was motivated by our objective of investigating a significant period of time (1992-2018). CDA is a problem oriented interdisciplinary research movement that includes a variety of approaches, theoretical models and agendas (Muldering, 2014; van Dijk, 2011; Wodak, 2004). In an interdisciplinary way CDA “combines a

theory of discourse and a range of text analytical methods with social and political theories relevant to the object of inquiry in order to contextualise and interpret its findings” (Mulderrig, 2014, p. 442).

The use of the analysis described (see Figure 2) combines aspects of critical discourse analysis with quantitative analysis; this combination has been used successfully in other relatively research (see, e.g., Albakry & Williams, 2016; Koller & Mautner, 2004; Mautner, 2005; 2009; for application in educational research, see: Mulderrig, 2003; 2008; 2011; Mikelatou & Arvanitis, 2018; Panitsides & Anastasiadou, 2015).

Figure A39. Analytical framework for the analysis of European lifelong learning documents



The choice of this analysis was motivated by several aspects of our research:

- Unlike some forms of discourse-based research, CDA does not begin with a fixed theoretical and methodological stance.
- Using a computer method allows the analysis of large masses of textual data.
- The desire to develop a systematic and therefore replicable approach to critical discourse analysis.
- The need to investigate patterns of change over a significant period of time and various institutional authors. Therefore, solid conclusions could only be generated by examining a very large corpus of data, which in turn requires the use of corpus software tools.
- Also, as can be seen in previous research (Albakry & Williams, 2016; Baker, 2007; Mulderrig, 2008; 2011; 2014; Mikelatou & Arvanitis, 2018; Panitsides & Anastasiadou, 2015) there is heuristic value in this combination in directing the analyst's gaze in unexpected and often fruitful directions.

5.2.a *The creation of the corpus*

In order to select the documents that make up the sample of our research on the discourse of lifelong learning policies, a process was carried including, on the one hand, the study of secondary sources through the synthesis of literature and, on the other, the research on primary sources (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996).

In this sense, this research has used two means to select the most relevant documents. First, a search using the word "Lifelong Learning" in the European database of official documents of the Commission, the Council and the European Parliament.⁷⁸

Second, the main bibliography concerning European administrative documents contributed by the articles of the synthesis of the scientific literature on the analysis of lifelong learning policies in the EU was used to identify key documents (see Annex II). We chose 1992 as the starting date because it was only under the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 that the EU established a clear legal basis for educational policy (Rasmussen, 2014).

Thus, in the first place, a synthesis of the scientific literature on the subject was carried out as a result of which the most relevant scientific books and articles were selected (Annex II) in order not only to gather the main ideas and reflections on the analysis of lifelong learning policies in the EU, but also to identify a list of the main references that experts use in their analysis in relation to EU documents: where the main developments of these policies are gathered.

The main academic articles on analysis of selected lifelong learning policies do not normally include a list of the texts analysed (with some exceptions, such as Panitsides & Anastasiadou 2015). What the experts do is to express their main reflections on the different aspects of the policies, but without claiming exhaustiveness in collecting all documents (legal, reports, communications, working documents, resolutions, recommendations, etc.) from the different European administrations (the Council, the Commission, the Parliament). In part this is because it is in practice impossible to gather all the possible types of document produced or published by all the different strata of the European public administration.

The closest approximations in this sense come in two articles by Panitsides & Anastasiadou (2015) and Mikelatou & Arvanitis (2018). Each applies a methodology in which, among other techniques, they process the texts using qualitative analysis software. In this sense, they represent an advance in the way of approaching the object of study since they can be allowed to incorporate all the texts that a priori may be relevant for analysing lifelong learning policies.

In both cases they describe their selection of documents as a systematic review of policy texts using a process that includes research from preliminary sources. Panitsides & Anastasiadou (2015) chose to use the European database of official documents by searching the official documents of the Commission of the European Communities (reports, staff working papers, communications, memoranda), using the title "Lifelong Learning". Mikelatou & Arvanitis (2018) chose to select the documents using the EU Eur-Lex database using the four Lifelong Learning objectives as keywords/codes to perform the search.

⁷⁸ https://europa.eu/european-union/documents-publications/official-documents_en. Selection: we have chosen only the Commission, the register of the Commission documents, final version (16 documents).

In any case, with nuances and differences specific to the time interval analysed, the greater emphasis on legal texts or the breadth of the typology of document, a comparative analysis of all the research analysed shows that the selected sample must contain a series of documents that we can consider to be referents in terms of the definition of the object and scope of the European policies which are the reason for the analysis of this research and which are truly indispensable (*viz*, Strategy for lifelong learning 1996, Lisbon strategy 2000, Strategic Framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020)).

As a result of both selections of documents, a list of primary sources was drawn up consisting of 68 documents (Annex III). The whole corpus comprises education policy documents dating from 1993-2018. It was divided in three periods to allow for comparison over time (Table 1).

Table A30. Corpus EU policy documents analysed by source and time frame

	Period before Lisbon strategy (1992-1999)	Period of Lisbon strategy (2000- 2009)	Period of Europe 2020 (2010-2018)	Total
European Commission	6	16	12	34
Council of the European Union	1	13	10	24
European Commission + Council of the European Union		3	3	6
European Parliament Council of Europe		3	1	4
Total	7	35	26	68

The three periods related to key EU strategies with a high impact on lifelong learning policies as already mentioned. Thus, the first period (1993-2000) preceded the Lisbon Strategy, the second period (2000-2009) is the Lisbon Strategy period, and the third is the Europe 2020 Strategy period. Only a few documents belong to the first period (7); most come from the second (35) and third (26) periods.

The diversity of sources is an essential element of a corpus (Sinclair, 1991). In our case, 34 documents were issued by the European Commission, 24 by the Council of the European Union, 6 by the Council of the European Union and the European Commission together, 4 by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union. In turn, there are different types of documents: 21 communications, 13 reports (6 of which are joint reports), 12 conclusions, 7 recommendations, 6 resolutions, 2 white papers, 2 proposals, 2 working documents, 1 decision, 1 work programme, 1 key message. In summary the corpus was designed to address ENLIVEN concerns in terms of text source (documents generated by the three institutions), text topic (lifelong learning), and time span (1993-2018).

Most of the documents are COM that are proposed legislation and other Commission communications to the Council and/or the other institutions (legislative proposals, communications, reports, etc.); they

are the instrument that create the discourse of the European Union. We treated these documents as social facts (Bowen, 2009, p.75) that provide information on how the EU’s discourse is produced.

5.2.b *The corpus analytical framework*

The corpus based analysis involved several stages, mainly based on the notions of keyness, collocation and concordancing.

Keyness (criticality) refers to the higher or lower frequency of particular words (keywords). ENLIVEN keywords analysis determined words that were more frequently used to identify the target groups of lifelong learning policies. More specifically, in the first stages we identified eight adjectives related to words that directly reference the concept of vulnerability: disadvantaged, excluded, low qualified, low skilled, marginalised, risk, unemployed and vulnerable. These search functions serve as a useful entry point into the data, providing a principled and automated means of narrowing the analytical focus and reducing the corpus to a more manageable size.

We prepared methodological tools to identify “keywords”. Keyword analysis was used to determine words more commonly used in the policy documents. ENLIVEN keywords focus on words that directly reference vulnerability. The software Atlas ti was used. The codification process and analysis of the policy documents was undertaken using Corpus-Based Discourse Analysis; the corpus was designed to address ENLIVEN concerns in terms of the text source (documents generated by three institutions: EC, CEU, EP), text topic (vulnerable target groups), and time span (1992-2018).

In this study, the rationale for the source of texts (European authorities) was made explicit in the project aims, and the corpus was derived through a query arrived at in two different but complementary ways: on the one hand, a search in the European database of official documents of the Commission and, on the other hand, the main bibliography concerning European administration documents contributed by the articles of the synthesis of the scientific literature on the analysis of lifelong learning policies in the EU. This process ensured that the corpus was representative—that is, it comprised documents relevant to (issues related to) vulnerability and vulnerable groups. In addition, the size and coverage of the corpus (99,180 words, containing 820 quotations (paragraphs) spanning twenty-five years) ensured that relevant patterns would emerge in the analysis (Table 2).

Table A31. Characteristics of the corpus according to used keywords

KEYWORDS	QUOTES	WORDS
DISADVANTAGED	190	23.360
EXCLUDED	36	5.221
LOW QUALIFIED	61	6.812
LOW SKILLED	116	13.457
MARGINALISED	11	1.226
RISK	178	21.421
UNEMPLOYED	178	21.672
VULNERABLE	50	6.011
TOTAL	820	99.180

Collocation refers to the co-occurrence of two or more words within a specific span. Collocation can provide the most frequent ideas associated with a word, in that the collocation of the keyword provides indication of the stance adopted in their representation (Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008, p. 20). In ENLIVEN the predetermined span was set at a paragraph to the word under investigation (the node). The examination of collocation also contributes to the diachronic characteristic of the study. To this end, collocations were calculated for the three identified periods.

Related to collocation are the overlapping concepts of keywords on the corpus. Co-occurrence is when two codes co-exist on a quotation. The Atlas.ti coefficient C indicates the intensity of the co-occurrence relationship between two codes. It varies between 0 and 1.

Concordances: In a linguistic corpus-based analysis “a concordance is a selection of the occurrence of a word form, each in its textual environment” (Sinclair, 1991, p. 32). Following previous research (Baker, Gabrielatos, Khosravinik, Krzyzanowski, Mcenery, & Wodak, 2008; Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008), we designed a qualitative process in a way akin to a qualitative analysis. The ENLIVEN key words were qualitatively examined via detailed concordance analysis in order to identify the EU discourse about vulnerable groups.

The linkages of concordances were examined by hand in order to identify wider themes. The examination of this informed the initial categorization. Subsequently the topic, and dimensions identified by a previous CDA/content analysis, were used to fine-tune the categorization (Annex IV).

Word clusters were analysed with their contexts. The number of lines for the concordance can be expanded to the researchers’ needs (Baker, Gabrielatos, Khosravinik, Krzyzanowski, Mcenery, & Wodak, 2008, p. 279):

- Concordances analysis – each instance of a particular search word with its co-text, in relation with structural and personal factors related to the vulnerability process and lifelong learning measures designed to support groups at risk of vulnerability.
- Co-assignment of information – those words that define groups and frequently co-occur with that search word: target groups as youth, migrants, disabled people
- Co-relation of information – relationship of those groups with other relevant codes, e.g. educational goals, measures designed.

The discourses of vulnerability in the ENLIVEN corpus revolved around four dimensions: individual factors, structural factors, educational goals and planned measures. These dimensions group several categories and codes that emerged from the CDA analysis (Table 10). The elaboration of the categories has been done through a deductive and inductive procedure. It was deductive since it was based on the theoretical referential framework, in particular the dynamic model of vulnerability developed in the first chapter (see Figure 2) as well as in previous literature reviewed, particularly on target group analysis (Brine, 2006; Levitas, 2004; Schneider & Ingram, 1993; Williams, 2008). On the other hand, the inductive approach made it possible to adapt and modify the codes and categories according to the information analysed. In addition, the elaboration of the codes and categories developed for the ENLIVEN IDSS has been a source of contrast,⁷⁹ for example in the identification of groups (see the

⁷⁹ For more information see the categories presented in the ENLIVEN *Deliverable 8.1* by Qu, Palmer, Atkin & John (2018) *Knowledge base of cases represented in unified formats and measured by similarity measures for each type of participating country*. ENLIVEN

personal axis of Table 10), although always adapting it to the results found in the corpus. For this reason, the number of codes is not the same either in the table or in the analysis presented below. Finally, it should be noted that this process has been contrasted by the team of researchers in a flexible process and that all the texts have been coded by two people.

5.3 Interviews

This report (Deliverable 1.1) includes a small set of exploratory interviews whose aim was to explore policy experts' perceptions of the implication of lifelong learning policies launched by the European Union. Overall the aims of the interviews are to contrast, deepen and substantiate the findings and insights gained in the analysis of the European policies. Participants were interviewed about experiences with policy development. Those narratives permitted us to look for emerging themes which could then be explored in more depth in subsequent phases of the research.

The interviews were conducted in 2018 in the course of 5 months. Six semi-structured interviews were conducted: 2 lifelong learning policy experts from the European Commission, and 4 lifelong learning policy experts from organizations whose work focuses on lifelong learning. There were 2 male participants and 4 women (see table in Annex V).

Three of the interviewees were based in Belgium, and three in other European countries, namely France and Germany. Five of the interviews were carried out by Skype, and one by phone. Five were conducted in English, and one Spanish at the request of the interviewee. All were audio-recorded and transcribed. Five were transcribed in English, and one in Spanish. The interviews were all carried out as confidential. All participants were provided with an Information Sheet and signed an Informed Consent Form. In order to preserve their anonymity, the data was anonymized.

The interviews were conducted in 2018. Each lasted approximately 75 minutes, utilizing an interview protocol that addressed all research questions that underpinned this study. The interview protocol was divided into three sections. In the first (Policy drafting and consultation process), respondents were asked to assess their work experience throughout the implication on the development of lifelong learning policies. In the second (vulnerable groups), they were asked to explain the involvement of those groups considered vulnerable in policy development. In the last section (Social inclusion), stakeholders were asked to comment on how social exclusion may be combatted through the lifelong learning policies and to spell out the most appropriate potential measures for improving the on-going co-operative programme. A final section (Terminology) focused on contrasting the use of different terms related to vulnerability, such as exclusion or social inclusion.

The small convenience group of respondents illustrated their experiences and concerns regarding vulnerability and lifelong learning. A descriptive content analysis was carried out based on the four lines of the interview. The results highlighted potentially interesting issues that were contrasted at later stages of the research.

5.4 Empirical review of vulnerability across national contexts in Europe

To further enable comparability in relation to the country contexts, information from Eurostat, World Bank and Youthwiki (a resource on youth and public policies in European countries that is maintained by the EC) were also used. Based on the dimensions identified in the theory section, public data from various European surveys were explored and comparative frequencies were presented on the level of vulnerability by country.

Statistical insight was then provided across European countries using internationally recognised and cross-nationally comparable indicators of material and financial inequality and welfare: people at risk of poverty or social exclusion (Eurostat), severely materially deprived people (Eurostat), Gini index of income (World Bank). The Eurostat indicators are integrated with data from a European Union initiative monitoring the degree of social inequality and how it changes over time and as such, these were considered appropriate for the purposes of this project.

5.5 Empirical analysis of national policies

Two main conceptual considerations guided the analysis of national policies. On the one hand, at a general level, the policy trail approach (Cort 2014) was applied. The results of relevant policy analysis apparent in secondary sources (such as policy reports) were considered to indicate dominant features in national lifelong learning policies when defining and addressing vulnerable groups. On the other hand, following Bacchi's (2012) approach on policy framing, it was assumed that the indications of various aspects of vulnerability evident in national policies and in the measures designed to address vulnerability illustrate the focus of policy priorities. In themselves these measures were then seen as results of discursive framing of the policy priorities and taken to express a national consensus on the definition of problems that needed to be approached and solved at the country level.

For describing the groups seen as vulnerable and at risk of social exclusion, as well as for exploring what social, cultural and economic factors are considered significant when it comes to risk of social exclusion, the concepts of social exclusion and vulnerability were used. They point to two main aspects of current understandings of social exclusion and vulnerability:

- Multidimensionality,
- Combination and potential accumulation of individual factors,

Empirical analysis sought to identify relevant dimensions of social exclusion and vulnerability for each of the countries involved in the project. The level was determined using expert opinion to explore the most recent and elaborate analytical descriptions of national policies and policy outcomes.

The selection of countries is based on the following principles. First, representation of all groups of countries based on an initial typology combining welfare state characteristics and characteristics of economic coordination present within the EU-28. Second, representation of regions of different level of development within countries eligible for support from the European Social Fund (ESF).

Table A32. Selection of countries

Country	Welfare regime type	Types of regional development ⁸⁰
UK	liberal regime	UK: contains all four types of regions
Austria and Belgium (Flanders)	social-democratic regime	phasing-out regions (GDP/head more than 75% of EU-25 average but less than EU-15) and competitive and employment regions
Denmark	conservative	phasing-in regions (GDP/head less than 75% of EU-25 average but more than EU-15)
Spain, Italy	familiaristic regime	contains all four types of regions
Estonia	neoliberal and dependent	convergent region (GDP/head less than 75% of EU-25 average)
Bulgaria, Slovakia	neoliberal and fragmentary	convergent region (GDP/head less than 75% of EU-25 average)
Australia	liberal regime	NA

The countries also represented different lifelong learning regimes (see D2.1). As the first step, the relevance of key dimensions of vulnerability in terms of social inclusion was explored among youth across all countries in Europe. This, first, helped us to indicate how the selected countries covered fare in comparative perspective, but it also enables the reader to consider the variety of dimensions of vulnerability that should be applied at the same time.

Then, short country profiles or ‘fact sheets’ focusing on the construction of dimensions of ‘vulnerable’ in country specific lifelong learning policies were composed for each country considered, with the premise that countries mostly focus on economic dimensions of vulnerability.

⁸⁰ In the period 2007-2013 there were four categories of eligibility:

- (a) convergent region (GDP/head less than 75% of EU-25 average)
- (b) phasing-out regions (GDP/head more than 75% of EU-25 average but less than EU-15)
- (c) phasing-in regions (GDP/head less than 75% of EU-25 average but more than EU-15)
- (d) competitive and employment regions (all other EU regions).

Table A33. Country market economy typology for countries participating in the ENLIVEN project

Market Economy	Liberal Market Economy	Coordinated Market Economy			Dependent Market Economy		
Industrial relations	Market based	Corporatist, Sector-wide and even national agreements, Coordinated bargaining, Strong trade unions and employer associations			Company level collective agreements Decentralised bargaining Trade unions and employer associations are weak		
Education and training system	general competence, employers invest little in human capital	Industry and/or company-specific competences Initially employers invest in human capital			Limited expenditures for further qualification		
Welfare state	Liberal	Social democratic	Conservative, continental	Southern Europe	Post-socialist, neoliberal	Post-socialist, embedded neoliberal	Post-socialist, Balkan
Labour market policies	Minimal income protection	Generous income protection; Strongly developed active labour market policy	Good income protection; Medium developed active labour market policy	Medium income protection, less developed active labour market policy	Minimal income protection; less developed active labour market policy	Minimal income protection; less developed active labour market policy	Minimal income protection; less developed active labour market policy
Adult education	Relatively wide-spread, unevenly distributed, mostly in-company training	Prevalent, often subsidised by the state	Education and training provide appropriate skills. comparatively low participation	Low participation, inequality in participation high	Participation on medium level, unevenly distributed	Participation quite low, inequality in participation quite low	Participation very low, inequality in participation quite high
Countries*	England, Scotland		Austria, Flanders	Italy, Spain	Estonia	Slovakia	Bulgaria

(*) Countries included in this report

Source: Roosmaa & Saar (2017, p.261)

First a quick reminder of the general level of economic inequality is provided, based on core indicators such as Gini index, relative poverty rate and material deprivation rate. Then, for each country, specific to their context most relevant dimensions of effective social exclusion are explored, relying on various data available and addressing whether specific attention is paid to age groups when designing policy interventions. Informed by this, policy definitions of vulnerability are highlighted as measures that target inclusion of vulnerable groups, and listed according to their construction of vulnerability.

The extent to which various factors of vulnerability are combined when policy interventions are designed for target groups forms an important additional dimension, highlighting the extent of youth inclusion into general programmes and measures (versus distinctive measures targeting youth). This section relies on a review of policy measures aimed at inclusion of the vulnerable.

Data used for the country profiles was obtained from Enliven reports (especially D2.1 and D2.2) as well as from reports of several earlier recent European Commission research projects on similar topics, targeting (youth) social inclusion or (youth) participation in lifelong learning, most notably the following:

- lifelong learning2010,
- Edumap,
- Young Adulllt,
- Except.

The reports that usually provide an extensive overview of policies or policy relevant statistics in the selected countries were taken to adequately indicate policy priorities and the underlying assumptions (of policy makers, but sometimes also of the experts analysing the policies) about the mechanisms that shape vulnerability and mechanisms that lift individuals from the state of vulnerability to the state of social inclusion.

However, different methods of impact evaluation return results characterised by varying degrees of internal and external validity. In general there is a pattern whereby more rigorous research designs tend to return less positive estimates of public policy interventions' desired effects and impacts. Many interventions are also accompanied by undesirable effects that reduce or distort their positive impact. Identifying and describing impact is a highly complex enterprise. Although the reports do not rely heavily on impact evaluations of lifelong learning measures – or perhaps exactly for this reason – there are no good reasons to believe that the same does not hold for lifelong learning and related public policy measures.

The section is organized as follows: after presenting comparative statistical portraits of dimensions of vulnerability, national policy portraits on constructing and addressing vulnerability are presented.

Then, a comparative section contrasting the national cases is presented. The focus of this section is on economic dimensions of social inclusion - this being seen as key in policy.

5.6 ANNEXES

5.6.a ANNEX I: Methodological Table

Objectives	Research questions	Data collection and analysis techniques	Other WPs
Identify the narratives towards vulnerable groups that emerge from the body of European policies related to Lifelong learning (1993-2018)	<p>Exploratory: Which is the role of vulnerable groups during the process of the policy drafting in lifelong learning policies, according to the stakeholders involved in the design and development of European lifelong learning policies? How they perceived the issue of being involved in those processes? How their interests and necessities of vulnerable groups are reflected?</p> <p>What are the frequent topics of, or issues discussed in, policy documents relating to vulnerable groups and other related key words (marginalized, low skilled, etc)? Narratives: In what ways are vulnerable groups are defined and constructed? Which specific groups are considered vulnerable within the specific socio-political context?</p>	<p>Interviews with stakeholders</p> <p>Corpus based CDA: corpus of 64 EU level policy documents</p>	
Identify the vulnerable groups among the Funding schemes (Social Funds)	Which vulnerable groups are reflected in the allocation of European Fundings?	Analysis of Funding schemes and secondary documents (WP3)	Wp3
Cross-country analysis of the main lifelong learning policies and funding schemes in Europe: identifying <i>vulnerable young adults</i>	<p>How are “young” addressed in lifelong learning policies? (<i>or, referring potentially to the measures like Upskilling Pathways</i>)</p> <p>How is lifelong learning reflected in employment policies addressing youth (with youth-specific ALMP measures)? (<i>or, referring potentially to the measures like Youth Guarantee</i>)</p> <p>Which are the similarities and differences in constructing vulnerability (1) between young and other groups; (2) between the groups among young; (3) between similar groups of young from different countries?</p>	<p>Analysis of documents (WP 3+ WP2) Analysis of secondary data/documents:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LabRef (Labour Market Reforms) 2. Youth Wiki 3. Council of Europe Youth Partnership 4. EduMap; YoungAdultlifelong learning; Except; lifelong learning2010; and other EC projects 5. Other secondary data/documents 6. WP2+WP3 report (contextual) 	WP2 & WP3 policy trail
Compare the consistencies and inconsistencies among the EU’s narratives of vulnerability for lifelong learning and identify the consistencies and inconsistencies in the referred narratives among the policies, funding and expert discourse	Which are the consistencies and inconsistencies among the policy discourses and narratives?	Analysis of the results of the previous reports chapters	

5.6.b ANNEX II: List of analysed secondary sources (synthesis of the literature)

	TITLE	AUTHOR (S)	YEAR
1	Lifelong learning and the knowledge economy: those that know and those that do not—the discourse of the European Union	Jacky Brine	2006
2	Making a European area of lifelong learning a reality? Some critical reflections on the European Union’s lifelong learning policies	Alexandra Dehmel	2006
3	The Evolution of the European Union's Lifelong Learning Policies: An Institutional Learning Perspective	Moosung Lee, Tryggvi Thayer and Na'im Madyun	2008
4	European Union policies on lifelong learning: in-between competitiveness enhancement and social stability reinforcement	Eugenia Panitsidou, Eleni Griva, Dora Chostelidou	2012
5	Adult Education Policy and the European Union Theoretical and Methodological Perspectives	Marcella Milana and John Holford (Eds.)	2014
6	From adult education to lifelong learning and beyond	Peter Jarvis	2014
7	Lifelong learning in the EU: changing conceptualisations, actors, and policies	Nina Volles	2014
8	Lifelong Learning Policy Agenda in the European Union: A bi-level analysis	Eugenia A. Panitsides & Sofia Anastasiadou	2015
9	Global Perspectives on Adult Education and Learning Policy	Marcella Milana and Tom Nesbit (Eds.)	2015
10	Lifelong learning: Foundational models, underlying assumptions and critiques	Kapil Dev Regmi	2015
11	Approaches to educational and social inclusion. International perspectives on theory, policy and key challenges	Gajendra K. Verma and Devorah Kalekin-Fishman (Eds.)	2016
12	Lifelong Learning Policy Discourses of International Organisations Since 2000: A Kaleidoscope or Merely Fragments?	Moosung Lee and Shazia K. Jan	2017
13	The Palgrave International Handbook on Adult and Lifelong Education and Learning	Marcella Milana, Sue Webb John Holford, Richard Waller, Peter Jarvis (Eds.)	2018
14	Social inclusion and active citizenship under the prism of neoliberalism: A critical analysis of the European Union’s discourse of lifelong learning	Angeliki Mikelatou & Eugenia Arvanitis	2018

http://europa.eu/publications/official-documents/index_en.htmhttp://europa.eu/publications/officialdocuments/index_en.htm)

5.6.c ANNEX III: List of analysed primary sources (EU documents)

	DOCUMENT NAME	SOURCE	YEAR	TYPE
1	White Paper: Growth, Competitiveness, Employment: the challenges and ways forward into the 21st century	Commission of the European Communities (CEC)	1993	White Paper
2	White Paper: education and training: teaching and learning: towards the learning society	Commission of the European Communities (CEC)	1995	White paper
3	Council Conclusions of 20 December 1996 on a strategy for lifelong learning (97/C 7/02)	Council of the European Union	1997	Conclusions
4	Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the economic and social committee and the committee of the regions: Towards a Europe of Knowledge.	Commission of the European Communities	1997	Communication
5	1997 Study group on education and training Report Accomplishing Europe through education	European Commission Study group on education and training	1997	Report
6	Education and active citizenship in the European Union	European Commission	1998	Report
7	Report from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the economic and social committee and the committee of the regions on the implementation, results and overall assessment of the European Year of Lifelong Learning (1996)	Commission of the European Communities (CEC)	1999	Report
8	Council resolution of 17 December 1999 on “Into the new millennium: developing new working procedures for European cooperation in the field of education and training” (2000/C 8/04)	Council of the European Union	2000	Resolution

	DOCUMENT NAME	SOURCE	YEAR	TYPE
9	Lisbon European Council 23 and 24 March 2000 Presidency conclusions	Council of the European Union	2000	Conclusions
10	Commission staff working paper: a memorandum on lifelong learning	Commission of the European Communities (CEC)	2000	Staff working paper
11	Strategies for jobs in the Information Society	Commission of the European Communities (CEC)	2000	Communication
12	Communication from the Commission: making a European area of lifelong learning a reality	Commission of the European Communities (CEC)	2001	Communication
13	Report from the Education Council to the European Council "The concrete future objectives of education and training systems, 5680/01 EDUC 18	Council of the European Union	2001	Report
14	Council resolution of 27 June 2002 on lifelong learning (2002/C 163/01)	Council of the European Union	2002	Resolution
15	Detailed work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of Education and training systems in Europe (2002/C 142/01)	Council of the European Union	2002	Work programme
16	European report on quality indicators of lifelong learning	European Commission	2002	Report
17	Communication from the Commission Investing efficiently in education and training: an imperative for Europe COM(2002) 779 final	Commission of the European Communities	2003	Communication
18	Council resolution of 25 November 2003 on making school an open learning environment to prevent and combat early school leaving and disaffection among young people and to encourage their social inclusion (2003/C 295/02)	Council of the European Union	2003	Resolution

	DOCUMENT NAME	SOURCE	YEAR	TYPE
19	Council conclusions of 25 November 2003 on the 'Development of human capital for social cohesion and competitiveness in the knowledge society' (2003/C 295/05)	Council of the European Union	2003	Conclusions
20	Proposal for a DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing an integrated action programme in the field of lifelong learning	Commission of the European Communities	2004	Communication
21	"Education & Training 2010" The success of the Lisbon Strategy hinges on urgent reform. Joint interim report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the detailed work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of education and training systems in Europe.	Council of the European Union and the European Commission	2004	Joint interim report
22	Council conclusions on Education and Training in the framework of the Mid-Term Review of the Lisbon Strategy	Council of the European Union	2005	Conclusions
23	Progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training. Report based on indicators and benchmarks	Commission of the European Communities	2006	Report
24	Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning	European Parliament and Council of the European Union	2006	Recommendation
25	Decision No 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 establishing an action programme in the field of lifelong learning	European Parliament and Council of the European Union	2006	Decision
26	Communication from the Commission Adult learning: It is never too late to learn	Commission of the European Communities	2006	Communication
27	Modernising education and training: A vital contribution to prosperity and social cohesion in Europe. 2006 Joint Interim Report Of The Council and of the Commission on Progress Under The 'Education & Training 2010' Work Programme (2006/C 79/01)	Council of the European Union and the European Commission	2006	Joint interim report

	DOCUMENT NAME	SOURCE	YEAR	TYPE
28	Communication from the Commission to the Council and to the European Parliament Efficiency and equity in European education and training systems COM(2006) 481 final	Commission of the European Communities	2006	Communication
29	Draft Conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on efficiency and equity in education and training (2006/C 298/03)	Council of the European Union	2006	(Draft) Conclusions
30	Communication from the Commission to the Council and to the European Parliament - Efficiency and equity in European education and training systems COM(2006) 481 final	Commission of the European Communities	2006	Communication
31	Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and The Committee of the Regions Action Plan on Adult learning: It is always a good time to learn.	Commission of the European Communities	2007	Communication (Action plan)
32	Council resolution of 15 November 2007 on education and training as a key driver of the Lisbon Strategy (2007/C 300/01)	Council of the European Union	2007	Resolution
33	Contribution of the Council (in the field of education) to the Spring European Council-Key messages to the Spring European Council	Council of the European Union	2007	Key messages
34	Promoting young people's full participation in education, employment and society	Commission of the European Communities	2007	Communication
35	A coherent framework of indicators and benchmarks for monitoring progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training	Commission of the European Communities	2007	Communication
36	2008 joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the 'Education and Training 2010' work programme — 'Delivering lifelong learning for knowledge, creativity and innovation'(2008/C 86/01)	Council of the European Union and Commission of the	2008	Joint progress report

	DOCUMENT NAME	SOURCE	YEAR	TYPE
		European Communities		
37	European Parliament Council Recommendation of the European Parliament and of The Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (2008/C 111/01)	EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT and Council of the European Union	2008	Recommendation
38	Council conclusions of 22 May 2008 on adult learning (2008/C 140/09)	Council of the European Union	2008	Conclusions
39	Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European economic and social committee and the Committee of the Regions An updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training COM(2008) 865	Commission of the European Communities	2008	Communication
40	New Skills for New Jobs Anticipating and matching labour market and skills needs	Commission of the European Communities	2008	Communication
41	Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020') (2009/C 119/02)	Council of the European Union	2009	Conclusions
42	Key competences for a changing world	Commission of the European Communities	2009	Communication
43	A new impetus for European cooperation in Vocational Education and Training to support the Europe 2020 strategy	European Commission	2010	Communication
44	COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION EUROPE 2020 A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. COM(2010) 2020.	European Commission	2010	Communication
45	Recommendation for a COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 27.4.2010 on broad guidelines for the economic policies of the Member States and of the Union Part I of the Europe 2020 Integrated Guidelines SEC(2010) 488 final	European Commission	2010	Recommendation

	DOCUMENT NAME	SOURCE	YEAR	TYPE
46	Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States Part II of the Europe 2020 Integrated Guidelines	European Commission	2010	Proposal
47	Joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the 'Education and Training 2010 work programme (2010/C 117/01)	Council of the European Union and Commission of the European Communities	2010	Joint progress report
48	Council conclusions of 11 May 2010 on the social dimension of education and training (2010/C 135/02)	Council of the European Union	2010	Conclusions
49	Council Resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning (2011/C 372/01)	Council of the European Union	2011	Resolution
50	Youth on the move promoting the learning mobility of young people	Council of the European Union	2011	Recommendation
51	COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning (2012/C 398/01)	Council of the European Union	2012	Recommendation
52	2012 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the Strategic Framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) 'Education and Training in a smart, sustainable and inclusive Europe' (2012/C 70/05)	Council of the European Union and European Commission	2012	Joint Report
53	Partnership and flexible pathways for lifelong skills development	European Commission	2012	Communication
54	Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes COM(2012) 669 final.	European Commission	2012	Communication
55	Council conclusions on quality assurance supporting education and training	Council of the European Union	2014	Conclusions

	DOCUMENT NAME	SOURCE	YEAR	TYPE
56	Report on Progress in Quality Assurance in Higher Education	European Commission	2014	Report
57	Council conclusions on reducing early school leaving and promoting success in school (2015/C 417/05)	Council of the European Union	2015	Conclusions
58	2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) <i>New priorities for European cooperation in education and training</i>	Council of the European Union and European Commission	2015	Joint Report
59	Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 24 February 2016 on promoting socioeconomic development and inclusiveness in the EU through education: The contribution of education and training to the European Semester 2016 2016/C 105/01	Council of the European Union (CEU)	2016	Resolution
60	Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the committee of the regions A new skills agenda for Europe Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness COM(2016) 381 final	European Commission	2016	Communication
61	Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications (Europass) and repealing Decision No 2241/2004/EC COM(2016) 625 final	European Commission	2016	Proposal
62	Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions Improving and modernising education	European Commission	2016	Communication
63	Developing media literacy and critical thinking through education and training - <i>Council conclusions</i>	Council of the European Union	2016	Conclusions
64	Commission Staff Working Document Analytical underpinning for a New Skills Agenda for Europe Accompanying the document Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the	European Commission	2016	Staff Working Document

	DOCUMENT NAME	SOURCE	YEAR	TYPE
	Committee of the Regions A New Skills Agenda For Europe: Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness {COM(2016) 381 final}			
65	COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 19 December 2016 on Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults (2016/C 484/01)	Council of the European Union	2016	Recommendation
66	Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions A New Skills Agenda For Europe Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness {COM(2016) 381 final}	European Commission	2016	Communication
67	Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on Inclusion in Diversity to achieve a High Quality Education For All 2017/C 62/02	Council of the European Union	2017	Conclusions
68	Proposal for a COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning	European Parliament and Council of the European Union	2018	Recommendation

5.6.d ANNEX IV: List of categories (Code book)

DIMENSION	CODE	CATEGORY	CODE	SUB-CATEGORY
INDIVIDUAL characteristics	B1.1	MINORITIES	B1.1.1	Ethnic minorities
			B1.1.2	Refugees/asylum seekers
			B1.1.3	Roma
	B1.2	Migrants	B1.2.1	Refugees/asylum seekers
			B1.2.2	Migrants
	B1.3	WOMEN/Gender	B1.3.1	Women
	B1.4	AGE Related	B1.4.1	Young people
			B1.4.2	Elderly
			B1.4.3	Children /Minors
			B1.4.4	Adult
			B1.4.5	Young Adults
	B1.5	DISABILITIES/Health	B1.5.1	Physical disabilities
			B1.5.2	Mental disabiliites
			B1.5.3	Learning
			B1.5.4	Long term health conditions
			B1.5.5	Behavioural difficulties
	B1.6	EDUCATIONAL	B1.6.1	Early schools leavers
			B1.6.2	Low skilled/qualified
			B1.6.3	Disengaged
			B1.6.4	Truants
			B1.6.5	Qualification level
			B1.6.6	Digital skills
			B1.6.7	Special educational needs
	B1.7	Additional Social disadvantage	B1.7.1	Homeless/young homeless
			B1.7.2	Care leavers
			B1.7.3	Young offenders
			B1.7.4	Drug/alcohol
			B1.7.5	Lone Parent/one parent family
			B1.7.6	Young parent
	B1.8	Employment related characteristics	B1.8.1	Unemployed
B1.8.2			Long-term unemployed	
B1.8.3			People re-entering the labour market	
B1.9	Personal Characteristics	B1.9.1	Failure feeling / self-esteem	
		B1.9.2	Social abilities	
		B1.9.3	Lack of trust in the education system	

DIMENSION	CODE	CATEGORY	CODE	SUB-CATEGORY
STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS	B2.1	Institutional/ Geographical	B.2.1.1	Disadvantaged areas/communities
			B.2.1.2	Rural
			B.2.1.3	Urban
	B2.2	Labour Market	B2.2.1	Lack of jobs locally / unemployment
			B2.2.2	Demanding technological market
			B2.2.3	Job seekers allowance
			B2.2.4	Companies / Society
	B2.3	Family	B2.3.1	Low Income
			B2.3.2	Chaotic
			B2.3.3	Lower socioeconomic background/`poverty
	B2.4	Characteristics of society	B2.4.1	Learning society, Knowledge based society
			B2.4.2	Global competitive society
			B2.4.3	Inequity

DIMENSION	CODE	CATEGORY	CODE	SUB-CATEGORY
MEASURES	D1	Provide Work experience	D1.1	Work experience
			D1.2	Work placements
			D1.3	Internships /training
			D1.4	Technical assistance
			D1.5	Free information
	D2	Education/training	D2.1	Work based education
			D2.2	Vocational education
			D2.3	Abroad
			D2.4	Grants
			D2.5	Compensatory education (languages)
	D3	Employability	D3.1	Entrepreneurships
			D3.2	Abroad process
			D3.3	Validation of outcomes
	D4	Provide support measures	D4.1.	Basic skills training
			D4.2	Mentoring /counselling
			D4.3	Tailored Guidance / Flexibility
			D4.5	Rehabilitation programs
	D5	Organization of measures	D5.1	Partnership / Stakeholders
			D5.2	Quality of teacher training
			D5.3	Quality education
			D5.4	E-learning methods
			D5.5	Remove barriers to labour market
	D6	Political measures	D6.1	Legislations
D6.2			Funding schemes	

DIMENSION	CODE	CATEGORY	CODE	SUB-CATEGORY
EDUCATION GOALS	C1	Work experience	C1.1	Work experience
			C1.2	Provide work placements
			C1.3	Provide internships
	C2	Education/training	C2.1	Basic skills
			C2.2	Civic education
			C2.3	Provide Training
			C2.4	New competencies
			C2.5	Capacity enhancement
	C3	Employability	C3.1	Employability
			C3.2	Reduction of Inequality
			C3.3	Competitiveness
	C4	Personal Development / Empowerment	C4.1	Self esteem
			C4.2	Aspirations
			C4.3	Motivations
			C4.4	Capacity of Adaptation
			C4.5	Autonomy
			C4.6	Responsibility
			C4.7	Social capital
			C4.8	Capacity enhancement
			C4.9	Substantial freedom
C4.10			Awareness	
C5	Civic/participation	C5.1	Voluntary service	
		C5.2	Civic Participation	
		C5.3	Consumers	
C6	Characteristics of the proposed society	C6.1	Social Justice	
		C6.2	Democratic society	

DIMENSION	CODE	CATEGORY
KEYWORDS	A1	DISADVANTAGED
	A2	EXCLUDED
	A3	LOW QUALIFIED
	A4	LOW SKILLED
	A5	MARGINALISED
	A6	RISK
	A7	UNEMPLOYED
	A8	VULNERABLE

5.6.e ANNEX V: ENLIVEN WP1 – Overview of Interviewees

	Pseudonym	Code for the interview	Code case	Gender	Age (approx.)	Educational level	Type of interview	Interviewer	Audio record N°
SP1	Maria	SP2_p1	SP2	female	50	Tertiary Education	lifelong learning expert	ET& CMO	OS01
SP2	Eric	SP2-P2	SP2	male	50	Tertiary Education	lifelong learning expert	ET& CMO	OS02
SP3	Tom	SP2-P3	SP2	male	70	Tertiary Education	lifelong learning expert	ET	OS03
SP4	Anna	SP2-P4	SP2	female	40	Tertiary Education	lifelong learning expert	ET	OS04
SP5	Nina	SP2-P5	SP2	female	40	Tertiary Education	lifelong learning expert	ET	OS05
SP6	Lucia	SP2-P6	SP2	female	70	Tertiary Education	lifelong learning expert	ET	OS06

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