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## Promoting workplace-based training to fight youth unemployment in three EU countries: Different strategies, different results?

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Running head: Promoting workplace-based training

Key words: youth unemployment, coordination, workplace-based training, vocational training, Varieties of Capitalism (VoC), Denmark, Spain, United Kingdom

*Key Practitioner message:*

- After the economic crisis it was argued that countries with a high level of firm involvement in the provision of initial VET were better equipped to fight youth unemployment.
- The study analysed how countries with different skill formation systems improved this type of training and assessed their relative success.
- The article shows that when implementing reforms policy-makers must take into account the institutions and mechanisms of coordination that prevail in each country. Otherwise, reforms may be unsuccessful.

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## **Abstract**

During the economic crisis, youth unemployment grew exponentially in many European countries. It was argued that countries with a high level of firm involvement in the provision of initial vocational training were better equipped to address this problem. Boosting workplace-based training was therefore seen as the right strategy to tackle unemployment. Using Denmark, Spain and the UK as case studies, this article analyses how countries with different skill formation systems have improved this type of training. While the UK reinforced the voluntaristic character of its training regime, Denmark improved the quality of its vocational education, and Spain made reforms to the training and apprenticeship contract. Interestingly, the countries achieved different results. To explain this divergence, it is argued that while the reforms made in UK and Denmark were compatible with the national institutions and coordination mechanisms, this was not the case in Spain, where reforms were implemented in a non-complementary way.

## **Introduction**

Youth unemployment rose very rapidly in a number of European countries after the onset of the global economic crisis in 2008 (Marques & Salavisa, 2017; Tosun, Unt, & Wadensjo, 2017). Southern Europe and Ireland were the most severely affected, but some other countries were able to prevent this situation. For instance, in Spain the youth unemployment rate (15–24 years old) rose from 24.5% in 2008 to 55.5% in 2013; in Austria it increased slightly from 8.5% to 9.7% in the same period; and in Germany it decreased from 10.6% to 7.8% (Eurostat, 2018). The impact of the sovereign debt crisis in Europe helps explain these differences, as Southern European countries and Ireland were more severely affected than other European countries. However, the above data also reveal that there were already differences before the

crisis; namely, youth unemployment rates were already higher in Southern Europe. A more detailed analysis of these data shows that youth unemployment rates were lower in countries with a collective skill formation regime, i.e., those with a high level of firm involvement in the provision of initial vocational training and a strong public commitment to vocational training (Busemeyer & Trampusch, 2012). Indeed, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria and Denmark had much lower youth unemployment rates, as shown in Figure 1 (Biavaschi et al., 2012; Brzinsky-Fay, 2017; Busemeyer & Iversen, 2012; Busemeyer & Thelen, 2015).

### **Figure 1 to feature here**

As a consequence, during the economic crisis, many authors and organisations claimed that reforms should be made in training and educational systems, notably in those countries that were facing growing youth unemployment levels (Biavaschi et al., 2012; Eichhorst, Rodríguez-Planas, Schmidl, & Zimmermann, 2015; Lodovici et al., 2013). In the European Union (EU), several initiatives were implemented to fight youth unemployment. A number of EU policy measures referred to the need for higher investment in apprenticeships and vocational training, the most important of which was the Youth Guarantee implemented in 2013 (Chabanet, 2014; Lahusen, Schulz, & Graziano, 2013; Tosun, 2017; Tosun & Horisch, 2018; Tosun, Treib & De Francesco, 2019). The Youth Guarantee called on member states to implement measures that would ensure that young people would get a ‘good quality’ offer of a job, a traineeship, an apprenticeship or continued education, within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving education. In the scope of these initiatives, the EU emphasised the need for greater collaboration between employers and the educational system, on the one hand, and among social partners, on the other. For example, the EU’s Youth Guarantee encouraged countries to:

... strengthen partnerships between employers and relevant labour market players (employment services, various levels of government, trade unions and youth services) in order to boost employment, apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities for young people' (European Council, 2013, p. 4).

In the field of comparative political economy, several authors have argued that countries have divergent skill formation systems (Busemeyer & Trampusch, 2012; Hall & Soskice, 2001; Thelen, 2004). They argued that Coordinated Market Economies (CMEs) tend to invest more on specific skills and therefore on their Vocational Education and Training (VET) system, whereas Liberal Market Economies (LMEs) invest more on general skills and consequently on their tertiary education system. They explained the differences between CMEs and LMEs by the role played by macro institutions (systems of industrial relations, labour market legislation and the welfare state). This led us to the research puzzle of our study: Given that skill formation systems differ across countries and that some institutions need to be in place before there can be greater firm involvement, one would expect it to be very difficult to successfully promote partnerships between social partners that boost apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities in the absence of these institutions. Notwithstanding, differences have been found among countries that lack these institutions. In Spain, for instance, workplace-based training did not increase between 2008 and 2015 whereas in the United Kingdom the number of students attending this type of training did increase.

The research question of this article is twofold: Did countries adopt different strategies to boost workplace-based training between 2008 and 2015; and if this was the case, why were some countries more successful than others? The article addresses this research question by

first analysing how countries with different skill formation systems boosted firm-based training; it then assesses the relative success of each country. Three typical case studies – Denmark, Spain and United Kingdom (UK) – are compared, showing that between 2008 and 2015, these countries made reforms with the aim of increasing firm-based training. However, we also show that these reforms have not been homogenous, which explains their varying success in boosting workplace-based training.

This article begins by reviewing the literature that discusses the linkages between institutions, coordination mechanisms and skill formation systems. The theoretical argument of the study is then presented and three hypotheses are put forward. This is followed by the methods and data section before presenting a comparative analysis of the three case studies. The article concludes with a brief summary and critique of the findings.

### **Institutions, coordination and skill formation systems**

There is a vast literature on the linkages between institutions, coordination mechanisms and skill formation systems (Busemeyer & Trampusch, 2012; Estevez-Abe, Iversen, & Soskice, 2001; Streeck, 1992a,b; Thelen, 2004). The Varieties of Capitalism (VoC) literature plays a crucial role in this debate; the differences between LMEs and CMEs are important to explain the differences between skill formation systems (Hall & Soskice, 2001). It is well known that *strategic* coordination prevails in CMEs and that *market* coordination plays the major role in LMEs. Strategic interaction refers to situations where actors are aware of their interdependence and all of them try to anticipate the choices of the other parties when making a decision, in the knowledge that the others will do the same (Hall & Taylor, 1996). The VoC literature argues that certain institutions ‘allow’ this interaction to take place because they ‘structure the courses of action that a set of actors may choose’ (Scharpf, 1997, p. 38);

institutions provide information and reduce uncertainty. Market coordination means that coordination among different actors takes place through market mechanisms. Similarly, institutions must be in place to allow this interaction to take place so that market mechanisms can work freely. According to the VoC literature, strategic coordination is important for a high investment in specific skills to take place, while market coordination is crucial for a high investment in general skills to occur.

Given that our analysis is focused on workplace-based training, it is necessary to clarify how these linkages work in the case of high investment in specific skills, i.e., why certain institutions are crucial for sustaining this type of investment. The following three types of macro institutions support high investment in initial VET: industrial relations systems, labour market legislation and the welfare state. According to the VoC literature, a high level of coordination in the industrial relations system is important to allow firms to invest in their employees' specific skills because it reduces the risk of poaching (i.e., the luring of skilled employees over to other firms by offering higher wages) (Thelen, 2004). When wages are set through collective agreements, this risk is much lower. Labour market legislation is important for employees: They tend to invest more in specific skills if there is a lower risk of dismissal, because specific skills can be used in a particular firm or sector but not in the external market. Thus, the higher the level of employment protection, the more willing workers are to invest in firm-specific training (Busemeyer & Thelen, 2015; Estevez-Abe et al., 2001). As for the welfare state, Estevez-Abe et al. (2001) argued that if unemployment benefits were generous, workers would be more prone to invest in firm-specific training because it would allow them to turn down job offers from a different industry and because it would help to keep wages high in periods of high unemployment.

Some countries, however, have a more hybrid system where institutional



complementarities are weaker. The French case is a good example; it does not have the same cooperative relations between labour and capital as do other countries in Continental Europe (Crouch, 1993), and the state tends to play a very central role. France shares important characteristics with other Mediterranean countries (Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece), so it is not by chance that Hall and Soskice (2001) included it in the Mediterranean group. In the field of comparative political economy, scholars speak of a different model – Mixed Market Economies (MMEs). This is a hybrid model in which the state plays a crucial coordination role (Molina & Rhodes, 2007). Due to the lack of strategic and market coordination, the state resolves coordination problems in these political economies. Historically, MMEs have combined a high level of employment protection (at least since the early 1970s) and a low level of coordination in the industrial relations system (Marques & Salavisa, 2017). MMEs also have a more generous welfare state than do LMEs.

As a consequence, MMEs do not have a high investment in workplace-based training because they lack institutional complementarities. This does not mean that they invest only in general skills because this depends on the priorities defined by the state. Similar to CMEs, a larger proportion of young people attend initial VET if the state increases its political commitment to this type of training. Nevertheless, we argue that it is much more difficult to increase the number of young people attending firm-based training, because these countries lack the necessary institutions and coordination mechanisms.

### **Strategies to increase firm-based training: the importance of coordination and institutions**

Considering the above-mentioned institutional legacies, we expected countries to address the need to increase firm-based training in different ways. It is easier for CMEs to increase firm-

based training, because they already have the necessary institutions and coordination mechanisms. If countries strengthen institutional complementarities, this would potentially increase workplace training. But this has not happened in the past decades, as documented in the extensive literature (Glyn, 2006; Palier, 2010; Palier & Thelen, 2010; Streeck, 2009; Thelen, 2014; Thelen & Busemeyer, 2008). Some authors have argued that a liberalisation process is underway in CMEs, while others speak of a dualisation process. Despite differences, both arguments contend that the scope of CMEs has changed dramatically even though the existing coordination mechanisms have not been undermined. Changes have been felt in many areas: the generosity of the welfare state declined (including that of unemployment benefits); labour market regulation decreased (especially for workers outside the industrial core); and collective bargaining was decentralised and now covers a smaller proportion of the labour force. We could expect CMEs to maintain their strong commitment to their training regime – particularly at a time characterised by growing youth unemployment rates – but we do not expect reforms to be implemented to counter liberalisation and dualisation, because structural changes have been taking place in these political economies since the late 1980s.

It is difficult for LMEs to follow the same strategy as CMEs, i.e., to build the same institutional complementarities that support high investment in specific skills. On the one hand, they lack the necessary institutions and strategic coordination to do so, and on the other, this would jeopardise the institutional comparative advantages of these countries. According to the VoC literature, labour market flexibility and investment in general skills are crucial for competing in sectors where radical innovation prevails (Hall & Soskice, 2001). We argue, however, that an alternative strategy compatible with LMEs' institutional legacy can be implemented. Historically, LMEs resolved the problem of the lack of investment in specific

skills by developing a voluntarist training regime (Busemeyer & Thelen, 2015; King, 1993, 1997; Thelen, 2004). As explained by King and Wickham-Jones (1998, p. 442), ‘... voluntarism is defined by a framework in which firms and workers have been largely left alone by the State to formulate their own arrangements for training’. This model builds on the tradition of apprenticeships, in particular in the crafts sector, where in the Middle Ages a master craftsman was allowed to employ young people and instruct them in their craft (Hodgson, Spours, & Smith, 2017; Lodovici et al., 2013).<sup>1</sup> Although the system went through several phases and the role of unions changed over time (losing importance after the neoliberal turn in the early 1980s), voluntarism has persisted (King, 1997). This means that some LME countries tackled firms’ reluctance to invest in specific skills by developing an apprenticeship system where firm-specific skills prevailed over school-based VET (unlike the German case where the two types of training are equally important).<sup>2</sup> Although apprenticeships lost importance in the 1980s due to the neoliberal turn, they did not disappear altogether and some governments invested in this system in the 1990s (Busemeyer & Thelen, 2015; Eichhorst et al., 2015; King, 1993; Lodovici et al., 2013; Thelen, 2014). It is therefore our hypothesis that to boost workplace-based training in LMEs, voluntarism has played a crucial role; firm-specific skills have prevailed and the state has actively supported the system by injecting public funds. In our perspective, voluntarism is compatible with the coordination mechanisms and institutions that prevail in LMEs. Furthermore, we hypothesise that trade unions have played a minor role in this process for two reasons: (i) they tried to guarantee

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to the UK, other LMEs have also invested in apprenticeships, namely the USA and Australia (Eichhorst et al., 2015; Thelen, 2004, 2014). Notwithstanding, apprenticeships have less historical importance in the USA and Australia than in the UK.

<sup>2</sup> Note that apprentices have access to both types of training, i.e., to firm-based training and to school-based training (Eichhorst et al., 2015). The main difference with the German case is that workplace-based training is much more important and the type of skills taught at schools are firm-specific and not general.

high wages for skilled workers in LMEs by controlling the number of apprenticeships, which historically has led to great conflicts with employers (Thelen, 2004); and (ii) after the neoliberal turn in the early 1980s, they lost importance and strength.

It is more difficult for MMEs to increase firm-based training than it is for LMEs, due in part to the lack of both market and strategic coordination mechanisms and to their non-complementary institutions. In light of the above discussion on CMEs and LMEs, two alternative strategies can be adopted: either a CME approach or an apprenticeship strategy. From our perspective, both strategies are difficult to implement in MMEs. In the case of the first strategy, these political economies have gone through a massive liberalisation process in the recent past; they were hit hard by the sovereign debt crisis and were forced by the EU to implement a set of structural reforms to further labour market flexibilisation and to reduce the weight of the public sector (Armingeon & Baccaro, 2012, 264; Hall, 2018; Pavolini, León, Guillén & Ascoli, 2015; Sacchi, 2015; Theodoropoulou, 2015). It is therefore very difficult to implement a system that requires cooperation between labour and capital, labour market regulation and generous unemployment benefits in a context characterised by the implementation of structural reforms. As for the apprenticeship approach, there are also some important caveats. Considering the key role played by the state in these political economies, it is much more difficult to safeguard firms' autonomy with respect to the types of skills employees receive; trade unions are much more important (e.g. union density is higher and they mobilise the workforce more effectively) and are therefore able to block reforms that leave them out of the process (Marques & Salavisa, 2017); and, lastly, in a number of Mediterranean countries, a large proportion of young people attend state-run vocational courses that are often integrated in secondary schools that offer both general education and vocational courses but have few linkages with employers (Biavaschi et al., 2012; Eichhorst et

al., 2015; Homs, 2009; Icart & Rodríguez-Soler, 2017; Souto-Otero & Ure, 2012). Despite the difficulties of implementing each of the above-mentioned strategies, we believe measures were taken in MMEs to boost firm-based training, because youth unemployment has risen exponentially and these countries have received substantial funds from the EU to implement active labour market policies (ALMPs) (Tosun, 2017). Based on this discussion we formulated three main hypotheses.

*H1:* Denmark made a commitment to increase workplace-based training to fight youth unemployment between 2008 and 2015. The growing liberalisation of the Danish political economy has weakened the key institutions of the Danish skill formation system and we therefore hypothesise that although the share of students in this type of training is high, it has not increased.

*H2:* The UK increased investment in workplace-based training to fight youth unemployment between 2008 and 2015. It is our hypothesis that voluntarism was crucial to boosting this type of training: firm-specific skills prevailed, the state actively supported the system by injecting public funds, and trade unions were kept out of the process. The share of students enrolled in this type of training can be expected to have increased.

*H3:* Facing a massive rise in youth unemployment, Spanish governments tried to increase the share of students enrolled in workplace-based training between 2008 and 2015.

Notwithstanding, we hypothesise that the lack of CME- and LME-type institutional complementarities have made it difficult to implement a coherent strategy leading to this change. Consequently, the number of students attending this type of training is not likely to have increased over these years.

## **Methods and data**

In our analysis, three cases are compared: Denmark, the UK and Spain. We chose these countries, not only because they belong to different skill formation systems and different VoC, but also because they were all facing increasing levels of youth unemployment during the period under study (see the Appendix, Table A1). Accordingly, we applied a comparison of three typical cases as suggested by the typology of case studies by Gerring (2008), studying the UK as an LME, Denmark as a CME and Spain as an MME. Furthermore, by focusing on countries which were all facing increasing levels of youth unemployment during the analysed period, the most important context factor could be held constant. As argued by Gerring (2008), the comparison of typical cases is suitable for hypothesis testing and to that end fits our research design and research question. There is extensive literature on the UK and its liberal system (Busemeyer & Thelen, 2015; Finegold & Soskice, 1988; Hodgson et al., 2017; King, 1993, 1997; King & Wickham-Jones, 1998; Thelen, 2004) and on Denmark's collective system (Busemeyer & Thelen, 2015; Thelen, 2014). Spain has been included in the group of MMEs by many authors (Hall, 2017; Hall & Soskice, 2001, 21; Molina & Rhodes, 2007) who have argued that its VET system is historically school-based rather than firm-based (Biavaschi et al., 2012; Eichhorst et al., 2015; Homs, 2009; Icart & Rodríguez-Soler, 2017; Souto-Otero & Ure, 2012).

Turning to the empirical strategy, the outcome variable is the share of students attending workplace-based VET. Five dimensions were analysed: measures taken by governments to promote workplace-VET, coordination within the industrial relations system, employment protection legislation, generosity of unemployment benefits, and level of public investment in training. The first four dimensions were chosen because the literature review shows that they have been crucial for supporting high investment in workplace-based VET. The latter was included to account for the role of public authorities. The indicators and data

sources used are as follows:

- *Share of students attending workplace-based VET*: This was measured as the share of students at the upper secondary level in ‘dual training’ schemes, i.e., vocational training schemes that combine school-based and workplace-based VET (Busemeyer & Iversen, 2012, 217). We used the *Education at a Glance Database* (OECD, various years, indicator C1.4). Data for this indicator refer to the period between 2008 and 2015.
- *Measures taken by governments to promote workplace-based VET*: This was measured by analysing the content of each reform focused on promoting workplace-based VET. We used data from the LABREF database (European Commission, 2018). All policy measures that focused on promoting workplace-based VET implemented between 2008 and 2015 were analysed. For a complete description of all policy measures, see the online-only Appendix (Tables S1, S2 and S3).
- *Coordination in the industrial relations system*: Two indicators were used – coordination of wage-setting and collective bargaining coverage. The first indicator was based on Kenworthy (2001) and ranged between 1 and 5. The higher the level of centralisation of wage-setting, the higher is the value for this indicator. The second indicator refers to the proportion of all wage earners covered by collective agreements. Both indicators were taken from the ICTWSS database (Visser, 2016) and data refer only to the period between 2008 and 2014 because no data were available for 2015.
- *Strictness of employment protection – individual and collective dismissals (regular contracts)*: Employment protection was measured using the ‘employment protection index’, taken from the OECD indicators of Employment Protection (OECD, 2014). This indicator is the weighted sum of sub-indicators related to the regulations for individual dismissals (weight of 5/7) and additional provisions for collective dismissals (2/7). It

incorporates 13 detailed data items. This index ranges between 0 and 6. The higher the level of regulation, the higher is the value for this indicator. Data for this indicator refer only to the period between 2008 and 2014 because no data were available for 2015.

- *Generosity of unemployment benefits*: We relied on the CWED dataset (CWED, 2017) for information on the overall generosity of unemployment benefits before the crisis (year 2008). This index is based on the same indicators that Esping-Andersen (1990) used to develop his typology on welfare regimes, namely: replacement rate of unemployment benefits (single and family), qualification period to obtain access to unemployment benefits, duration of unemployment benefits, number of days waiting before receiving unemployment benefits, and share of the working population that is insured against the risk of unemployment. As the CWED does not provide data for the entire period, we complemented these data with qualitative information provided by the LABREF database (European Commission, 2018) for the period between 2008 and 2015. All reforms of unemployment benefits were analysed. To code data, we used four categories: reforms towards increasing generosity, reforms towards decreasing generosity, compulsory activation for benefit recipients, and other. See the online-only Appendix (Tables S4, S5 and S6) for detailed information on the reforms made to unemployment benefits and how each policy was coded.
- *Public investment on vocational training*: This measure was constructed by multiplying public spending on upper secondary education (as percentage of GDP) with the share of upper secondary students in vocational training, regardless of whether training was located in schools or in firms (Busemeyer & Iversen, 2012). We used the *Education at a Glance Database* (OECD, various years, indicators C1.4 and B2.2). Data refer to the period between 2008 and 2015.



## **Increasing workplace-based training to fight youth unemployment**

The main aim of this section is to assess how each country has addressed the need to increase workplace-based training and how this links with reforms in labour market policies (employment protection legislation and generosity of unemployment benefits), coordination in the industrial relations system, and the level of public investment in vocational training. Before turning to this analysis, we look briefly at the relative importance of these measures.

We draw on the work of Tosun et al. (2017) for this analysis. These authors developed a typology to study youth-oriented ALMPs and also used the LABREF database.<sup>3</sup> After making some minor changes to this typology, we obtained the following categories: workplace-based training; labour market training; job search assistance and monitoring, wage subsidies, public sector employment programmes; promotion of self-employment and entrepreneurship; and other. To compare with their typology, we excluded the category ‘packages’ because we counted each programme separately. We also changed the first category from ‘human capital investment’ to ‘workplace-based training’ as this was the main focus of our study. Lastly, we added a new category – promotion of self-employment and entrepreneurship’. Table 1 shows that all three countries implemented policies to boost workplace-based training.<sup>4</sup> It also provides information on other policies, and this has allowed us to assess the relative importance of each policy-area. Findings indicate, firstly, that Denmark places a clear focus on the ‘workplace-based training’ and ‘labour market training’. Secondly, ‘wage subsidies’ is the most important policy-area in Spain. Lastly, investment in ‘workplace-based training’ is relatively high in the UK, which is the most eclectic country because measures were implemented in all policy-areas (see the online-only Appendix, Tables

<sup>3</sup> To develop their typology, Tosun et al. (2017) drew on Caliendo and Schmidl (2016) and on Bonoli (2010).

<sup>4</sup> Only ALMPs targeting young people were included for the purposes of our analysis.

S1, S2 and S3, for detailed information on all the policies implemented and on how each policy was coded).

**Table 1 to feature here**

***Denmark: improving the attractiveness of dual training in a context of liberalisation***

In Denmark, four initiatives were taken to increase the quality of vocational youth education.<sup>5</sup> First, as part of a package to address rising youth unemployment (worth €8.6 million), in 2011 the national government set the goal of training more unemployed youths through the adult apprenticeship scheme. In the same year, it went further and invested €340 million to establish 10,400 extra apprenticeships in 2012. Moreover, it created 1,500 extra traineeships in vocational schools. In 2012, an additional measure was taken to increase vocational students' access to traineeships. A series of new initiatives was implemented, including apprenticeship-centres at vocational schools. These three measures sought mainly to improve access to traineeships and apprenticeships. However, after a tripartite agreement was reached, a more important reform was implemented in 2014 with the following key measures: a simpler structure that reduced the number of introductory courses from 12 to 4, with specialised education starting after one year and continuing for the following two years and including apprenticeships of some form; stricter entry requirements; an increase in teaching time to a minimum of 25 hours per week; more opportunities to move from vocational youth education to higher education; and more practical training courses designed with the help of the social partners. The main objective of this reform was to increase the quality of vocational youth education and thereby to attract more young people to the system. In the scope of this reform, the state invested €400 million to improve the quality of vocational youth education.

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<sup>5</sup> Denmark is the only country in our sample that has not received funds from the EU to implement the Youth Guarantee, because the level of youth unemployment there is lower than in other EU countries (Tosun, 2017). Nevertheless, this has not stopped the Danish government from implementing new policy measures in this area.

It should be stressed that these reforms were made in the context of a decline in the share of students attending workplace-based VET; indeed, it was not only the rise of youth unemployment and the decline in the employment rate that concerned policy-makers (see the Appendix, Table A1). As can be seen in Table 2, the share of students fell from 47.5% in 2008 to 42% in 2015 despite the fact that public authorities were more committed to improving the system at the time. By increasing the number of apprenticeships and traineeships, raising the quality of vocational education and facilitating the transition to higher education, the government tried to tackle the drop in student numbers. As for the other dimensions, the institutions found to support dual training systems in the above literature review were clearly weaker. First and foremost, the generosity of unemployment benefits dropped substantially in the previous decade. While this trend was already visible before the economic crisis (Figure 2), the number of reforms reducing unemployment benefits (or implementing compulsory activation for benefit recipients) was high in Denmark (Table 3). There was more liberalisation in the Danish political economy, especially in the field of labour market policy (Thelen, 2014). Despite some reforms in the field of industrial relations the situation did not change dramatically: coordination of wage setting and collective bargaining coverage remained high (Table 4). Interestingly, the most substantial reform to the VET system was negotiated with social partners, thus confirming the importance of coordination in the industrial relations system. On the other hand, public investment in VET decreased between 2010 and 2013 before increasing again in 2014 due to the above-mentioned reform (Figure 3). Taken as a whole, the dual training system is still in place in Denmark and there was an attempt to strengthen it during the crisis by improving its quality. Nevertheless, the weakening of crucial institutions due to liberalisation is transforming the Danish political economy and this makes it difficult to revert the current downward trend in the number of students

attending workplace-based training. In our view, the stronger relationship between the VET system and higher education (mentioned above) is also a sign of this transformation.

**Tables 2 and 3, Figures 2 and 3 to feature here**

***The United Kingdom: strengthening the voluntarist training regime***

To address the rise in youth unemployment, which was greater than in overall unemployment (see the Appendix, Table A1), nine policies were implemented in the UK to boost work-based training, all of which focused on strengthening the apprenticeship system. In 2008, ‘The National Apprenticeship Service’ was established as the single body responsible for the delivery of Apprenticeships across England.<sup>6</sup> This consisted of an organisational reform that aimed to create better conditions to expand the apprenticeship system by creating a web-based vacancy matching system and a system to coordinate funding. In 2009, the Labour Government implemented a policy called the ‘Apprenticeship Grant for Employers’ to foster new Apprenticeships for young unemployed people aged 16 or 17. In the scope of this programme, employers were offered a grant of £2,500 for each person trained. The target was to create 5,000 apprenticeship places. In the same year, the government published the ‘White Paper on Skills for Growth: The national skills strategy’ (BIS, 2009), in which they set the objective of doubling the number of advanced apprenticeships to 35,000 over the following two years and announced a total investment of €148 million to achieve this goal. Furthermore, a new Apprenticeship Scholarship Fund was created (offering bursaries up to €1,123) to support apprentices who wanted to go on to higher education. Thus, besides expanding the system, this strategy established a better link between the apprenticeship system and higher education. It is well-known that investing heavily in higher education is a key characteristic of

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<sup>6</sup> Note that the majority of these reforms targeted England and not Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland. This is important because, as shown in Table 3, the number of apprenticeships increased mainly in England.

LMEs, and it is therefore logical to expand the apprenticeship system at the same time as investing heavily in higher education.

Later, in 2011, the Conservative-Lib Dem Coalition furthered these policies and increased the scope of the ‘Apprenticeship Grant for Employers’ as part of the ‘Youth Contract’. The target increased to 20,000 apprenticeship places (in 2012 this measure was extended to December 2014). Also in 2011, two additional measures were announced: the creation of an additional 75,000 adult apprenticeship places (an investment of €296 million); and the government’s use of the ‘Education Act’ to reaffirm its commitment to increase the number of apprenticeships. In 2013, an important reform was implemented that strengthened the voluntarist character of the British training regime. Following the Richard Review of Apprenticeships in 2012 (Richard, 2012), the Coalition government allowed employers to design their own apprenticeships. Under this reform (BIS, 2013, p. 11):

... it is the responsibility of employers, working with professional bodies and others, to design the new Apprenticeship standards. The government cannot determine the skills needed for all occupations, and will not try to do so’.

As explained by Hodgson et al. (2017, p. 656), through this reform,

... employers have been put in the ‘driving seat’ of creating new standards of competence and apprentices will be required to demonstrate these through a rigorous graded assessment (...) at the end of their apprenticeship; together with appropriate skills in English and Mathematics.

Lastly, in 2015, the government announced that the Apprenticeship Grant for Employers would be extended until the end of the 2016–2017 academic year. In sum, both

governments invested substantially in the apprenticeship system. While the Labour Government did so by incentivising a better relationship between the apprenticeship system and higher education, the Coalition Government gave employers more autonomy to design their own apprenticeships.

As hypothesised above, the UK's strategy to increase firm-based training was focused on strengthening the apprenticeship system. Besides directly financing the system, the Coalition government gave more autonomy to employers. This is in line with the earlier discussion about the voluntarist tradition in LMEs. Also as hypothesised, trade unions did not play an important role. Interestingly, this happened with both the Labour and the Conservative-Lib Dem Coalition governments, and thus confirms the neoliberal character of the British political economy. As for the results, data presented in Table 2 show that the number of people attending workplace-based training increased over these years. Due to the missing OECD data for the period between 2008 and 2011, we provide additional data in Table 5 which shows that after several measures were implemented in 2009, the number of apprentices rose substantially. Lastly, no substantial reforms were implemented during this period for the other dimensions; employment protection, coordination of wage setting, collective bargaining coverage and generosity of unemployment benefits all remained low (Figures 2 and 4; Tables 3 and 4). However, it is interesting to note the marked increase in public investment in VET in the UK over this period, which demonstrates the state's commitment to boosting this type of training (Figure 3).

**Tables 4 and 5 and Figure 4 to feature here**

***Spain: the training and apprenticeship contract as a social policy instrument***

The Spanish labour market was hard hit by the economic crisis; youth and overall unemployment rose exponentially and employment rates declined. The situation in Spain was

worse than in Denmark and the UK, (see the Appendix, Table A1). Three reforms were implemented in Spain to increase the share of young people attending workplace-based training. In 2011, in the scope of a package of measures to address youth unemployment, the training and apprenticeship contract, was reformed to combine vocational training with paid employment (Spanish Royal Decree 10/2011). In contrast to the earlier Spanish Royal Decree 1/1995, the new contract focused on workers aged between 16 and 25 years, the maximum length was extended to two years and working hours could not exceed 75% of the total contract time. Furthermore, some fiscal benefits were introduced for firms that hire workers over the age of 20 who are registered with Public Employment Services (i.e., registered as unemployed), namely, 100% reduction in social contributions for firms with under 250 employees and 75% reduction for firms above this threshold. Firms that converted the training and apprenticeship contract into a permanent contract would receive an additional €1000 benefit. A new reform was introduced in 2012 (Spanish Royal Decree 3/2012) to extend the scope of this contract. The following revisions were implemented: the age limit was raised to 30 years; the maximum duration was raised from two to three years; the effective working hours for those hired with this contract increased (training activities should represent at least 25% first year and 15% subsequent years); in addition to the fiscal benefits introduced in 2011, workers' contributions to social security were cut by 100%; the benefit for firms converting the training and apprenticeship contract into a permanent contract increased to €1500 (€1800 in the case of women) and was extended to three years (instead of one year); and, lastly, under the 2012 reform, after the contract expired, a worker could be hired by the same firm with another training contract if the contract was for a different professional qualification. In addition to these two reforms, a new law was approved in 2012 (Spanish Royal Decree 1529/2012), aimed primarily at implementing a dual vocational training system

in Spain. Although this broad objective is referred to in the legislation, the implementation of the training and apprenticeship contract (which had already been in place since 2011) is the main initiative mentioned. According to this law, such contracts represent a contractual channel for the dual training system and are therefore seen as the cornerstone of this reform. In sum, in 2011 and 2012, the training and apprenticeship contract was revised, and a new law was implemented in 2012 to create a dual training system.

Although the dual system was a stated aim of the legislation, in fact the existing legislation in Spain was mainly adapted to fight youth unemployment and the training contract was used as a social policy rather than a skill formation instrument. Indeed, the reform of the training and apprenticeship contract sought to give young unemployed people an opportunity, as only registered unemployed people were entitled to state aid. As explained above, the actual working hours of those hired on this contract were very long, so there was little time left for training. The legislation did not aim to make deep-seated reforms to the VET system in Spain, which is historically managed by the state and takes place in public schools rather than at the workplace (Biavaschi et al., 2012; Homs, 2009; Icart & Rodríguez-Soler, 2017; Souto-Otero & Ure, 2012).<sup>7</sup> The focus was on combatting youth unemployment by keeping young people in the labour market. This is illustrated by the fact that after a contract expires, the worker can be hired by the same firm on another training contract, as long as it is for a different professional qualification. This was made possible because the Spanish VET system is divided into three subsystems: formal VET, managed by the education ministry; continuous VET, managed by the social partners; and VET for unemployed, managed by the ministry of employment (Souto-Otero & Ure, 2012). In the context of the economic crisis and rising youth unemployment, the latter subsystem gained importance

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<sup>7</sup> According to Icart and Rodríguez-Soler (2017), in 2012–2013, 76.6% of VET students were attending public schools.



because its main goal was indeed to fight unemployment. This subsystem had used training contracts widely in the past, so it was not surprising that this policy was important after the economic crisis (Biavaschi et al., 2012; Eichhorst et al., 2015). Table 1 also shows that policies promoting training contracts were complemented with measures fostering wage subsidies, i.e., initiatives that include incentives for firms that hire young unemployed people. Overall, no substantial reforms were made to the formal and continuous VET system in Spain; policies to promote workplace-based training targeted unemployed people and incentives to hire young people were considered the best strategy to fight unemployment whilst boosting workplace-based training.<sup>8</sup>

Some striking changes have taken place in the other dimensions in the years under study. In the literature review, we discussed the liberal reforms implemented in MMEs during the sovereign debt crisis, and indeed, Spain introduced several such reforms. Employment protection was weakened (Figure 4), coordination of wage setting was reduced and the coverage of collective bargaining decreased slightly (Table 4). The changes in unemployment benefits were not as large, but several measures were implemented to increase compulsory activation for benefit recipients (Table 3). Moreover, the level of public investment in vocational training did not increase over these years (Figure 3). Consequently, and in light of the strategy followed to boost firm-based training (focused mainly on the VET for unemployed), it is not surprising that the share of students attending workplace-based VET did not increase between 2008 and 2015 (Table 2).

### **Comparison of the three cases**

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<sup>8</sup> Interestingly, in the scope of the Spanish National Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan, two *separate* actions are mentioned: (i) promotion of dual vocational training through contracts for training and apprenticeships; and (ii) promotion of vocational training through schools (Piqué, Veà & Strecker 2015).

In this section, we make a comparative analysis of the findings of the three case studies.

As hypothesised above, the UK implemented measures to increase firm-based training, but it did so without undermining its institutions or coordination mechanisms, i.e., these measures did not build institutional complementarities as in CMEs. The UK boosted workplace-based training by strengthening the voluntarist character of its training regime and promoting apprenticeships that are increasingly managed by employers. As explained above, employers have been responsible for designing the new apprenticeship standards since 2013.

Furthermore, trade unions have been kept out of the process and the state's role in the type of training apprentices receive is minimal even though it finances the system. Denmark already had this dual training system in place, but implemented reforms to improve its quality. The Danish case is an interesting example: As youth unemployment rose after 2008 and the number of students attending firm-based training was decreasing, the national government introduced reforms to raise the quality of vocational education and thus make it more attractive. The recent liberalisation of labour market policies in Denmark has weakened institutional complementarities and this may pose challenges to the dual training system in the future. Nevertheless, coordination has been maintained in the industrial relations system and collective bargaining coverage is still very high. Lastly, also as hypothesised, Spain has experienced many difficulties in boosting workplace-based training. Unlike the UK where it increased, and Denmark where it was already very high, the number of students attending firm-based training did not rise in Spain. Policies to promote firm-based training, such as the reform of the training and apprenticeship contract, were used mainly as a social policy instrument, i.e., to bring young unemployed people into the labour market. Despite the Spanish government's stated intention to create a dual training system, there were no deep-seated reforms to the formal VET, which continues to take place in schools rather than the

workplace, and the state coordinates the system without much employer involvement. Furthermore, the implementation of structural reforms meant that employment protection legislation was liberalised and the coordination of the industrial relations system decreased. The main innovation has been the reform of the training and apprenticeship contract, but this has not led to reforms in other spheres of the Spanish political economy that might have created better conditions for a dual training system. The state has continued to play a leading role despite the context of growing liberalisation. Taken as a whole, the three countries have followed different strategies to increase workplace-based training. This was because the different institutional legacies in the three countries influenced how they addressed the need to boost this kind of training. From our perspective, this was the cause of the differing results, notably when comparing Spain and the UK.

## **Conclusions**

Three main conclusions can be drawn from the comparative analysis conducted in this article. First, CMEs and LMEs can promote workplace-based training more easily than MMEs. Second, CMEs and LMEs use distinct methods to boost this type of training; whereas CMEs rely on reinforcing the dual training system, LMEs promote voluntarism. Third, policy makers must take these two conclusions into account when designing public policies. In MMEs, workplace-based training can only be promoted after implementing more radical reforms in other areas. As the Spanish case illustrates, it does not make sense to propose to create a dual training system and simultaneously deregulate labour legislation or reduce the coordination of the industrial relations system. As for CMEs, liberalisation must be offset if governments wish to increase the share of students attending this type of training. The Danish case shows that labour market deregulation and a reduction in the generosity of the welfare

state make it difficult to strengthen the dual-training system. If institutional complementarities are weakened, the skill formation system will also face problems. As for LMEs, the promotion of this type of training entails maintaining high public investment and the prevalence of firm specific skills over school-based VET. The British case is an excellent example of this process because it illustrates how to boost this kind of training in an LME.

The main goal of this article is to provide a more in-depth understanding of the functioning, effectiveness and forms of workplace-based training measures to fight youth unemployment in the three countries under study. Future research could also include quantitative analyses of more country cases over longer periods of time in varying economic contexts to see how far the insights gleaned herein are applicable to a larger set of cases and in other economic circumstances.

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Table 1. Youth-oriented Active Labour Market Policies (2008–2015), by type.

	Denmark	Spain	United Kingdom
Workplace-based training	4	3	9
Labour market training	4	3	3
Job search assistance and monitoring	1	1	3
Wage subsidies	0	7	3
Public sector employment programmes	0	0	1
Promotion of self-employment and entrepreneurship	0	0	1
Other	0	3	3
Total	9	17	23

Source: Own elaboration based on the LABREF database (European Commission, 2018).

Table 2. Share of students attending workplace-based VET.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Spain	1.8	1.7	2.2	2	1	:	0	0
Denmark	47.5	46.5	45.3	45	44	43	42	42
United Kingdom	:	:	:	:	17	25	24	22

Source: Education at a Glance Database (OECD, various years).

Table 3. Unemployment benefits reforms (2008–2015), by type.

	Denmark	Spain	United Kingdom
Reforms towards increasing generosity	3	11	0
Reforms towards decreasing generosity	4	3	1
Compulsory activation for benefit recipients	3	6	4
Other	0	0	1
Total	10	20	6

Source: Own elaboration based on the LABREF database (European Commission, 2018).

Table 4. Coordination of Wage Setting (CWS) and Collective Bargaining Coverage (CBC).

	2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014	
	CW S	CB C	CW S	CB C	CW S	CB C	CWS	CB C	CW S	CB C	CW S	CB C	CW S	CB C
DK	4	:	4	82.0	4	83.0	4	:	4	:	4	84.0	4	:
SP	4	79.3	2	81.4	3	77.4	3	77.5	3	77.5	3	77.6	3	:
UK	1	33.6	1	32.7	1	30.9	1	31.2	1	29.3	1	29.5	1	:

Source: ICTWSS Database (Visser, 2016).

Table 5. New apprenticeships in the UK.

Academic year	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
2005/06	175,000	27,990	20,196	:
2006/07	184,400	19,590	16,913	:
2007/08	224,800	21,530	15,803	5,587
2008/09	239,900	18,100	10,579	7,372
2009/10	279,700	16,355	16,655	6,973
2010/11	457,200	18,580	21,561	9,364
2011/12	520,600	:	26,427	8,395

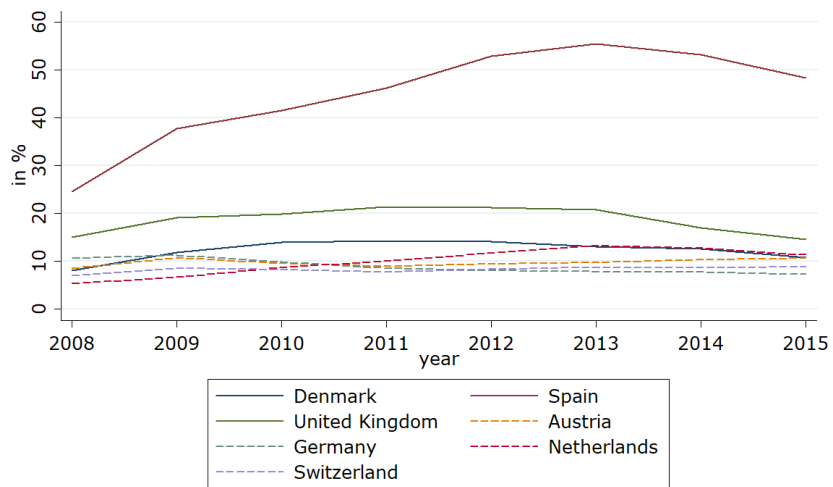
Source: Lodovici et al. (2013, p. 60)

Table A1. Employment statistics – Denmark, United Kingdom and Spain (2008–2015).

		Employment rate (15–64 years old)	Unemployment rate (15–64 years old)	Youth unemployment (15–24 years old)
Denmark	2008	77.9 %	3.5 %	8.0 %
	2009	75.3 %	6.1 %	11.8 %
	2010	73.3 %	7.6 %	14.0 %
	2011	73.1 %	7.7 %	14.2 %
	2012	72.6 %	7.7 %	14.1 %
	2013	72.5 %	7.2 %	13.1 %
	2014	72.8 %	6.8 %	12.6 %
	2015	73.5 %	6.3 %	10.8 %
United Kingdom	2008	71.5 %	5.7 %	15.0 %
	2009	69.9 %	7.7 %	19.1 %
	2010	69.4 %	7.9 %	19.9 %
	2011	69.3 %	8.2 %	21.3 %
	2012	69.9 %	8.1 %	21.2 %
	2013	70.5 %	7.7 %	20.7 %
	2014	71.9 %	6.3 %	17.0 %
	2015	72.7 %	5.4 %	14.6 %
Spain	2008	64.5 %	11.3 %	24.5 %
	2009	60.0 %	18.0 %	37.7 %
	2010	58.8 %	20.0 %	41.5 %
	2011	58.0 %	21.5 %	46.2 %
	2012	55.8 %	24.9 %	52.9 %
	2013	54.8 %	26.2 %	55.5 %
	2014	56.0 %	24.6 %	53.2 %
	2015	57.8 %	22.2 %	48.3 %

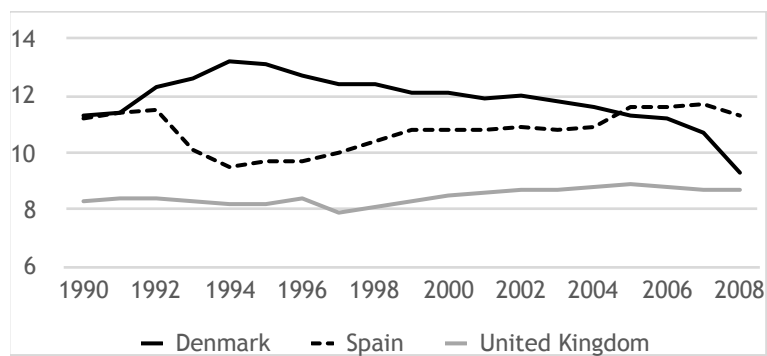
Source: Labour Force Survey (Eurostat, 2018).

Figure 1. Development of youth unemployment in seven European countries.



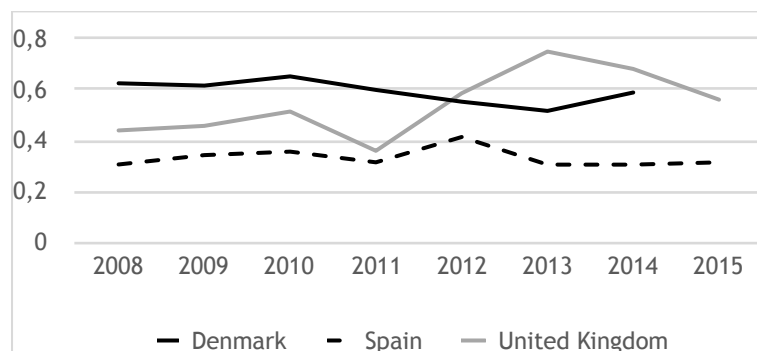
Source: Labour Force Survey (Eurostat, 2018).

Figure 2. Generosity of unemployment benefits.



Source: Comparative Welfare Entitlements Dataset (CWED, 2017).

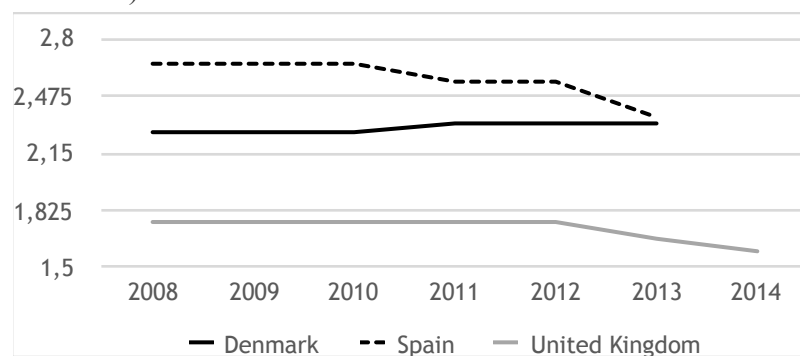
Figure 3. Public investment in vocational training.



Source: Education at a Glance Database (OECD, various years).

Note: Data is not available for Denmark in 2015.

Figure 4. Strictness of employment protection – individual and collective dismissals (regular contracts).



Source: OECD Indicators of Employment Protection (OECD, 2014).

Note: Data is not available for Denmark and Spain in 2014.

## Appendix online only Tables S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6

### Supporting Information

This document details the statements extracted from the LABREF database for the coding of youth-oriented active labour market policies and reforms to unemployment benefits. The text given in the description column is directly quoted from the sources indicated. The countries are presented in alphabetical order.

Table S1 - Youth oriented active labour market policies in Denmark (2008–2015).

Policy measures	Description
2008 Active labour market policies Public Employment Services (job assistance, job-counselling etc.) Guidance to youth aged under 25  Source: LABREF  <b>Coding: 3</b>	Young people aged under 25 who have not completed an upper secondary education programme and who are not currently enrolled in such a programme will be offered guidance by municipalities.
2008 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Enhancing vocational education and training programmes  Source: LABREF  <b>Coding: 2</b>	In the 10th grade, students have to choose at least two different education programmes, one of which must be either a vocational education and training programme or a vocationally oriented upper secondary education programme. Students can also spend up to 4 weeks in voluntary bridge-building programmes to a vocationally oriented upper secondary education programme or combinations of bridge building to a vocationally oriented upper secondary education programme and a non-paid practical training placement with an educational perspective. The academic year is planned in such a way as to ensure that young people who drop out of an upper secondary education programme stay within the field of education. Exams can be taken in the winter semester, allowing the pupils concerned to begin a vocational education or training programme in January if ready to do so.
2011 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Four initiatives to help young unemployed – budget bill  Source: LABREF  <b>Coding: 2 + 1</b>	Four initiatives worth DKK 60 million for 2012 and 2013: (1) Training more unemployed young through the adult apprenticeship scheme; (2) Job rotation to help more unemployed young people enter the labour market; (3) A job and skill development package for academically weak young people; (4) Trainee programmes to give unemployed graduates access to the labour market.

<p>2011 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Various initiatives to help young unemployed</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 2</b></p>	<p>Initiatives were adopted to help young into education or jobs, worth a total of DKK 100 million: (1) Possibility to enter an ‘upgrading of skills job’ for all young people, regardless of education; (2) Targeted training for young unemployed, including separate active measures towards young unemployed within the construction sector; (3) Strengthened effort towards unemployed academics; (4) Job rotation scheme/ arrangement for unemployed with a higher education; (5) Courses in reading, writing and mathematics for an increased number of young people; (6) Campaigning for an increased number of work-experience placements and traineeships.</p>
<p>2011 Active labour market policies Training More funding for apprenticeships, vocational education and training</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>Broad political agreement to allocate 2.6 billion DKK (€0.34 billion) to establish 10,400 extra apprenticeships in 2012. On top of that will be created 1,500 extra traineeships on vocational schools. Increased resources are also allocated to support the increased activities elsewhere in the educational system. 70 million DKK (€10 million) are set aside to improve the quality of vocational education.</p>
<p>2012 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Youth package</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 2</b></p>	<p>Bridging programmes, job rotation schemes, vocational schemes, special training consultants at vocational schools and strengthening of ‘knowledge pilot schemes’: Temporary measure.</p>
<p>2012 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Reforms of vocational training for young persons</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>Measure to increase the access of vocational students to traineeships. A range of new initiatives including apprenticeship-centres at the vocational schools.</p>



<p>2013 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth More involvement of social partners in VET</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: NOT CODED (this is not a policy, but a tripartite agreement)</b></p>	<p>The government has been looking at reforming the system for some time, and has held tripartite talks with the social partners. In a second round of talks, on 2 October 2013, the government announced a tripartite agreement on a common declaration of intent. Crucially, the government had revised its position and accepted a number of proposals previously rejected. The declaration includes a number of measures on social partner involvement. It says social partners will take an active role in addressing the challenge to establish a sufficient number of practical training courses. It was also agreed that the Employer's Contribution to Education (AUB) would increase. The government plans to spend DKK 3 billion (€0.4 billion as at 19 February 2014) on implementing the reform. The main aims are to increase the quality of vocational youth education and make sure that the proportion of the youth cohort at these schools will increase from 18% to 25%. The key measures of the proposal are: simpler structure, stronger entry requirements, increase teaching time, possibility to move to higher education, better matching, 'flex-education', vocational education courses for adults, targeted education for people aged over 25, more practical training courses.</p>
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<p>2014 Active labour market policies Training Increasing the quality of vocational youth education</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>The government plans to spend DKK 3 billion (€0.4 billion as at 19 February 2014) on implementing the reform aimed at increasing the quality of vocational youth education and making sure that the proportion of the youth cohort at these schools will increase from 18% to 25%. The key measures of the proposal are: a simpler structure – reducing the number of introductory courses from 12 to 4, with specialized education starting after 1 year and continuing for the following 2 years, and including apprenticeships of some form; stronger entry requirements, with a minimum ‘02’ grade in Danish and mathematics needed during the final exam in secondary school, though an agreement on a practical training place or passing of exams arranged at the vocational youth schools themselves will also give access; an increase in teaching time to a minimum of 25 hours per week; improved opportunities to move from vocational youth education to higher education; an extra year in secondary school, for those who need it, which will specialize in preparing students for vocational youth education; matching access to some popular courses with labour market prospects for the skills taught; limited access to the most popular courses if labour market prospects are not considered good enough; a new ‘flex-education’ (maximum 2 years) for young people aged under 25 who are not qualified for a standard vocational youth education; new vocational education courses for adults, which should ensure vocational youth education is aimed at young people; targeted courses for the people aged over 25 who are unskilled and want to acquire skills; more practical training courses designed with the help of the social partners.</p>
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Table S2 - Youth oriented active labour market policies in Spain (2008-2015)

Policy measures	Description
<p>2008 Active labour market policies Training Reform of vocational training system</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 2</b></p>	<p>I) Extending the network of Integrated Vocational Training Centres; II) Creation of a network of 25 National Vocational Training Reference Centres, to be regulated by Law 229/2008 of 15 February 2008. These centres will be opened in all autonomous communities and will be responsible for programming and implementation of innovative and experimental training activities in the framework of the National List of Professional Qualifications. This network will be coordinated by the general state administration, with the collaboration of autonomous communities and most representative trade unions and employer organisations, through the General Vocational Training Council, a tripartite governmental advisory body; III) Establishment of a system to assess and accredit the professional skills acquired through work experience or informal training. Candidates who have their skills accredited will be given individual advice on the stages that they need to undergo in order to complete their training itinerary and obtain a qualification. If they fail to accredit their experience, they will be advised on the training possibilities for future rounds; IV) Setting an On-Line Platform for training modules at distance (35 training modules will be available in the school year 2009–2010); V) Simplifying the ways of access and promotion between initial qualification programmes and the vocational training of secondary degree, thus easing life-long learning; VI) making more flexible the access to middle-level training courses by accrediting work experience in combination with training. A system of public grants will be provided to enable 18–24 year old workers to obtain qualifications while working. Also plans to promote training contracts targeting young people who have dropped out of the education system in particular, in order to allow them to complete their education.</p>
<p>2010 Active labour market policies Employment subsidies Reallocation of tax benefits to support the recruitment of individuals at high risk of unemployment</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 4</b></p>	<p>Reallocation of tax benefits for the recruitment of individuals at high risk of unemployment. The groups defined following the reform are: 1) unemployed workers between 16 and 31 years of age: tax benefit of €800; 2) unemployed workers over 45 years of age: tax benefit of €1,200; 3) workers subject to training, handover and replacement contracts due to early retirement age: a tax benefit of €500 (€700 for women). These tax benefits will be complemented by other tax benefits aimed at encouraging the use of training contracts, which are generally given to young people.</p>

<p>2010 Active labour market policies Training Supporting and widening use of training contracts</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 4</b></p>	<p>Full subsidy for social security contributions in case of training contracts, while also improving the wages and the unemployment benefits upon termination. The requirements that a young worker must comply so as to qualify for an internship contract have been changed to include professional certificates, and the qualifying period has been extended to 5 years following graduation. Age limit for training contracts (<i>contrato para la formacion</i>) is extended to 24 years. A subsidy is provided for converting these contracts into the PEP contract (contract to promote permanent hiring with reduced severance payment).</p>
<p>2011 Active labour market policies Training Public Employment Services (job assistance, job-counselling etc.) Actions to improve the employability of young and low-skilled</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 4 + 3 + 2</b></p>	<p>On the one hand, firms are granted fiscal benefits (100% reduction in social contributions for firms under 250 employees and 75% reduction for those firms above the threshold) if they sign part-time contracts with workers under 30 years of age who, in turn, must have been registered in a PES for at least 12 out of the last 18 months. Contracts must last at least 6 months, firms must register a net hiring and can be granted additional benefits should they hire handicapped workers or transform a temporary contract into a permanent one. These incentives are limited to contracts signed in the year after the Royal Decree Law is enacted.</p> <p>Various actions to improve the employability of targeted groups of long-term unemployed: young, older than 45 years of age, workers previously employed in construction and low-skilled workers. Actions combine tailored job action plans with training measures. ALMP actions (especially training programmes) will prioritize these groups. Last, the unemployed should represent between 20% and 40% of total people involved in training measures coordinated by the PES.</p>
<p>2011 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Development of labour practices for young people</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 7</b></p>	<p>RD regulates the “business practices” or placements of young people (aged between 18- and 25) with professional qualification but without work experience and who are experiencing job placement difficulties. Companies will have to sign an agreement with the Public Employment Services for the development of the labour practices within the firm; the PES will make a short-list of candidates.</p>

<p>2011 Active labour market policies Training Training and apprenticeship contract</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>The training and apprenticeship contract is revamped to combine vocational training or education with a paid employment for young low-skilled workers. It is now targeted to workers between 16 and 25 years of age without any professional qualification. Nevertheless, workers aged 25–30 may be hired via this contract until end-2013. The contract's length must be set between 1 and 2 years with an option for a third year under certain circumstances. The training and education programmes must be organized through the national network of training and education centres and must lead to some kind of educative or professional qualification officially recognized. The job position must be linked to the training and working hours must be less than 75% of the total contract time. Some fiscal benefits (100% reduction in social contributions for firms under 250 employees and 75% reduction for those firms above the threshold) are granted to firms that hire workers aged 20 or more who are registered in a PSE. Firms need to prove a net increase in hiring and can be granted an additional 1,000 EUR benefit should they transform the training and apprenticeship contract into a permanent contract.</p>
<p>2011 Active labour market policies Training Training on the job</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 2</b></p>	<p>The goal is to provide young unemployed (18–25 years of age) with little or no working experience with a first internship in a firm, getting involved in on-the-job training actions and improving their profile and employability. The unemployed must accredit some education qualification (at least second-level secondary education) and will receive a remuneration amounting to at least 80% of IPREM. Firms must sign a collaboration agreement with a Public Employment Service (PES). Not labour contract, but a collaboration agreement, is signed between the firm and the worker. The internship length cannot exceed 9 months.</p>
<p>2011 Active labour market policies Training Extension of social security coverage to participants in training</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 7</b></p>	<p>Extension of social security coverage (except for unemployment benefits) to participants in training programs receiving any kind of monetary compensation and funded by public agencies or private bodies, when no legal employment relationship binds the participant with the training provider.</p>

<p>2012 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Reform of the apprenticeship and training contract</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1 + 4</b></p>	<p>The reform extends the scope of this contract. The age limit for its use is increased to 30 years as long as unemployment rate remains at 15% or higher. The maximum duration has been raised from 2 to 3 years. The effective working hours for those hired with an apprenticeship and contract is also increased. With the new legislation, after the expiration of the contract, the worker can be hired with another training contract, also with the same firm, only if the contract is for a different professional qualification. In addition, firms recruiting workers unemployed as of 1.1.2012 will be entitled to reductions in social security contributions: 100% reduction for firms with less than 250 workers and 75% reduction for the rest of firms, while workers contributions will be reduced 100%. Firms transforming apprenticeship and training contracts into permanent contracts will be entitled to a rebate €1500 in social contributions per year over 3 years (€1800 in case of women).</p>
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<p>2012 Active labour market policies Training Measure to promote vocational training provided by both the education system and the public employment services</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>The Decree develops certain aspects of the labour reform. The Decree consists of two sections. Section I provides the foundation for implementing dual vocational training. The Decree comprises six objectives: increasing the number of people who can get a degree of post-compulsory secondary education through the teaching of vocational training; reducing early school leaving; easing access to the labour market thanks to a reinforced contact with firms; increasing the link of business with vocational training, reinforcing the link between firms and vocational training teachers; improving data collection regarding vocational training. The theoretical training must be supervised by the educational authorities, and the objective should be obtaining professional qualifications. Educational institutions interested in participating in this training scheme should develop a training project that builds on collaboration with businesses. The relationship between schools and businesses must be formalised in a cooperation agreement, which must include a training programme covering the most important rules for the development of training activities (location, content, duration, timing, schedule, etc.). Students may earn a grant by the company or another institution. Second II elaborates the regulation of contracts for training and learning under the Statute of Workers. Such contracts represent a contractual channel for the dual training system, and also feature a combination of work and theoretical training. Unlike other dual forms of training, the participants are considered employees and are governed by labour law. The maximum duration of these contracts is three years; the employee is at least entitled to minimum wage for the given working time (theoretical training is not paid). Training activities should represent at least 25% (first year) or 15% (subsequent years) of working time specified in the contract, and can be offered by a specialised centre or in the company. These contracts coexist with training contracts that can be signed with individuals who have a degree and seek to implement their knowledge in practice.</p>
<p>2013 Active labour market policies Employment subsidies Hiring incentives for hiring through TWA</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 4</b></p>	<p>The application of incentives to hire workers through temporary employment agencies</p>

<p>2013 Active labour market policies Special schemes for the disabled Hiring incentives for disabled</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 4</b></p>	<p>Incentives for hiring disabled people under the age of 35.</p>
<p>2014 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Reductions in employer social security contributions for hiring young enrolled in the Youth Guarantee scheme</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 4</b></p>	<p>The beneficiaries of the National System of Youth Guarantee are youths under the age of 25 (or 30 if disabled) who do not have a job and are not integrated into systems of education or training, regardless of being registered as job seekers. Potential beneficiaries must enrol in an electronic media file that functions as a single list of demand. To register in this list, the applicant — in addition to the basic requirement of age and other nationality requirements and the registration of residency in a town — must meet the requirement of not having worked for the last 30 days or participated in training programmes over four hours per month for a period between 30 to 90 days, depending on the type of training. Measures include a programme for the recruitment of young people enrolled in the system through reductions in employer social security contributions. The bonus amounts to EUR 300 a month when the contract is concluded for a full-time post, and between EUR 150 or 220 per month for part-time employment contracts (depending on the working day which should be at least equivalent to 50% of a full-time contract). The contract must be signed for an indefinite duration, and the bonus is applied in the first six months of its term. The bonus is only obtained when hiring increases the employment daily average of the last 30 days, and that employment is maintained during the bonus time. For these purposes, dismissals not declared unfair do not count. The type of training or educational activities provided to youth benefiting from this programme and the circumstances that allow companies to obtain benefits from the expected economic incentives for the recruitment of these young people were further clarified by Act 18/2014.</p>



<p>2015 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Extension of the Youth Guarantee for workers between 25 and 30</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 7</b></p>	<p>This Act ensures the Youth Guarantee for workers over 25 and under 30 (until the youth unemployment rate is below 20%).</p>
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Table S3 - Youth oriented active labour market policies in the United Kingdom (2008–2015).

Policy measures	Description
<p>2008 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth The young shall stay longer in education/training</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 2</b></p>	<p>Introducing the requirement for, by 2013, all 17-year-olds, and, by 2015, all 18-year-olds, to participate in some kind of education or training. Also: (1) setting out duties on employers to release young people for the equivalent of one day a week to undertake training elsewhere (where the employer does not provide their own training); (2) introducing a duty on local authorities to ensure that young people participate and to provide the support service currently known as Connexions; (3) requiring local authorities to assess the education and training needs of young people aged 16–19 with special educational needs; (4) requiring the Learning and Skills Council to secure the proper provision of courses for learners over the age of 19.</p>
<p>2008 Active labour market policies Training National Apprenticeship Service to support apprenticeships</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) was established as a single body responsible for the end to end delivery of Apprenticeships across England. It makes it as easy as possible for employers to take on apprentices, streamlining the application process, coordinates funding and offering support and advice at every step for both the employer and learner. Its services include: Employer Services; Learner Services; and a web-based vacancy matching system (Apprenticeship vacancies). It took over the running of the apprenticeship programme from the Learning and Skills Council.</p>
<p>2009 Active labour market policies Direct job creation schemes Funding work-focused volunteering opportunities for long-term and young unemployed</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 7</b></p>	<p>8m GBP funding for work-focused volunteering opportunities for those unemployed more than six months and guaranteed job or work-focused training place for all 18–24 year olds before reaching 12 months of unemployment (after 6 months since 2010, part of the 6 month offer). Target was 40.000 volunteers in 2 years, delivery was significantly less.</p>

<p>2009 Active labour market policies Employment subsidies Six months subsidies for employers of the young - Future Jobs Fund</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 4</b></p>	<p>The Future Jobs Fund (FJF) provided funding – paying wages and other business costs up to £6,500 per person – for approved bids from organisations or consortia (usually led by local councils) that offered jobs lasting at least 6 months, involved working at least 25 hours a week and paid at least the National Minimum Wage. The FJF was the main part of the Young Person’s Guarantee where 18–24-year-olds reaching the six-month point of their Jobseeker’s Allowance claim were guaranteed an offer of a job, training or work experience.</p>
<p>2009 Active labour market policies Employment subsidies Subsidies for employment of the young in the care sector - Care First Careers</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 4</b></p>	<p>Care First Careers is a joint Department of Health and Department for Work and Pensions recruitment initiative to get more young people into the adult social care sector, introduced nationally on 25th January 2010. Employers receive a £1,000 subsidy to employ for at least six months an 18- to 24-year-old who has been out for work for six months or longer. The recruit would also receive free pre-employment training.</p>
<p>2009 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Apprenticeship Grants for Employers</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>The Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE) programme was designed to stimulate the formation of new Apprenticeships for young unemployed people aged 16 or 17. Employers were offered a grant of £2,500, payable in two instalments – of £1,500 on the Apprentice’s start on programme and £1,000 after 12 weeks. Target was 5,000 Apprenticeship places and a cut-off date of March 31st 2010 for applications.</p>

<p>2009 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Better skills, apprenticeships - White paper on skills for growth</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>White paper on Skills for growth: 1) building a ‘modern class of technicians’, with an overarching ambition that three quarters of people should participate in higher education or complete an advanced apprenticeship or equivalent technician level course by the age of 30; 2) doubling the number of advanced apprenticeships to 35,000 places over the next two years, with additional funding for advanced (level 3) and higher (level 4) apprenticeships of GBP 17 million (€19.1 million as at 14 January 2010) in 2010–2011 and GBP 115 million (€129.1 million) by 2014–2015; 3) supporting apprentices to progress to higher education through the introduction of a new Apprenticeship Scholarships Fund, offering bursaries of up to GBP 1,000 (€1,123); 4) developing a new network of University Technical Colleges for young persons aged 14–19 years; 5) empowering learner choice as a means of enhancing provider performance through the use of an updated version of new ‘Skills Accounts’; 6) introducing lighter touch monitoring arrangements for providers that perform well; 7) simplifying the skills system by supporting the UKCES recommendation that the number of skills and funding agencies should be reduced by over 30 bodies within the next three years, including new plans for a ‘substantial reduction’ in the number of Sector Skills Councils.</p>
<p>2009 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Direct employment - Community Task Force</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 5</b></p>	<p>The Community Task Force was part of the Department for Work &amp; Pensions Young Person's Guarantee and helped young jobseekers aged 18–24, by giving them up to 6 months of work experience. Work placements often provided environmental, economic and social benefits to their community, for example including such roles as land management workers, gardeners and recycling workers.</p>
<p>2011 Active labour market policies Public Employment Services (job assistance, job-counselling etc.) The New Enterprise Allowance (NEA) to encourage self-employment</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 6</b></p>	<p>A new scheme to encourage self employment has been launched by the government. The New Enterprise Allowance (NEA) is open to those aged 18 and over receiving Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) with the following features: 1) access to a business mentor to provide guidance and support 2) can stop claiming JSA and switch to a weekly allowance for up to 26 weeks to a total amount of GBP1,274 (paid at a similar level to the basic JSA of GBP65 per week for the first three months, before falling to GBP33 for the remaining three months) 3) Claimants becoming self employed may be eligible for a loan of up to GBP1,000 to help with business start-up costs.</p>

<p>2011 Active labour market policies Public Employment Services (job assistance, job-counselling etc.) Additional adviser contact to help a young person focus on getting into a job or education or training</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 3</b></p>	<p>To fight youth unemployment: Provide job search support for 16–17-year-olds on JSA by making adviser support available to these claimants; Additional adviser contact to help a young person focus on getting into a job or education or training; Extra time for advisers to help clients amounting to one hour at the front end of a claim and an extra five minutes per week while on benefit; At least fortnightly reviews between the claimant and adviser or more frequently if this is deemed necessary; Attendance at reviews and interviews will be mandatory for the claimant with the prospect of sanctions for those on JSA in the event of non compliance; JCP advisers will work closely with local authorities (who currently have front line responsibility for 16–17-year-olds).</p>
<p>2011 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Youth Contract: half a million new opportunities for young people</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1 + 2 + 3 + 4</b></p>	<p>Youth Contract: half a million new opportunities for young people in a long list of measures, the key ones of which are summarised as follows: 1) Cash payments to encourage employers to recruit young people – 160,000 job subsidies worth up to GBP2,275 2) An extra 250,000 Work Experience places over the next three years taking the total to at least 100,000 places per year – an offer of a Work Experience place will be made to every 18–24-year-old before he or she enters the Work Programme (acceptance appears to be voluntary); 3) At least 20,000 extra incentive payments with GBP1,500 each for employers to take on young people as apprentices; 4) Extra support through Jobcentre Plus in the form of weekly, rather than fortnightly, signing-on meetings. 5) In addition the government announced special help for ‘the most vulnerable’ 16–17-year-olds not in employment, education or training (NEET) to get them back into education, an apprenticeship or a job with training (at a total cost of GBP150m).</p>
<p>2011 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Apprenticeship offers</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>Education Act 2011: apprenticeship offers + Securing the provision of apprenticeship training + Apprenticeship certificates</p>

<p>2011 Active labour market policies Training New skills strategy</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>Skills for Sustainable Growth: It outlines the coalition's plans to address 'current failings' in England's further education and training system. One of the main aims is to create an additional 75,000 adult apprenticeship places on top of the previous Labour government's plans with 200,000 adults expected to start an apprenticeship by 2014–2015. The government will pay GBP 250 million (€295 million as of 15 December 2010) towards this over the spending review period. There will also be a focus on making level 3 apprenticeships (A-level equivalent) the level 'to which learners and employers aspire'.</p>
<p>2012 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Work programme for youth: scheme amended</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 7</b></p>	<p>After fierce opposition by trade unions but also a group of main employers, on 29 February 2012, the government met employers to hear their concerns about the scheme. After the meeting, it announced that the threat of removing benefits from people who leave placements would be dropped. The government stated that benefit sanctions would apply only in cases of gross misconduct. It also said that only 220 people had been sanctioned since the scheme started, and that many employers were still joining the programme.</p>
<p>2012 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Youth Contract initiative</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: NOT CODED (identical to other measure)</b></p>	<p>The Youth Contract, launched in April 2012, is a package of support to help young unemployed people prepare for work and find long term sustainable employment. Provision under the Youth Contract includes: 1) wage incentives worth up to £2,275 each for employers who recruit an 18 to 24 year old who has been on benefit 6 months or more from Jobcentre Plus or through the Work Programme; 2) an extra 250,000 work experience places or places in sector-based work academies over 3 years, taking the total to at least 100,000 a year; 3) a further 20,000 incentive payments to encourage employers to take on young Apprentices, taking the total number to 40,000 in 2012–13; 4) additional support through Jobcentre Plus by way of more adviser time and more frequent attendance; 5) an opportunity to be referred for a careers interview with the National Careers Service 3.63. As part of the Youth Contract, the government is investing £150 million over 3 years (£126 million of it in England) to support the most disengaged and disadvantaged 16–17-year-olds. This provides support to help them to get back into education, an apprenticeship or a job with training.</p>

<p>2012 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Pilot project launched in London for young people</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 7</b></p>	<p>A pilot project was launched in London in August 2012 (to start in the autumn) aimed at helping young people aged 18-24 claiming income-based JSA who have not previously completed at least six months of paid work. There is a requirement that they must undertake work experience to help better prepare them for the labour market. The work experience will involve at least 30 hours per week for 13 weeks and it is envisaged that placements will have a strong community focus and so will mainly be in charities, social enterprises and the voluntary sector. In addition there will be ongoing support from contracted providers in job search. It is anticipated that around 6,000 young people across the 16 London boroughs will take part in the pilot. The pilot is funded under the DWP Youth Contract and with additional funds from the ESF.</p>
<p>2012 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Apprenticeship Grant for Employers</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE) for SMEs recruiting those aged 16-24 years old was extended to December 2014. AGE provides grants of £1,500 to employers with up to 1,000 employees recruiting 16 to 24 year olds, to encourage them to develop their business and take on new apprentices. The £1,500 is in addition to the training costs of the Apprenticeship Framework which are met in full for young people aged 16 to 18, and 50% for those aged 19 to 24. In July 2013, it was extended to December 2014.</p>
<p>2013 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Allowing employers to design their own apprenticeships</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>Following the Richard Review of apprenticeships in 2012, this new approach is an attempt to raise the quality of apprenticeships by making them more closely allied to what employers need in terms of skills. The plans include the following: 1) Employers putting recognised and meaningful industry standards at the heart of every apprenticeship. 2) Every apprenticeship should be targeted at a skilled job, involving substantial new learning that will provide the foundations for a career and a springboard for progression. 3) Training and accreditation of existing workers who are already fully competent in their jobs should be delivered separately. 4) Apprenticeships should be focused on the outcome, clearly setting out what apprentices should know and be able to do at the end of their apprenticeship. 5) Apprenticeships will move to a final holistic test which has the full confidence of employers. All apprentices will work towards a Level 2 qualification either through GCSEs or functional skills in English and maths from August 2014 if they have not already achieved this.</p>

<p>2013 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth New Traineeship programme</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 2</b></p>	<p>New traineeship programme: initial proposals for the development of a new programme of traineeships to help young people to prepare for and secure apprenticeships and other sustainable employment.</p>
<p>2015 Active labour market policies Special schemes for youth Introduction of the Youth Obligation to encourage young individuals to take up employment</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 3</b></p>	<p>Youth Obligation for most 18 to 21 year olds claiming benefits. From the start of Universal Credit claims, 18 to 21 year olds will participate in an intensive period of support, learning, job-search and interview techniques and doing structured work preparation. Tailored, flexible support will be provided to those in work, but need to increase their earnings. After 6 months, young people still claiming Universal Credit will be expected to apply for an apprenticeship, a traineeship, gain work-based skills valued by employers, or go on a work placement to give them the skills they need to get on in work.</p>
<p>2015 Active labour market policies Training Extension to the Apprenticeship Grant for Employers</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>The government announced an extension to the Apprenticeship Grant for Employer until the end of the 2016–2017 academic year.</p>



Table S4 – Reforms to unemployment benefits in Denmark (2008-2015)

Policy measures	Description
<p>2008 Unemployment benefits Duration of unemployment benefits Modified supplementary unemployment benefits</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 2</b></p>	<p>Supplementary unemployment benefits can be received for 30 weeks within 104 weeks. The adjustment shall create increased transition from part-time work to full-time work by ensuring sufficient incentives with employers and employees. Previously, part-time employees with terms of notice were eligible for part-time unemployment benefits for 50 weeks within a period of 70 weeks and those without terms of notice were eligible for part-time unemployment benefits for 4 years within a period of 6 years.</p> <p>The adjustment is expected to have an employment effect of 1,700 full-time persons.</p>
<p>2008 Unemployment benefits Search and job availability requirements Widening the scope of activation measures</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 3</b></p>	<p>Widening the scope of activation measures and changing the enforcement of availability criteria. Previously, the rules concerning availability to work were enforced by requiring 4 job applications per week per unemployed. Now: 1) Immediately after a person has become unemployed, the unemployment insurance benefit fund is obliged to explain what the availability rules mean to the unemployed. 2) When the unemployed comes to the first meeting a job search plan is made for the next 3 months; 3) The right-and-duty to participate in ALMP (principle of mutual obligations) will take place after 3 months rather than 6 months of unemployed for all unemployed under 30 years and will be simplified with respect to what offers various target groups should receive.</p>
<p>2009 Unemployment benefits Search and job availability requirements Stricter rules on compulsory activation for young unemployed</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 3</b></p>	<p>All unemployed below the age of 30 will be required to take their first job interview within one month of unemployment instead of after three months and compulsory activation starts after 3 months. Formerly, compulsory activation set in after 6 months for those below 30 and who received unemployment benefits.</p>

<p>2010 Unemployment benefits Coverage and eligibility conditions Strengthening eligibility conditions</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 2</b></p>	<p>Conditions for regaining the right to unemployment benefits will be harmonised with the rules for qualifying for benefits, in the first place. In both case, criteria is 52 weeks of full-time employment during the previous 3 years, up from 26 weeks in 3 years.</p>
<p>2010 Unemployment benefits Duration of unemployment benefits Limitation of the maximum period during which unemployed people can receive benefits</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 2</b></p>	<p>Maximum period is 2 out of the last 3 years – half the earlier '4 out of 6' years.</p>
<p>2011 Unemployment benefits Duration of unemployment benefits Half year extension of unemployment benefits for those who exhaust their benefits in the second half of 2012</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>The duration of unemployment benefits for insured unemployed will be extended by half a year for all unemployed, who will exhaust their unemployment benefits in the second half of 2012, except that the total benefit period cannot exceed 4 years. This element acts against the shortening of the benefit period from four to two years – decided in May 2010 and becoming effective from summer 2012.</p>
<p>2013 Unemployment benefits Net replacement rate Temporary labour market benefit for those who have expired benefits</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>A new temporary so-called “labour market benefit” will be introduced from January 1, 2014. The benefit will be given to all unemployed, who exhaust their right to unemployment benefits and/or the educational allowance after January 1, 2014. The duration of the labour market benefit will be gradually reduced towards the second half of 2016, where the two-year benefit period will then be fully implemented. The total duration of unemployment benefits and the two new benefits cannot exceed four years. The main strength of the reform is therefore that the number of unemployed losing the right to benefits will be more evenly distributed over the period 2013-2016. The reform is to be financed through a wide range of minor savings on the public budget. The related legislation went through Parliament on June 28.</p>

<p>2015 Unemployment benefits Duration of unemployment benefits Introduction of temporary labour market cash benefits</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>A new type of benefit has been introduced: temporary labour market cash benefits. These benefits are granted to persons who from 2015 will exhaust their right to unemployment benefits, and the temporary labour market benefits and who are denied full cash benefits. The total period of unemployment benefits, temporary labour market benefits and temporary labour market cash benefits may not exceed 3 years. Temporary labour market cash benefits are independent of spouse's income and total family wealth.</p>
<p>2015 Unemployment benefits Duration of unemployment benefits Increase of flexibility and generosity for those willing to work</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 3</b></p>	<p>The main purpose of this reform is to strengthen the incentive to take on all types of employment during the unemployment benefit period. The reform consists of the following main elements: (1) Introduction of the employment account which allows a flexible accumulation of rights to unemployment benefits. This implies that employment during the unemployment benefit period increases the period that an individual is entitled to benefits. (2) Extension of the period is calculated at the ratio 1:2; i.e., one day's work may be converted into two days' extension of the period that an individual is entitled to benefits. However, the extension period cannot exceed one year. (3) A waiting day is introduced every four months for persons with a high unemployment rate corresponding to three waiting days per year for full-time unemployed. The waiting day may be avoided if, during a period of four months, the person has had employment corresponding to more than 20 days of full employment. This should promote the incentive to take on all types of employment.</p>
<p>2015 Unemployment benefits Net replacement rates for specific groups of graduates</p> <p>Source LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 2</b></p>	<p>The main purpose of this reform is made more flexible and generous for those showing willingness to work (see other entry). However, for graduates the system will become less generous. Graduates will receive 82% of the maximum unemployment benefit for breadwinners and 71.5% for non-breadwinners instead of the present 82% irrespective of status.</p>



Table S5 – Reforms to unemployment benefits in Spain (2008-2015)

Policy measures	Description
<p>2008 Unemployment benefits Net replacement rate Unemployed who decide to become self-employed can draw 60% of their unemployment benefits at once</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>Unemployed who decide to become self-employed can draw 60% of their unemployment benefits at once (instead of the current 40%).</p>
<p>2009 Unemployment benefits Coverage and eligibility conditions New unemployment benefit for those who have lost their unemployment rights</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 3 + 1</b></p>	<p>New €420 monthly unemployment payment to be granted to people who have lost their unemployment rights since 1 January 2009. The new unemployment benefit will last a maximum of 180 days and will be available, in any case, up until 15 February 2010. The payment amount is equal to Spain's current Public Indicator of Multiple Effect Income (IPREM). Entitlement to the benefit will be conditional on the unemployed person taking part in a training programme – this initiative will include measures such as career guidance, attending job interviews, training measures and help with writing their curriculum vitae (CV).</p>
<p>2012 Unemployment benefits Coverage and eligibility conditions Eligibility conditions for workers older than 50</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>The age to receive unemployment assistance for workers older than 50 is raised from 52 to 55 years</p>
<p>2012 Unemployment benefits Coverage and eligibility conditions Intensified means-tested criteria for unemployment assistance</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 2</b></p>	<p>The wealth of the beneficiaries has a stronger role in setting the eligibility conditions. Eligibility for non-contributory unemployment benefits is limited by the level of income received by the potential beneficiary. Unproductive assets are supposed to supply income at the legal rate of interest. Previously only 50% of this legal interest was applied while now 100% is considered. Thus, eligibility criteria are more aligned with wealth.</p>

<p>2012 Unemployment benefits Duration of unemployment benefits Special subsidy for workers older than 45 is repealed</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 2</b></p>	<p>The special unemployment subsidy for workers over 45 and that have exhausted their 24-month unemployment benefits is repealed.</p>
<p>2012 Unemployment benefits Duration of unemployment benefits Extension of unemployment benefits</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 3 + 1</b></p>	<p>Extension of unemployment benefits for six additional months to people involved in retraining programmes.</p>
<p>2012 Unemployment benefits Duration of unemployment benefits Duration of unemployment assistance for older workers</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>The duration of unemployment assistance for unemployed people older than 55 will cover the period until they have access to a contributory pension of any kind.</p>
<p>2012 Unemployment benefits Net replacement rate Increase in unemployment assistance</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>Unemployment assistance is raised from 75% to 80% of IPREM (the indicator of income used to fix min and max benefits).</p>

<p>2012</p> <p>Unemployment benefits Net replacement rate New programme of unemployment assistance</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 3 + 1</b></p>	<p>The law extends a special assistance programme for long-term unemployed until February 2013. This programme was initiated in February 2011 for a period of six months, and has since then been extended by successive six-month periods. The programme includes two types of measures: unemployment benefits of 75% of the multiplier for the public income index (or 85% if the applicant is taking care of at least three family members) and a retraining programme to improve employability are provided to unemployed persons.</p> <p>The financial aid is increased from 399 € to 452 € for those long-term unemployed having at least two members of the family unit in charge, in addition to the spouse or partner, - with the exception of those unemployed who have at least one dependent child, who are automatically entitled to ask support from PREPARA, independently of the time that they have been unemployed.</p> <p>To access this programme, the law requires regular unemployment benefits to have been exhausted and for three requirements to be met: Registration as unemployed for at least 12 months, family responsibilities and demonstration that the applicant does not receive an income in excess of 75% of the multiplier for the public income index. Compared to previous programme, the government has slightly increased the amount of financial aid for those with greater family responsibilities, and has included special requirements for unemployed persons who reside with others and who have an income or revenue.</p> <p>Those who receive these benefits are required to participate in professional development activities and in job search. A breach of these duties entails the loss of support.</p> <p>The law also increase collaboration and coordination of the State with the Autonomous Communities.</p>
<p>2012</p> <p>Unemployment benefits Net replacement rate Steepening of the unemployment benefit over the unemployment spell</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 2</b></p>	<p>After 180 days of unemployment gross benefits are reduced from 70 to 50% of the reference wage.</p>

<p>2012 Unemployment benefits Search and job availability requirements Tightened job-search conditionalities for the active income for job insertion</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 3</b></p>	<p>To be eligible for the Active Income for job insertion (Renta activa de insercion), benefit recipients must: a) actively search for a job for at least 12 months; b) not have rejected an adequate job offer, training or other measure to improve their employability (any interruption would require a full period of 12 months); c) have previously exhausted unemployment benefits and unemployment assistance</p>
<p>2012 Unemployment benefits Search and job availability requirements</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 3</b></p>	<p>Active job search and proof of job-search activities is an obligation of unemployment benefit recipients. Responsibility is given to regional authorities. Participation in actions to improve employability is voluntary for the first 30 days.</p>
<p>2013 Unemployment benefits Coverage and eligibility conditions Reduction of the contribution period for unemployed in agriculture</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>Temporary reduction of the contribution period required by Social Security to access a special unemployment subsidy in the agricultural sector (due to lack of employment).</p>
<p>2013 Unemployment benefits Coverage and eligibility conditions Measures to support self-employment of young people</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>To promote the self-employment of young people (i.e., the start of activities on their own or the launch of a business or a company), Act 11/2013 implements several measures. These are measures that usually represent cost savings for people who establish a business or a profession (especially social security costs), but in some cases, they also have the potential to obtain financial resources from public administration. Compatibility between the unemployment benefits and the performance of a self-employment activity for a maximum of 270 days, right to immediate access to full unemployment benefits to make investments in the new activity, the possibility of interrupting receipt of unemployment benefits for a period of 60 months to conduct a self-employment activity, and the voluntary payment of social security contributions in case of accident at work. The unemployment benefits received immediately under the conditions described above are fully tax-free.</p>



<p>2013</p> <p>Unemployment benefits Duration of unemployment benefits Extension of unemployment benefits with mandatory participation in retraining</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 3 + 1</b></p>	<p>Extending the retraining programme for the unemployed. It was introduced in 2011 in light of the growing unemployment rate and the increased number of people who stopped receiving unemployment benefits because they had reached their maximum term. The programme has already been extended four times (for successive periods of six months). An automatic renewal every six months has now been agreed, as the unemployment rate in Spain is expected to remain above 20%. The programme combines the granting of a special benefit to long-term unemployed who have exhausted their regular benefits (and who do not earn an income above a specific limit) with mandatory participation of such persons in retraining activities which will help them find a new job.</p>
<p>2015</p> <p>Unemployment benefits Coverage and eligibility conditions Introduction of compatibility between unemployment benefits and income from self-employment or incorporation of the unemployed person into a cooperative or a worker-owned company</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 1</b></p>	<p>This Act foresees compatibility between unemployment benefits and the income from self-employment in case of workers who launch an autonomous activity (up to 9 months). This measure can also apply to the incorporation of the unemployed person into a cooperative or a worker-owned company. The Act also extends the traditional possibility of receiving all accrued unemployment benefits in a single payment if that amount is used to launching an autonomous activity (an operation known as "capitalisation") to all unemployed (before, only up to 60% for adult unemployed). Lastly, a self-employed who has to interrupt his/her activity for economic reasons, who is entitled to the cease of activity benefit and who was entitled before the entrepreneurship project to contributory unemployment benefits can now choose to restart the remaining unemployment benefit or to receive the cease of activity benefit. Interestingly, s/he can do so up to five years after the beginning of the self-employment initiative (before, only two years).</p>

Table S6 – Reforms to unemployment benefits in the United Kingdom (2008-2015)

<b>Policy measures</b>	<b>Description</b>
<p>2008</p> <p>Unemployment benefits Search and job availability requirements Activation measures for lone parents</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 3</b></p>	<p>Since 2008, lone parents who are able to work and whose youngest child is 12 years old or over are required to actively seek work, with support including national rollout of in-work credit. Those with a youngest child aged 10 or over will follow from October 2009 and those with a youngest child aged 7 or over from October 2010.</p>

<p>2009 Unemployment benefits Coverage and eligibility conditions Simpler benefit system – Welfare Reform Bill 2009</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 4</b></p>	<p>Reform of the welfare and benefit system to improve support and incentives for people to move from benefits to work. Abolishing the Income Support (IS), by moving IS claimants who are ready for work into Job Seeker's Allowance or into Employment and Support Allowance where appropriate. The reform thus introduces a simpler benefit system with just 2 benefit types available: the Employment Support Allowance will take-in many of those currently on IS, while the existing Jobseeker's Allowance will encompass those considered job ready who are currently on other benefits.</p>
<p>2012 Unemployment benefits Search and job availability requirements More stringent rules for jobseeker's allowance to comply</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 3</b></p>	<p>From the 22nd October 2012 more stringent rules have been applied to the receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for those who fail to comply with the rules. Prior to the change, those JSA recipients who were deemed to refuse a job offer or in some other way contravene the benefit rules, were liable to lose their benefit entitlement for up to three months. Under the new rules this has been extended to a possible maximum of three years, though tiered as follows: 1) low level – for failures to undertake a specific action as required by a JCP adviser the sanction will be one month for a first and three months for a second and subsequent failures; 2) Intermediate level – for failures to actively seek and be available for work, leading to disentitlement to JSA and if a new claim is made, then no benefit is payable for up to one month for the first failure and three months for the second and subsequent failure; 3) High level – for failures to comply with the most important job seeking requirements such as refusing to accept a reasonable job offer or leaving a job voluntarily without good reason. Here the sanctions will be for a fixed period that will increase for those with a history of such failure to comply with three months for a first failure, rising to six months for a second failure and three years for a third. Note that the JSA will be gradually replaced by the Universal credit, which also has stricter conditionality.</p>
<p>2013 Unemployment benefits Search and job availability requirements Claimant commitment: new form or jobseeker's agreement</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 3</b></p>	<p>The Claimant Commitment will be rolled out in the Autumn of 2013 and will focus on using a new form of the Jobseeker's Agreement that will set out more fully the requirements for continued receipt of benefits. This will include a personal statement developed and agreed between client and adviser with expected tasks set out, along with more regular monitoring and adjustment. Ultimately the agreement will be enforced with the threat of benefit sanctions and follows the introduction in 2012 of a more severe regime on these.</p>

<p>2015 Unemployment benefits Coverage and eligibility conditions Restrictions on EEA nationals entitlements for universal credit</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 2</b></p>	<p>The regulations provide that an EEA national whose only right to reside is as an EEA jobseeker, or a family member of such a person, cannot satisfy the Habitual Residence Test and will not be entitled to Universal Credit. This policy is meant to protect the integrity of the benefit system and to ensure that any available benefit support is increasingly focused only on mobile EEA nationals who contribute to the UK through work.</p>
<p>2015 Unemployment benefits Search and job availability requirements More requirements for claimants of the jobseeker allowance</p> <p>Source: LABREF</p> <p><b>Coding: 3</b></p>	<p>Jobseeker's Allowance claimants, and those claiming the equivalent in Universal Credit are now required to do more for their benefit. Half of all claimants are required to attend the Jobcentre weekly rather than fortnightly, and the government announced in Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015 that, from October 2016, all new claimants will be required to attend the Jobcentre weekly at the start of their claim.</p>