Active and Critical: The Political Inclusion of Unemployed Youth in Europe

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Abstract: In this paper I analyze the political inclusion of unemployed youth in four European cities: Cologne (Germany), Geneva (Switzerland), Lyon (France), and Turin (Italy). Political inclusion is a multidimensional concept including both political attitudes and behaviors. Here I focus on one political attitude, dissatisfaction with labor market policies, and on three forms of political participation, namely contacting, party activities, and manifestation. I find that unemployment affects youth political inclusion in terms of political attitudes, but less so with regards to their political behaviors. Moreover the lived experience of unemployment accounts for a small share of the dissatisfaction with labor market policies, it is rather the collective experience of youth on the labor market that help understand their dissatisfaction, as well as their political socialization.

Active and Critical: The Political Inclusion of Unemployed Youth in Europe[1]

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In times of raising and longer lasting unemployment among youth in Europe it is important to understand what are the consequences of youth labor market exclusion in terms of political inclusion. However this field of research remains underdeveloped as can be seen by the sparse number of publications on the topic (Banks and Ullah 1987; Bay and Blekesaune 2002; Breakwell 1986; Bynner and Ashford 1994; Carle 2003; Clark 1985; Hammer 2002). The question of how unemployment affects political inclusion is still open and more research is needed on the mechanisms linking both life spheres. In addition, the existing studies find mixed effects of unemployment on political attitudes and few have worked on political participation. There is no consensus yet on the effects of unemployment on political inclusion.

The literature on youth unemployment and politics is focused on attitudes and electoral behavior (Banks and Ullah 1987; Bay and Blekesaune 2002; Breakwell 1986; Bynner and Ashford 1994). Other forms of political participation, which are recognized as important for the study of youth political participation (Henn, Weinstein, and Wring 2002; O'Toole et al. 2003), are less studied (Carle 2003; Hammer 2002). Moreover, unemployed youth political participation has been studied more thoroughly in the minimal or residual welfare states and in the universal welfare states. The bulk of existing research have been conducted on youth in the United Kingdom (Banks and Ullah 1987; Breakwell 1986; Clark 1985) and in the Nordic countries (Carle 2003; Hammer 2002). Although research have showed that the impact of unemployment on collective participation varies across unemployment regimes (Baglioni et al. 2008; della Porta 2008; Giugni 2008) and the political inclusion of unemployed youth also as the research by Bay and Blekesaune (2002) show.

In this paper, I focus on four cities characteristic of the continental, employment-centered, welfare regimes – Cologne in Germany, Geneva in Switzerland, Lyon in France, and Turin in Italy – and analyze the political inclusion of unemployed youth. I define political inclusion as a

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multidimensional concept aimed at understanding the political attitudes and participation of marginalized groups of the population. I work on one political attitude and three forms of participation that are best able to capture the specificities of unemployed youth political inclusion. First the dissatisfaction with labor market policies is analyzed, then the political participation in contacting, party activities, and manifestation. Finally, I propose to analyze how the lived experience of unemployment contributes to the dissatisfaction with labor market policies.

Political inclusion

I define political inclusion, following Iris Marion Young's (2000) work on this concept, as being the equal opportunity of different individuals or groups of individuals to express their interest, opinions, and preferences about political choices and decisions. Thus political inclusion entails a notion of equality, as set by the ideal of democracy, but is not based on the idea that *the excluded* or *the marginalized* should be included through a pre-determined set of political procedures and acts. The inclusion of excluded individuals or groups does not imply conforming to existing norms and institutions; rather *the excluded* can set their own means and modes of inclusion in the processes of decision-making. Laura Morales explains that *"political assimilation or integration are, in essence, the same thing and that both carry the same ideological baggage of conformity to the cultural and the social norms of the majority population. […] Historically, the notion of assimilation implied that the behaviours and attitudes of immigrants and their descendants approximate those of the native population."* (2010: 20).

Working with the concept of integration or assimilation presupposes that the studied population, be they migrants or unemployed, is expected to conform to the attitudes and behaviors of the population. It is a challenge to study the political inclusion of specific groups of the population while taking this potential bias into account. In this research, I study specific political attitudes and forms of participation that correspond to the profile of the studied population. This enables me to analyze political inclusion while focusing on political attitudes and forms of participation that are most connected to the lives of the unemployed youth that I study.

Youth political inclusion

In the literature on youth and politics, two trends coexist; researchers analyzing youth limited political participation (Esser and de Vreese 2007; Muxel 2001, 2010; Phelps 2004, 2012) are confronted to researchers who propose to distinguish between institutional activities and other forms of participation. This latter set of research demonstrate that youth are not less engaged and less active in politics, rather they are participating through other means (Andolina et al. 2002; Henn, Weinstein, and Wring 2002). Moreover they show that youth have different conceptions of citizenship (Dalton 2009) and are interested in specific political issues that are seldom addressed in institutional politics (O'Toole et al. 2003; O'Toole, Marsh, and Jones 2003). Hence to understand the impact of unemployment for youth political inclusion one should engage in analysis of multiple political behaviors, rather than focus on electoral or institutional political participation.

Among those who support the hypothesis that youth political participation is declining, studies in European countries and the United States have stressed youth political apathy in terms of electoral participation and party activities. Hadjar and Beck (2010) not only find that age is an important predictor of electoral abstention, but also that in the case of youth education is no longer a driver of turn out at the pole. Rather highly educated youth are more critical of the system and less likely to vote. In addition, Anne Muxel (Muxel 2001) stresses the importance of social inclusion and inequalities for the electoral behavior of youth. The transition to adulthood, and in particular the access to the labor market, plays a crucial role in shaping the citizens self-identity and in particular their self-confidence as political actors. Muxel (2001) proposes the concept of *'moratoire des années de jeunesse'* – a period during which youth experiment with roles transmitted and internalized through the socialization process and build their political identity through trial and adoption or rejection of different forms of participation.

Henn et al. (2002) further note that youth are more likely than older citizens to perceive politics as something remote from their lives, as activities taking place in the parliament and not directly affecting their lives. As well as activities on which they do not, or cannot, have a direct influence. They conclude that youth are not apathetic, rather they are alienated from politics and although they support other forms of participation, it is not conducive to political participation. Additionally, Kathy Edwards (2007) highlights the importance of studying institutional barriers, not only individual deficits, when it comes to youth political participation. Youth consider that issues that affect their lives are not addressed in the political realm. They

feel the age hierarchy with these regards, as well as the power inequalities.

Following these insights Harris et al. (2010) analyze the political participation of youth where it takes place, away from political institutions, and find that youth are engaged in everyday politics. These everyday politics are activities, set at the local level, within the community, and which contribute in shaping the society they want to live. Youth are concerned with issues of inequalities, the environment, and more generally with the consumers' societies they live in. Instead of highlighting the decline in youth political participation, those who support the hypothesis that youth are engaged in other forms of participation, have worked on the emergence of new forms of activism, as well as the idea that youth are more critical and participatory citizens (Dalton 2009; Harris, Wyn, and Younes 2010; Vromen 2003).

Based on these findings on youth political participation, I propose to analyze the impact of unemployment on youth political inclusion by analyzing dissatisfaction with labor market policies and participation in both institutional forms, contacting and party activities, as well as in manifestation – a set of activities that enable to act on issues concerning them more directly such as boycotting, signing petitions, and participating in demonstration. This distinction is based on previous work on political participation by Teorell et al. (2007) and Bäck et al. (2011). This focus permits to work on political behaviors that correspond to youth political profile and to the specific experience of unemployed youth so they offer a good opportunity to test the impact of unemployment on political inclusion. Below I discuss this focus in relation to the specific literature on unemployed youth political inclusion.

Unemployed youth political inclusion

The literature on unemployed youth and politics comprises research on the political apathy (Banks and Ullah 1987; Breakwell 1986) and on the political marginalization (Bay and Blekesaune 2002; Bynner and Ashford 1994) of unemployed youth. Both these concepts anticipate a detrimental impact of unemployment on political inclusion. Political apathy is understood as a minimal political involvement measured in terms of political interest (Van Deth and Elff 2004) or as political abstention measured in terms of electoral behavior, while political marginalization is understood as dissatisfaction or disaffection from politics (Banks and Ullah 1987; Bay and Blekesaune 2002; Breakwell 1986; Clark 1985). Apart form the study of voting; unemployed youth political behaviors have not been studied comparatively since the existing research on unemployed youth political participation have worked on

unemployed youth only (Carle 2003; Hammer 2002).

The studies comparing unemployed and employed youth political attitudes find that unemployed youth are less trustful towards political institutions (Bay and Blekesaune 2002), they are also more cynical and slightly less interested in politics (Banks and Ullah 1987; Bynner and Ashford 1994). These studies support the idea that unemployed youth are disaffected by politics, although they do not conclude that unemployed youth are marginalized and their political inclusion is similar to that of other youth. In the discussion of the literature on youth political participation, I highlighted that youth feel that institutional politics are remote from their lives. In the case of unemployed youth it is interesting to see whether they construct a political understanding of their situation and if it translates in specific political attitudes. Hence I propose to test a specific hypothesis on youth dissatisfaction with politics that is connected to their unemployment. I analyze satisfaction with how the government manages issues related to the labor market: the Economy, unemployment and precarious employment policies. I hypothesize that the unemployed youth are less satisfied than the employed youth with the way the government handles labor market policies (hypothesis 1).

Regarding political behaviors, studies including a comparison of the electoral behavior of unemployed and employed youth find that unemployed are slightly less likely to vote (Banks and Ullah 1987; Bynner and Ashford 1994). However Carle (2003), working on unemployed youth only, finds that the most common form of participation among unemployed youth is voting. In addition Carle (2003) finds that the duration of unemployment reduces political participation. Hammer (2002) working with the same data shows that those who receive social assistance are in a more difficult financial situation and are also more likely to participate in what she calls 'irregular' political activities (cf. demonstrations, building occupations, petitions, and boycotts) and less in 'regular' activities (cf. election and group activities). Other researchers have analyzed unemployed youth dispositions towards violent or radical actions (Bay and Blekesaune 2002; Breakwell 1986; Clark 1985) and support for extreme right or left political parties (Banks and Ullah 1987). These studies stress that unemployed youth are more supportive of contentious politics, yet they do not work on behaviors, their analyses rest on attitudes. In his study on political trust Kaase (1999) relates discontent with institutional or conventional participation to either inaction because 'they may not know what to do about it' (16) or to a turn to unconventional engagements since in Kaase's view 'it is disappointment with the output of the 'normal' political process which motivates people to become unconventionally engaged' (16). Hence I compare unemployed

and employed youth political participation in the three different forms discussed above: contacting, party activities, and manifestation. I expect to find a reduced participation of unemployed youth in the forms that are less common in the political repertoire of youth and that require high resources and involvement, the institutional forms, contacting and party activities (hypothesis 2) and no effect on the participation of the unemployed youth in manifestation, the form of participation that includes political behaviors most common among youth and most directly linked to youth-specific concerns (hypothesis 3).

Finally I propose a last hypothesis explaining the link between political dissatisfaction and the lived experience of unemployment. Here I expect dissatisfaction with unemployment and youth policies to be connected not only to the financial deprivation resulting from unemployment, but more generally to the lived experience of unemployment and this includes also the social inclusion and the personal well-being of the unemployed. The last hypothesis states that the financial difficulties, the social isolation, and the reduced life satisfaction contribute to unemployed youth dissatisfaction with labor market policies (hypothesis 4). Below I introduce the concept of unemployment lived experience and discuss this hypothesis more in details.

Unemployment regimes and the lived experience of unemployment

I compare unemployed to employed youth living in four European cities, Cologne in Germany, Geneva in Switzerland, Lyon in France, and Turin in Italy. These four cities correspond to employment-centered welfare regimes, although Turin on unemployment specific policies is part of the sub-protective welfare regime. Gallie and Paugam (2000) use unemployment welfare regimes to compare the impact of unemployment on individuals' lives in a cross-country perspective. They analyze the effects of unemployment on social disqualification[2] in different national settings analyzed as ideal-types of welfare regimes. They construct these ideal-types based on the provision of unemployment benefits by the state. The measures are the coverage (who is eligible for unemployment benefits), the compensation (the cash transfers), as well as the existence and type of active employment measures proposed by the state. Based on these three elements they distinguish four unemployment welfare regimes: the sub-protective, the liberal-minimal, the employment-

[2] Social disqualification is defined as "a sharp drop in living standards, a weakening of social life, and marginalization with respect to those in work – effects which can become cumulative and lead to a situation of intense poverty and, at the extreme, of social rupture" (Gallie and Paugam 2000: 1).

centered, and the universalistic[3]. In addition to the unemployment welfare regimes, Gallie and Paugam advocate to take into account the roles of both the family and the market as institutions that contribute in shaping the lived experience of unemployment.

Following Gallie and Paugam's approach, who use the unemployment welfare regimes to compare twelve European countries, other researchers (Giugni 2010; Giugni, Berclaz, and Fuglister 2009) have proposed to adapt these ideal-types to study the unemployed individuals' engagement in protest activities. These authors study the role of Political Opportunity Structures (POS) for the emergence of collective political action by unemployed individuals. They build indicators operationalizing the coverage, the compensation, and the active employment measures. In addition, they propose to work on a second dimension that covers the labor market regulation, especially the existing regulation on employment contracts and dismissals. They argue that in order to understand the situation of unemployed persons researchers should take into account the overall regulation of the labor market and not only that of unemployment. For the purpose of this analysis I also use these two dimensions, although I operationalize the labor market dimension differently than proposed by Giugni et al. (2010). I compare unemployment regulations and unemployment rates to capture the situation of youth on the labor market.

I use the indicators collected within the YOUNEX research to compare the four cities on the first dimension. These indicators are collected at the local level when specific regulations exist at the regional or municipal levels and at the national level otherwise. They permit to situate comparatively the cities in terms of unemployment regimes. They are qualitative comparative measures and cover the dimensions identified by Gallie and Paugam (2000): the coverage, the provision of benefits, the degree of sanctioning, and the links to social aid[4].

[3] The sub-protective regime is characterized by little or no state intervention in favor of the unemployed persons and the liberal-minimal regime also offers little protection to the unemployed people, but it distinguishes itself from the former on the premise that in this case the absence of intervention is a political choice to avoid interventions in the free market and the potential creation of state dependency. Whereas the employment-centred regimes is an insurance based model that provides protection to those unemployed persons who have already contributed during their employment, the conditions in terms of duration and amount of contributions paid create a distinction between insiders who have access to unemployment benefits and outsiders who cannot receive unemployment benefits (generally youth, women, and less trained workers), nevertheless this regime offers protection to certain groups and also active employment measures. Finally, the universalistic model is the most generous in terms of provision of alternative source of living, as well as with regards to active measures.

[4] The seven indicators used to calculate the inclusiveness of the unemployment regimes all range from -1 to +1 and are attributed on the basis of analysis of public policies and statistics on unemployment when available at the local level otherwise at the country level. The specific indicators are: formal pre-

On the unemployment regulation, Cologne and Turin offer a limited assistance to unemployed individuals, while Geneva and Lyon are more inclusive in terms of both access and provision of resources and services. The French unemployment regime is the most inclusive among the four cities with a score of .57 (on a scale from -1 to +1) and the Swiss the second most inclusive with 0.29, Cologne is more exclusive with a negative score of -0.29, but it is not the least inclusive among the four cities studied here. Turin lags behind with a score of -0.43, which reflects the limited welfare provisions offered to unemployed youth in Italy.

On the second aspect, the unemployment rates, I situate the four cases within Europe, but this time working at the country level only. The OECD data from 2010 on youth unemployment rate in Europe distinguish two age categories, the 20 to 24 years old and the 25 to 34 years old, for the former the average unemployment rate is higher (19.1) than for the latter (11.2). Although the unemployment rate for the 'older' group is consistently lower, the four cities display steady trends in the unemployment rates of both groups of youth. Germany and Switzerland have both below average unemployment rates for the two age categories, in Germany the unemployment rate is 9.3 for the 20 to 24 years old and 7.9 for the 25 to 34 years old, while in Switzerland both rates are even lower, 7.9 and 5.2 respectively. In France and in Italy the situation differs; both countries have youth unemployment rates above the European average. In France the unemployment rate is 20.9 for the 20 to 24 years old and 10.5 for the 25 to 34 years old, the unemployment rate is much higher for the younger unemployed in this country. In Italy the tendency is similar with 24.7 for the 20 to 24 years old and 11.9 for the 25 to 34 years old.

My main interest with regards to these two dimensions lies in their relation to the lived experience of unemployment, including the financial difficulties, the social isolation (Hammer 2003; Paugam 2006), and the personal well-being (Clark and Oswald 1994; Ervasti and Venetoklis 2010; Goldsmith, Veum, and Jr 1996; Hammer 2000; Nordenmark 1999) of the unemployed youth. The state provision of resources help reducing the individuals' financial difficulties and the unemployment rate influences the evaluation of one's financial situation, since unemployed youth compare themselves to other youth. The provision of benefits allows maintaining social contacts and a socially active life, in addition the prevalence of

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requisites to obtain unemployment benefits, level of coverage, extension of coverage, requirement to receive/shift to social aid, counter-provisions and sanctions, percentage receiving unemployment benefits, percentage being sanctioned. Originally these scores have been created comparatively based on 7 cities among which Karlstad, Kielce, and Lisbon in addition to the four presented here.

unemployment among youth reduces the social isolation since friends share a similar situation. Finally, the unemployment benefits reduce the worries about one's financial situation and the high unemployment rate among youth reduces the stigma attached to the status of unemployed individual and the perception of unemployment as a personal failure, hence both affect the personal well-being.

The fourth hypothesis proposed in this paper states that the lived experience of unemployment has an impact on political dissatisfaction. Based on the unemployment regimes and unemployment rates I expect to find a more negative lived experience of unemployment in Cologne (hypothesis 4a). At the other extreme, I expect to find the least negative lived experience of unemployment in Lyon (hypothesis 4b) and intermediary situations in Geneva and Turin. In Geneva I expect to find a negative situation in terms of social inclusion, but less so in terms of financial difficulties (hypothesis 4c), while in Turin I expect to find financial difficulties (hypothesis 4d), but less detrimental impact of unemployment on social inclusion. In both Geneva and Turin I expect to find an intermediary situation in terms of personal well-being since it is affected by both the financial situation and the social inclusion.

Data and method

The statistical analyses are run on the YOUNEX database, a survey of young long-term unemployed and employed youth residing in Cologne (Germany), Geneva (Switzerland), Lyon (France), and Turin (Italy) in 2009 and 2010. Telephone interviews have been carried to measure the social and the political inclusion of youth depending on their employment situation. Respectively 1'525 long-term unemployed and 1'602 employed youth have answered the questionnaire that includes three dimensions apart from the employment related and the socio-demographic background questions: the social, the political, and the personal well-being dimensions. The respondents are aged 18 to 34 years old, and the long-term unemployed are currently not working and have been looking for a job for the last 12 months or more[5], whereas the employed youth have had an open-ended contract for at least one year[6].

[5] Distinctions can be made with regards to the job search and most recent definitions of unemployment demand to control for the actual job search, here I only work with individuals response to the question 'are you looking for a job', not trying to assess job search through supplementary questions. Moreover the long-term unemployed youth include both individuals who registered in the unemployment office and who did not. In the case of Geneva, this difference needs to be accounted

I present first the dependent variables: dissatisfaction with labor market policies and three forms of political participation[7]. Dissatisfaction with the labor market policies is measured on an additive scale, from 0 to 30, I used three items on dissatisfaction with the way the government manages the Economy, unemployment, and precarious employment to create this scale. Institutional political participation includes two forms of participation: contacting and party activities. Contacting is created using contacting a politician, a national or local government official, the Media, and a judicial body for non-personal reasons. While party activities include: working in a political party, donating money to a political group, and being a member of a political party. Manifestation includes signing a petition; wearing or displaying a badge; boycotting or buying products for political reasons; taking part in a demonstration, in an illegal or a violent action. The three forms of political participation are coded as 1 when the respondents have participated in any one or more of the political activities in on form of participation and 0 otherwise.

The independent variables measuring the lived experience of unemployment include measures of financial difficulties, social inclusion, and personal well-being. Financial difficulties are measured through a subjective question asking how difficult it is to cope with present income, coded as 1 when youngsters face difficulties in coping with present income and 0 otherwise. Social inclusion is measured through two variables, the first addressing contacts with friends, frequent contacts with friends is coded as 1 and frequent means weekly or daily contacts with them, and 0 includes those who said they never see their friends or only once or twice a month. Finally, personal well-being is measured through life satisfaction and hopes of finding a job. Life satisfaction is measured with a scale from 0 to 10 asking how happy they are taking all things together and hopes of finding a job is measured with a question on how they evaluate their chances of finding a job within the year, those who are positive about their chances are coded as 1 and those who are not as 0.

The second set of independent variables include self-positioning on a left-right scale, political interest, political cynicism, and institutional trust. Political interest is a dichotomic subjective

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for in the OLS regression model through a proxy 'receiving unemployment benefits' since the unemployed youth who respondent to the survey pertain to two distinct groups. For more details about this the author can be contacted.

[6] For the control group to have the full benefits of labor market inclusion, we set a criteria on the duration of their current employment: the group of employed youth only includes people who have been on the labor market for more than a year and who benefit from a stable employment contract.

[7] Descriptive statistics for the variables that are not discussed in the text can be found in table I in the annex.

measure asking the respondent whether he or she is interested in politics. Political cynicism is measured through a question asking whether the respondent agrees with the idea that parties are only interested in our votes, not in our opinions. Political interest and political cynicism are coded as 1 when the respondent answered positively and 0 otherwise. For the left-right positioning, I used a question asking the respondents to position themselves on a left-right scale, ranging from 0 to 10, to construct a categorical variable with three positions: left, right, and center. Left-oriented are those respondent who position themselves from 0 to 4, right-oriented those who position themselves from 6 to 10, and the center are those who answered 5 or were not able to place themselves on the scale. I combine those who placed themselves at the center of the scale and those who say they don't know and use this group as reference category for they represent those who have the weakest left-right understanding of politics. Last but not least, institutional trust is measured on a scale from 0=not trustful at all to 60=very trustful combining six items on trust in political institutions (the parliament and the government at the local, the regional, and the national levels).

The models include variables controlling for sociodemographic characteristics such as sex, age, nationality, and education level (three levels: primary/ secondary/ tertiary). In table 1 I present the sociodemographic composition of the two groups in each city. In both Cologne and Geneva the unemployed youth are characterized by being more often than employed youth foreigners and having stopped their education after the primary level. Whereas, in both Lyon and Cologne, the unemployed youth have prevailingly achieved a secondary level of education and there are fewer women among them. Regarding age, the unemployed youth are younger in Cologne and in Turin, while they are older in Lyon and the same age as employed youth in Geneva. These sociodemographic variables are important predictors of political attitudes and behaviors and because unemployed and employed youth differ with these regards, I include these variables in the regressions when testing for differences in terms of political inclusion.

[table 1]

Dissatisfaction with labor market policies

In table 2 I present an OLS regression comparing the unemployed and employed youth dissatisfaction with labor market policies while controlling for sociodemographics characteristics of the respondents. Having assessed the differences in terms of education

and other important sociodemographic characteristics that exist between both groups, the use of regression to analyze dissatisfaction with labor market policies permits to avoid differences due to selection bias.

[table 2]

The coefficients in table 2 show that unemployed youth are significantly more dissatisfied with the labor market policies in three of the four cities I study, namely Cologne, Geneva, and Lyon. Only in Turin, the unemployed and employed youth share similar levels of dissatisfaction with the labor market policies. This might be due to the high unemployment rate among youth in this city, which produces dissatisfaction with the public management of these issues across both groups of youngsters. However this is not confirmed by a similar finding in Lyon, the other city with a high unemployment rate among youth. Looking at the model specification for each city, table 2 shows that in Cologne, the model including only the unemployment status and the sociodemographic variables already accounts for 12.8 percent of the variance. This contribution is consistently higher than in the other three cities where the explained variance lies between 6 and 1.5 percent.

I find support for the first hypothesis although I cannot confirm it since in three of the four cities I analyze the unemployed youth are more dissatisfied with the labor market policies, but not in Turin. I return to the analysis of dissatisfaction with the labor market policies with a more complete model after presenting the results of the logistic regressions on the three forms of political participation.

Political Participation

I now turn to political participation and compare unemployed and employed youth political participation in contacting, party activities, and manifestation in the four cities. I run logistic regressions since my dependent variables are dichotomic and, again, I control for the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents.

[table 3]

In table 3 I find that the unemployed youth likelihood of participating in contacting is not significantly different from that of employed youth in three of the four cities: Cologne, Geneva, and Lyon. Here Turin stands out again. In the Italian city the unemployed youth

have a higher likelihood of participating in contacting. I run the same analysis for party activities and here I find again that in Turin the unemployed youth are significantly more likely to participate in party activities. However I also find that in Lyon the unemployed youth are significantly less likely to do so. In the other two cities, Cologne and Geneva, the unemployed youth do not differ from the employed youth in their likelihood of participating in contacting. Finally, I analyze participation in manifestations, the form of participation favored by youth, and find that the unemployed and employed youth do not differ in any of the four cities.

On the second hypothesis, I do not find that the unemployed youth are participating less in institutional forms – overall they do not participate less in contacting and in party activities. Only in Lyon the unemployed youth have a lower likelihood of participating in party activities. Quite on the contrary, in Turin, the unemployed youth are significantly more likely to participate in both contacting and party activities. On the form of participation that is most common among youth, I find that the unemployed youth are not significantly less likely to participate in manifestation. Overall unemployment appears to have little impact on political behaviors. Only in Turin and in Lyon the unemployed youth likelihood of participation in institutional forms is significantly different from that of employed youth. In the Italian city the odds of participation of the unemployed youth are higher than those of the employed youth, while in Lyon I find the opposite, but for party activities only. So the second hypothesis can be rejected in three cities at least and the third hypothesis is confirmed. These findings lead to think that the lived experience of unemployment, even when lasting for a year or more, affects political attitudes, yet it does not contribute to political behaviors. In the long run, these political attitudes may have an impact on political behaviors, but this would require panel data to be analyzed. For the remainder of this paper, I focus on explaining the specific political dissatisfaction of unemployed youth using predictors tackling the lived experience of unemployment.

The lived experience of unemployment

In the first step of my analysis I showed that unemployment contributes to dissatisfaction with labor market policies. Hence it is important to analyze what in the lived experience of unemployment contributes to this dissatisfaction to help us understand better the impact of unemployment on political inclusion. The last hypothesis addresses this issue. In order to test it, I use measures of the lived experience of unemployment: the financial difficulties, the social isolation, and the personal well-being. I start with a descriptive analysis of these

measures, comparing the unemployed and employed youth in the four cities.

[table 4]

First on financial difficulties, I use a subjective question to measure difficulties in coping with the present income. In table 4 I find that, although the degrees of financial difficulties vary across the four cities, the unemployed youth are consistently more numerous to say it is difficult to cope with their present income. The financial difficulties faced by unemployed youth are highest in Cologne where the differential between unemployed (65.9) and employed youth (6.9) is the biggest and where I find the highest percentage of unemployed who say they have difficulties to cope with their present income. In Geneva and Lyon, with comparable percentages of employed youth who say they have difficulties to cope with present income (respectively 8.4 and 8.7), smaller percentages of the unemployed youth have difficulties in doing so, respectively 38.9 percent in Geneva and 24.7 percent in Lyon. In Turin the situation is somehow different since the employed youth are more numerous to say they have difficulties in coping with present income (18.0), while the unemployed youth fall in between Geneva and Lyon with 29.7 percent. Although Cologne is not the less financially supportive unemployment regimes, a majority of unemployed youth face financial difficulties. Even more than in Turin, where the state provides no financial support to unemployed youth (Ferrera 1996). This finding can be explaining by the role of family support, which complements the welfare state in Italy (Bimbi 1999; Saraceno 1994).

Regarding social inclusion, I analyze first the percentages of youth who say they had frequent contacts, weekly or daily, with friends over the past month. Here the differences between unemployed and employed youth are statistically significant in the four cities. However the social inclusion of unemployed youth through contacts with friends differ across the four cities. In Cologne and Geneva smaller percentages of unemployed youth mention they have frequent contacts with friends (in Cologne 42.0 and in Geneva 40.2 percent) than of employed youth (respectively 78.6 and 70.7 percent), while in Lyon and Turin it is the opposite, higher percentages of the unemployed youth see their friends frequently. In Lyon the unemployed youth are those with the highest percentage who have frequent contacts with friends, with 85.0 percent, and in Turin a high percentage of the unemployed youth also see their friends frequently, 76.2 percent. Lyon and Turin are two cities with a high unemployment rate among youth. This could explain the higher percentages of unemployed youth who have frequent contacts with their friends; they can meet with other youth who are unemployed, whereas in Cologne or Geneva unemployment rates are much lower and so are

the numbers of unemployed youth.

On the second measure of social inclusion, participation in social activities, the patterns I find in Cologne and Geneva correspond to those for contacts with friends. Significantly smaller percentages of unemployed youth take part in social activities, in Cologne 40.2 percent of the unemployed youth participate in social activities as much as other youth, while 70.7 percent of the employed youth do so in the same city. In Geneva the trends are similar, although the differential between unemployed and employed youth is smaller than in Cologne, respectively 61.9 and 78.1 percent. Not surprisingly, in the two other cities where a higher percentage of unemployed youth have frequent contacts with friends, unemployed youth do not differ from employed youth in terms of social activities. The trends of social inclusion reveal again that the unemployed youth living in Cologne, on the whole, have a more negative lived experience of unemployment.

The last two measures of the lived experience of unemployment tackle the personal well-being of unemployed youth. I measure the life satisfaction of unemployed youth and their perceived chances of finding a job. In table 4, we see that the unemployed youth are significantly less satisfied with their life on the whole than the employed youth in the four cities. However in this case it is not in Cologne that I find the biggest differential between both groups, in Lyon the unemployed youth display the lowest mean score. The unemployed youth in the French city have a mean score of 3.51 on a scale from 0 to 10 while the employed youth in the same city have a mean score of 7.51 on the same scale. The second lowest mean score is that of the unemployed youth in Cologne with 5.95 compared to 7.78 for the employed youth living in the same city. In Geneva and Turin the differentials are smaller, but remain statistically significant. Geneva appears as the city where youth on the whole are the most satisfied with their lives, with the highest score for both groups 6.93 for the unemployed youth and 8.10 for the employed youth. In Turin the mean score for the unemployed youth is 6.77 and 7.46 for the employed youth.

The second measure addresses the unemployed youth expectations of finding a job in the near future; hence the question is asked only to the unemployed youth and not to the control group. This measure relates their lived experience of unemployment to an assessment of the labor market, which is directly connected to the labor market policies. Geneva is not only the city where unemployed youth are most satisfied with their lives, it is also the city in which I find the highest percentage of the unemployed youth who say they hope to find a job within the year, 66.1 percent respond so. In Cologne and Turin just over one half of the unemployed

youth expect to find a job within the year, respectively 53.7 and 53.1 percent, while in Lyon the unemployed youth appear as the less optimistic about their chances of finding a job within the year with 35.9 percent who say so.

The unemployed youth in Cologne do have the most negative lived experience of unemployment in terms of financial difficulties and social isolation, but not in terms of personal well-being. Surprisingly, on this last dimension, the most negative experience is found in Lyon, the city I expected to display the less negative lived experience of unemployment. This expectation, however, is confirmed with regards to financial difficulties and social isolation. The personal well-being appears as less connected to the other two dimensions. Regarding the two intermediary cases, in Geneva unemployed youth are indeed more isolated socially, but they also face more financial difficulties than in Turin. This points to the limit of not taking into account the contribution of the family when assessing the lived experience of unemployment through an unemployment regime analysis.

Explaining the political dissatisfaction of unemployed youth

The last step of the analysis tests the hypothesis that the lived experience of unemployment accounts for the unemployed youth dissatisfaction with the labor market policies. I run four OLS regressions, one for each city, to explain unemployed youth dissatisfaction with the labor market policies. I analyze the four cities separately since the lived experience of unemployment varies across cities, so its impact on political dissatisfaction might also vary. Each model includes the predictors of unemployment lived experience that I discussed above, as well as predictors of political attitudes and sociodemographic controls.

[table 5]

Table 5 presents the results of these OLS regressions. I start with the lived experience of unemployment and discuss its contribution to unemployed youth dissatisfaction with labor market policies in each of the four cities. First the financial difficulties contribute to the dissatisfaction of unemployed youth with labor market policies in Lyon and Turin, but not in Cologne or Geneva. Although the unemployed youth in Cologne and Geneva were more numerous to mention difficulties in coping with their present income than in the other two cities, this does not translate in dissatisfaction with labor market policies as it does in Lyon and Turin.

Regarding the social inclusion, in Lyon the frequent contacts with friends increase the dissatisfaction with labor market policies. I expected the social inclusion to reduce the political dissatisfaction of unemployed youth due to a less negative lived experience of unemployment. Yet what is taking place is rather that the social contacts politicize the unemployed youth and increase their dissatisfaction with the labor market policies. Moreover the high prevalence of unemployment among youth in Lyon might contribute to this. Sharing one's experience with other individuals who experience or experienced similar situations offers opportunities to build a political understanding of their situation and to discard the idea that unemployment is a personal failure. However the same phenomenon is not taking place in Turin, the other city with a high unemployment rate among youth. More generally Turin differs from the three other cities in terms of dissatisfaction with the labor market policies, the unemployed and employed youth are as dissatisfied, so it may be related more to the general situation of youth on the labor market rather than to the specific lived experience of unemployment.

In the two cities with low unemployment rate among youth the single predictor of unemployment lived experience, which contributes to explaining dissatisfaction with labor market policies is the hopes of finding a job. In Cologne and in Geneva hoping of finding a job within the year significantly reduces dissatisfaction with the labor market policies. Hence in Cologne and in Geneva it is not the negative lived experience of unemployment, but rather the expectations that youth place in their chances of reentering the labor market that affects their satisfaction with labor market policies. Yet this finding is not confirmed in Turin, where the other predictors of unemployment lived experience are not significant either. In Lyon this predictor could not be included since too many responses were missing on this variable.

Next I turn to the political attitudes, these predictors are used to account for the political socialization of unemployed youth. The single most important predictor, which is consistent across the four cities, is institutional trust. Unsurprisingly trusting political institutions reduces dissatisfaction with the labor market policies. However, the other important political predictor, political interest significantly increases dissatisfaction with labor market policies only in Geneva and in Turin. The role of political interest in these two cities is not surprising since political interest contributes to the political understanding of the unemployment situation, what is more puzzling is its absence of contribution in Cologne and Lyon[8]. In Turin, political

[8] Here the fact that it is not significant in Cologne and in Lyon might be related to those respondents who, lacking political knowledge, did not respond to the institutional trust variable and so are not accounted in these models.

cynicism and a left self positioning on a left-right scale both increase dissatisfaction with labor market policies, while the placement to the right of the scale reduces dissatisfaction with labor market policies. In Lyon, the left self-placement also increases dissatisfaction with labor market policies, but not the positioning on the right. In Turin, more than in the other three cities, I find that the political attitudes significantly contribute in explaining the model for dissatisfaction with labor market policies. My understanding is that in Turin where unemployment is high among youth and where the state plays little or no role in supporting the unemployed youth, the political socialization is more important in understanding the political dissatisfaction of unemployed youth than the lived experience of unemployment. In the other three cities the political attitudes do not appear as consistently important, apart from institutional trust.

Finally, with regards to the sociodemographic control variables, I find that the only significant predictors are primary education in Cologne, which increases dissatisfaction with labor market policies, and national citizenship, which increase also dissatisfaction, in Geneva and in Lyon.

Conclusion

The findings of this paper contribute to understand the political inclusion of unemployed youth, the existing literature focused mainly on political attitudes and few studies have been conducted on political behaviors. Here I show that unemployment influences political attitudes, but does not affect as much political participation. However results on the lived experience of unemployment leave many questions open with regards to how unemployment shapes political attitudes. The mechanisms remain unclear since I find mixed results from the measures I proposed of the lived experience of unemployment. The financial difficulties, social isolation, and personal well-being predictors contribute little to the understanding of dissatisfaction with labor market policies. Besides further research is needed to understand the effects of these changes in political attitudes for future political participation.

The analyses presented in this paper show that the unemployed youth are significantly less satisfied with the way the government handles labor market policies in three of the four cities: Cologne, Geneva, and Lyon. Yet the unemployed youth generally do not differ from the employed youth in terms of political participation. Especially in the one form of participation that is most common among youth, participation in manifestation. Moreover I found only

small differences between the unemployed and the employed youth in the institutional forms of participation, the one's from which youth tend to withdraw. Where differences appeared, in Turin in particular, the unemployed youth were more active than the employed youth. Only in Lyon, are the unemployed youth significantly less active in contacting.

Regarding the lived experience of unemployment, the unemployed youth are confronted with a more negative situation in terms of financial difficulties and social isolation in Cologne the city with both a low unemployment rate and an exclusive unemployment regime. However, in Lyon with both high unemployment rate among youth and an inclusive unemployment regime, the unemployed youth are more affected in their personal well-being. In particular they are less satisfied with their life on the whole, the prevalence of unemployment among youth does not contribute in reducing the dissatisfaction and the negative experience related to unemployment. In addition, the high unemployment rate affects the possibilities of reentering the labor market and in turn the life satisfaction. Cologne and Geneva reveal similar profiles in terms of the lived experience of unemployment among youth and the same is true for Lyon and Turin. Hence the unemployment rate appears as more relevant than the unemployment regimes for understanding the lived experience of unemployment. However, the distinctions between unemployment regimes should be refined, including in particular indicators measuring the contribution of the family and the financial and housing independence of youth. This would enable to capture better specificities of the Southern and Northern European countries.

TABLE 1: the sociodemographic profiles of unemployed and employed youth by city

	Cologne		Geneva		Lyon		Turin	
	U	E	U	E	U	E	U	E
Sex								
Female	**45.9**	**57.0**	49.3	48.1	**51.4**	**60.6**	**52.3**	**59.1**
Nationality								
National citizens	**69.6**	**82.4**	**49.8**	**59.4**	97.0	97.7	95.2	96.6
Education level								
Primary education	**44.2**	**4.7**	**24.4**	11	**23.7**	**32.3**	-	-
Secondary education	**50.9**	**58.6**	54.5	**54.9**	**71.1**	**62.1**	**86.4**	**79.9**
Tertiary education	**4.9**	**36.7**	21.1	**34.1**	**5.2**	5.6	**13.6**	**20.1**
Age								
Mean age	**29.9**	**30.4**	28.4	28.8	**26.4**	**25.8**	**23.3**	**24.3**

Note
U=Unemployed / E=Employed
Bold numbers: adjusted residuals < -1.97 / grey cells: adjusted residuals > 1.97
For life satisfaction: bold when t-test shows statistical difference between groups

TABLE 2: OLS Regression on dissatisfaction with labor market policies

	Cologne		Geneva		Lyon		Turin	
Unemployed	2.744***	(0.568)	1.635***	(0.453)	1.277***	(0.382)	0.116	(0.417)
F statistic	21.70	0.000	5.891	0.000	3.480	0.002	2.639	0.022
Observations	593		564		637		883	
r2	0.182		0.0597		0.0321		0.0148	

Note
Standard errors in parentheses
The model includes sociodemographic controls (sex, nationality, age, education)
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

TABLE 3: Logistic regression on forms of political participation (odds ratios)

	Cologne		Geneva		Lyon		Turin	
Contacting								
Unemployed	1.390	(0.332)	1.437	(0.342)	0.843	(0.158)	2.789***	(0.752)
Party activities								
Unemployed	1.040	(0.245)	1.369	(0.295)	0.633*	(0.130)	2.532*	(0.931)
Manifestation								
Unemployed	1.286	(0.245)	1.152	(0.211)	1.152	(0.169)	1.178	(0.167)
Observations	722		607		779		916	

Note
Exponentiated coefficients; Standard errors in parentheses
The models include sociodemographic controls (sex, nationality, age, education)
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

TABLE 4: the lived experience of unemployment – unemployed youth financial difficulties, social inclusion, and personal well-being by city

	Cologne		Geneva		Lyon		Turin	
	U	E	U	E	U	E	U	E
Financial difficulties								
Difficult to cope with present income	**65.9**	**6.9**	**38.9**	**8.4**	**24.7**	**8.7**	**29.7**	**18.0**
Social inclusion								
Frequent contacts with friends	**42.0**	**78.6**	**75.0**	**83.0**	**85.0**	**70.9**	**76.2**	**69.4**
Taking part in social activities	**40.2**	**70.7**	**61.9**	**78.1**	72.8	77.4	70.6	70.2
Personal well-being								
Life satisfaction	**5.95**	**7.78**	**6.93**	**8.10**	**3.51**	**7.51**	**6.77**	**7.46**
Hopes of finding a job within a year	53.7	**-**	**66.1**	**-**	**35.9**	**-**	53.1	**-**

Note
U=Unemployed / E=Employed
Bold numbers: adjusted residuals < -1.97 / grey cells: adjusted residuals > 1.97
For life satisfaction: bold when t-test shows statistical difference between groups

TABLE 5: OLS Regression on dissatisfaction with labor market policies

	Cologne		Geneva		Lyon		Turin	
Unemployment lived experience								
Financial difficulties	1.242	(0.903)	0.352	(0.709)	2.244**	(0.689)	1.967**	(0.610)
Contacts with friends	0.719	(0.789)	-0.613	(0.742)	1.769**	(0.674)	-0.059	(0.658)
Social activities	0.667	(0.875)	-0.013	(0.667)	-0.481	(0.624)	0.348	(0.534)
Life satisfaction	-2.527	(1.939)	-1.894	(1.804)	0.667	(1.253)	-2.929+	(1.508)
Hopes of finding a job	-2.566**	(0.915)	-1.628*	(0.692)	-		0.513	(0.526)
Political attitudes								
Left-right scale (ref. center)								
·Left self-placement	0.772	(0.867)	-0.052	(0.681)	1.212*	(0.586)	2.025**	(0.647)
·Right self-placement	-1.514	(1.287)	-0.277	(0.857)	-0.124	(0.528)	-1.783*	(0.715)
Political interest	0.0684	(0.941)	1.364*	(0.631)	0.793	(0.630)	1.055*	(0.499)
Political cynicism	-0.375	(0.895)	0.042	(0.595)	0.966	(0.611)	2.006**	(0.632)
Institutional trust	-12.41***	(2.098)	-17.86***	(1.604)	-14.61***	(2.091)	-15.52***	(1.605)
Sociodemographic								
Female	-0.126	(0.811)	1.122+	(0.635)	-0.860+	(0.473)	0.683	(0.496)
National citizen	-1.110	(0.849)	2.272***	(0.646)	3.278*	(1.532)	-5.103	(5.250)
Age	1.925	(1.865)	-0.120	(1.267)	1.901+	(1.062)	1.278	(1.684)
Education level (ref. secondary)								
·Primary education	2.290*	(0.925)	-0.210	(0.839)	0.210	(0.615)	-	
·Tertiary education	-		-0.156	(0.862)	-		0.825	(0.710)
Unemployment benefits	-		-0.688	(0.652)	-		-	
Constant	23.26***	(2.537)	25.49***	(1.730)	17.05***	(2.635)	24.83***	(5.315)
F statistic	11.36	0.000	13.08	0.000	13.26	0.000	18.82	0.000
Observations	200		238		239		369	
r2	0.405		0.489		0.443		0.377	

Note
Standard errors in parentheses
+ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Annex II: Descriptive statistics on dependent and independent variables by city and by employment status

		Cologne		Geneva		Lyon		Turin	
		Mean	C.I.	Mean	C.I.	Mean	C.I.	Mean	C.I.
Dependent variables									
Dissatisfaction with labor market policies	Unemployed	19.6	(18.7-20.4)	14.4	(13.7-15.1)	16.0	(15.4-16.5)	17.4	(16.8-17.9)
(0=satisfied/ 30=dissatisfied)	Employed	15.1	(14.6-15.7)	12.9	(12.4-13.4)	14.8	(14.3-15-3)	17.3	(16.7-17.8)
Contacting	Unemployed	.17	(.13-.21)	.18	(.13-.22)	.17	(.13-.21)	.11	(.08-.14)
(0=no participation/ 1=participation)	Employed	.20	(.16-.23)	.14	(.10-.18)	.21	(.16-.25)	.05	(.03-.07)
Party activities	Unemployed	.16	(.12-.20)	.21	(.16-.25)	.12	(.09-.16)	.05	(.03-.07)
(0=no participation/ 1=participation)	Employed	.21	(.17-.25)	.18	(.14-.22)	.19	(.15-.22)	.03	(.01-.04)
Manifestation	Unemployed	.36	(.31-.42)	.60	(.54-.65)	.56	(.51-.61)	.38	(.33-.42)
(0=no participation/ 1=participation)	Employed	.43	(.38-.48)	.62	(.57-.68)	.52	(.48-.58)	.36	(.32-.40)
Independent variables									
Left self placement	Unemployed	.36	(.30-.41)	.33	(.28-.39)	.36	(.31-.41)	.46	(.41-.50)
(0=not left/ 1=left)	Employed	.44	(.39-.49)	.36	(.31-.42)	.33	(.25-.34)	.33	(.29-.37)
Right self placement	Unemployed	.12	(.08-.15)	.20	(.16-.25)	.27	(.23-.32)	.28	(.25-.33)
(0=not right/ 1=right)	Employed	.19	(.16-.24)	.34	(.29-.39)	.29	(.25-.34)	.30	(.26-.34)
Center and don't know	Unemployed	.35	(.30-.40)	.32	(.26-.37)	.10	(.07-.13)	.15	(.12-.18)
(0=right or left/ 1=center or don't know)	Employed	.32	(.27-.36)	.22	(.18-.27)	.11	(.08-.14)	.24	(.10-.28)
Political interest	Unemployed	.38	(.33-.43)	.42	(.36-.48)	.37	(.32-.42)	.42	(.37-.46)
(0=no interest/ 1=interested)	Employed	.54	(.49-.58)	.41	(.36-.47)	.33	(.28-.37)	.25	(.21-.29)
Political cynicism	Unemployed	.79	(.75-.84)	.62	(.56-.67)	.72	(.68-.77)	.81	(.78-.85)
(=not cynical/ 1=cynical)	Employed	.61	(.56-.66)	.54	(.49-.60)	.74	(.69-.78)	.84	(.81-.87)
Institutional trust	Unemployed	29.5	(31.2-29.6)	33.1	(31.6-34.7)	34.0	(32.9-35.1)	31.3	(30.3-32.2)
(0=trustless/ 60=trustful)	Employed	33.0	(32.0-34.1)	35.6	(34.3-36.8)	35.0	(33.9-36.1)	30.7	(29.7-31.7)

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