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Abstract

This document outlines a user vision statement for the development of the HECAT platform. The HECAT project's aim is to develop a new type of algorithmic approach that integrates the qualitative and experiential aspects of unemployment; it is in other words **to work with the unemployed rather than on them**. It proposes a state of knowledge on the experiences of the unemployed. Based on an analysis of social sciences literature, it highlights the salient features of these experiences and focuses on three major dimensions: (1) the ways of reacting to unemployment and the meanings that individuals attribute to job deprivation, i.e. "the lived experiences of the unemployed"; (2) public policies and institutional actions that target the unemployed and influence their experiences, i.e. "the government of the experiences of the unemployed"; (3) the situations of the unemployed in the labour market and with regard to employment that influence the attributed and experienced meanings of unemployment, i.e. "the inequalities within unemployment".

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Contents

Introduction

Since the formulation of the Hecat collective project, the world is currently going through a serious health crisis that cannot be ignored in our reflections and research practices. Working on unemployment in Europe in order to identify the complexity of this phenomenon and to develop a concrete tool to help stem it seems all the more relevant, even urgent, in view of what is also becoming a social and economic crisis. The Covid-19 epidemic prompted massive and rapid national and international measures, but also very uneven ones: while some countries, such as China, then Italy and France, quickly favoured total containment of the populations, others, such as South Korea and Sweden, preferred to gradually isolate people detected as virus carriers. However, in many cases, professional lives are greatly slowed down. Job losses or threats of layoffs are numerous. The first measures taken in this respect are very mixed: while the United States offers no protection to workers, the European Commission has set up the Sure plan, "Support to mitigate unemployment risks in emergency", which is partly expressed, at national level, by placing workers who are prevented from carrying out their duties on partial unemployment. Through this public policy (massive short-time working) Europe is preserving jobs despite the sharp fall in economic activity, while unemployment is exploding in the United States (measured at 3.5% at the beginning of 2020, the unemployment rate is close to 20% at the end of April 2020). But in the next period unemployment may increase in many European countries.

The crisis has made the HECAT even more urgent or pressing, and this report proposes to come back to the institutional components of unemployment in Europe and its collective and personal experiences. It draws up a state of the art on unemployment, and more specifically the experiences of the unemployed, and therefore constitutes a first step in the process of designing the unemployed experience-based tool to be developed in the framework of the Hecat project. From a political point of view, unemployment has been considered a scourge in Europe since the 1970s. At that time, there were still small differences between European countries (whose unemployment rates averaged between 3% and 4%): Europe was then situated between the United States, with its high unemployment rates, and Japan, with its much lower rates. While France, Germany and Italy had low rates at that time, these countries then distinguished themselves by high rates around 2010, while others, such as Sweden and Finland, quickly lowered their rates after a brief increase. As regards the countries of the former Soviet bloc and former Yugoslavia, which had low unemployment rates, some, such as Slovenia, have recently seen their rates increase: this justifies taking Slovenia as a central case study in the Hecat project.

Social scientists have argued that unemployment is an administrative, and therefore socially constructed and imperfect category: its boundaries should be considered carefully (Demazière, 2018). Unemployment is not just an economic issue, reducible to the difference between job supply and demand, it is also an institutional phenomenon. And, as some economists have pointed out: "in a pure market, unemployment does not exist" (Eymard-Duvernay, 2001: 292). Unemployment is defined by institutional boundaries that differentiate it from other social statuses: inactivity on one hand, professional activity or employment on

the other hand. And after the second world war period in Europe, unemployment has been institutionalized, with notable differences among countries. A new definition based on job search emerged (consolidated as of the 1960s, when the International Labour Office made the will to work an essential criterion), that enlarged the scope of unemployment, since a simple job application was enough to be officially recognised as unemployed. However, the positive side of the status of unemployment was only conditional and partial: conditional because the application had to be renewed on a regular basis and because the job search was monitored, which might have led to loss of the status; partial, since the acknowledgement of a job application did not automatically make a person eligible for benefits. During the period known as the Economic Miracle, the unemployed have therefore been placed under the supervision of the welfare state and their PES: they are supported and receipt unemployment benefits (particularly adult males who lost their jobs and are considered as breadwinner) and they are controlled and encouraged to find a job. This tension increased when unemployment level rose, with different scales depending on the countries, and became more contradictory. More and more unemployment has been the support of government technologies, constantly adjusted and enriched, aiming at a double goal: to repair the economic damage and to discipline the unemployed.

So, for a long time, the unemployed person was the one who was deprived of work; today, he or she has also become the one who has to actively look for a job (Gallie, Marsh and Vogler, 1994). Unemployment is thus inseparable from social norms, such as the activation norm, which is at the heart of contemporary public policies. Unemployed people's experiences of unemployment are influenced and framed by these norms and institutions. These also delineate the contours of the social status of the unemployed and distribute the jobless within or outside this status. However, a main element in the contemporary period is the blurring of unemployment boundaries. So, deprivation of work is catch with several indicators such as "underemployed part-time workers" or "persons seeking work but not immediately available" (see for example EU-LFS) or with reference to the trend that activation programmes these days often also target those who have previously been considered inactive (Clasen and Clegg, 2001).

In most European countries, PES are at the centre of the implementation of unemployment as a technology of government. Counsellors use digital tools to profile the unemployed so as to put them back to work, and the digitalisation of unemployment tackle has accelerated these last years, under the political dynamic of the European Commission[1]. The Hecat project is particularly designed to question the effects and the limits of this digitalisation. To underline and counter these limits, the research team pays a particular attention to what we call the "lived experiences" of unemployment: in other words, we wish to work with and not on the unemployed and we argue that this approach opens new ways of facing and fighting to unemployment.

[1] See the following documents: https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/eu-in-brief_en; https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/ministerial-declaration-egovernment-tallinn-declaration; https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en.

In order to understand and analyse the characteristics and specificities of the experiences of the unemployed people, it seems important to us to consider three dimensions, which will be analysed successively: the ways of reacting to unemployment and the meanings that individuals attribute to job deprivation, i.e. "the lived experiences of the unemployed" (I); public policies and institutional actions that target the unemployed and influence their experiences, i.e. "the government of the experiences of the unemployed" (II); the situations of the unemployed in the labour market and with regard to employment that influence the attributed and experienced meanings of unemployment, i.e. "the inequalities within unemployment" (III).

I. The lived experiences of unemployment

The term "lived experience" refers here to the ways in which people facing job deprivation experience this situation. The experience of unemployment has several components: the concrete living conditions of the unemployed, their subjective reactions and interpretations of this situation, their activities and initiatives to cope with it, their future expectations and exit prospects. In European societies, where having a job and earning a living by working is the norm, unemployment is a devalued and stigmatizing condition. It is therefore crucial to understand the experiences of the unemployed, as job deprivation places them on the margins of this norm. Social sciences have studied these experiences extensively.

The experiences of the unemployed are dimensions that are poorly considered in policies to combat unemployment and support measures. Nevertheless, professional advisors and all those who work in direct contact with the unemployed have practice-based knowledge of them. Therefore, analysing these experiences and understanding how unemployment is experienced by those who experience it is a major challenge for the Hecat project. This should make it possible to identify elements of knowledge that cannot be ignored in the design of a technical system that is relevant to the unemployed, its first beneficiaries. Based on an analysis of the international literature, four main results have emerged: two central features have been highlighted that colonise the experience of unemployment, namely a social process of loss (I.1) and, in tension with the first, the centrality of job-seeking obligations (I.2); however, the wide variations in this experience depending on the characteristics of the unemployed (I.3), or the activities in which they are involved (I.4) should not be underestimated.

I.1. The experience of unemployment as a global process of loss

The first research focusing on the experiences of the unemployed were carried out during the Great Depression between the wars in Europe (for example, among the most prominent: Bakke, 1933; Jahoda, Lazarsfeld and Zeisel, 1933). And we have to consider these historical research as they highlight a salient feature of job deprivation: social loss. The famous ethnography done by Paul Lazarsfeld and his team in the small Austrian town of Marienthal, which was hit by massive unemployment, showed the strength of the negative consequences of job loss: loss of self-confidence, shrinking social networks, weakened collective memberships, disruption of daily schedules, etc. Described as a "weary" or "resigned" community, the unemployed were seen as apathetic.

Such research was interrupted during the post-war period of full employment and development of the Welfare State. But they have been around afresh with the return of mass unemployment in the 1970s and 1980s. Again, empirical studies provide an overall picture, where unemployment is portrayed as a set of deprivations that undermine (or even paralyze) the jobless. The negative effects of job deprivation are, in most cases, placed at the heart of the analysis of unemployment experiences. Our sociological and anthropological knowledge of the effects of unemployment shows the breakdown of self-esteem (Tiffany, Cowan and Tiffany, 1970); the destabilization of family life (Fagin and Little, 1984); damaged social

relations (Jahoda, 1982); economic pauperization (Gallie, Paugam and Jacobs, 2003); deregulated life styles (Burman and Rinehart, 1990); psychological or emotional imbalance (Hayes and Nutman, 1981); health hazards (Wilson and Walker, 1983); higher mortality rates (Mckee-Ryan and al., 2005) and eroded social position (Procoli, 2004).

The list of empirical research of unemployment experiences is immeasurable. Our objective is not to provide an exhaustive list of this research, but rather to draw the main conclusions. What is most remarkable is the convergence of their results: most of these research feed into and consolidate what has been called "a deprivation theory of unemployment" (Boland and Griffin, 2015). What are the most salient empirical dimensions of this perspective, initiated in the 1930s? An analysis of the factors weighing on the subjective well-being of the unemployed gives a first indication, based on the exploitation of European Social Survey (ESS) data for 21 countries (Ervasti and Venetoklis, 2010). First, it shows that the unemployed are distinguished from the employed by a degraded well-being: anxiety, uncertainty, discouragement and pessimism are more frequent among the former. This survey then focuses on the economic and financial consequences. It demonstrates that the material living conditions of the unemployed are deteriorating rapidly, albeit with differences between countries. This questiones the incentive theory arguing that the unemployed live in a certain comfort level that is not conducive to active job search. It also shows the importance of financial constraints in worsening the well-being of the unemployed.

These two types of negative consequences of unemployment, which relate to the economic and material situation on the one hand and to personal identity and health on the other hand, are situated at the individual level. However, the negative effects of unemployment extend to those close to the unemployed, primarily their families, and affect the unemployed social relations more generally. It is a strong result of the pioneering research of the 1930s to show that the experience of unemployment must also be analysed at the level of the collectives and networks to which the unemployed belong (Feather, 2018). The impact of unemployment on social relations, both within and outside the family, is well established: unemployment produces social weakening, although the resilience of families and relational networks varies. Thus, a recent study on the relationship between unemployment and the risk of marital separation in five European countries shows that male unemployment increases this risk, while the effect of female unemployment is more differentiated from one country to another (Solaz and al., 2020).

Three theoretical approaches coexist to explain these negative effects of unemployment: the theory of latent deprivation according to which the unemployed are mechanically, or passively, deprived of the positive effects of paid work (Jahoda, 1982); the agency restriction theory arguing that unemployment hurts because of the constraints it places on personal agency, planning and autonomy (Fryer, 1986); the status passage theory emphasizing the meanings that unemployed people attribute to employment and unemployment, and pointing out that unemployment is made and constructed as unpleasant by the social meanings attached to it (Ezzy, 2000). Each of these explanations is relevant, and they are not mutually exclusive. So, the experience of unemployment can be conceptualized, at a crossroads between these

three perspectives, as an "overarching process of loss" (Sage, 2018), at least in countries where formal employment is widespread such as most European societies (Demazière, 2014). The important and conceptual point is that the effects of unemployment cannot be explained by only the absence of paid work: we have to consider the importance of the meanings people attach to unemployment and employment (Boland and Griffin, 2015). These meanings are not homogenous, which means that the deprivation theory of unemployment is, perhaps, as much a presupposition as it is a result (Cole, 2007). This observation leads to another direction: considering that these meanings are produced and legitimated by social norms, institutions and public policies. This leads to describe a second facet of the experience of unemployment, related with job search requirements.

Key take-aways:

Empirical analyses showing the negative effects of job deprivation on the experiences of the unemployed emphasize the multidimensionality of these consequences: economic and financial, personal and identitary, familial and relational. Each of these dimensions can be captured through multiple indicators. But, at least, researches converge to underline the extent to which these consequences structure the experiences of the unemployed. This result should encourage us to define and built a large set of variables to capture or measure them.

I.2. The experience of unemployment and job search requirements

To understand the experience of unemployment, it is necessary to broaden the analytical framework, as this experience is supported by legal status and framed by institutions. Being unemployed also means be recognized as such. And the first step in this process is the registration to the Public Employment Service. Being registered is a condition to be supported and accompanied for job search. It is also a requirement for access to rights, in particular to unemployment benefits. Welfare systems are highly heterogeneous in Europe (Gallie and Paugam, 2000). And many parameters differentiate the unemployment benefit systems: conditions of eligibility, replacement rates, length of duration, and also which actors carry the costs (Esser and al., 2013). Unemployment benefit coverage is all but uniform and has been shown to vary by dimensions such as gender, age or prior employment relationship » (Leschke and Finn 2019). Despite their diversity, these institutions have powerful effects on the experience of unemployment, especially since the rights granted to the unemployed imply duties. The most important of these duties, settled at the historical origin of unemployment, is the obligation to seek for job. From the 1920s to the 1930s, payment of unemployment benefits implied that jobseekers were "genuinely seeking work", although this criterion was difficult to define and apply in practice (Denman and McDonald, 1996).

Job search requirements have been constantly reaffirmed over time. In the second half of the 20th century, job search became the basis of the unemployed condition. It was at the heart of the statistical concept, with the publication in 1954 of the recommendations of the Eighth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS). These recommendations were

quickly taken up by the International Labour Office, which defined the unemployed as anyone over 15 years of age, without a job (paid- or self- employment), actively seeking a job and immediately available to take one. According to this international statistical standard, job search must be active, since what is measured in statistical surveys is that unemployed people "actively seek work". Statistical analyses, based on large surveys such as the Labour Force Survey, provide a description for active job search. They make it possible to measure the intensity of individual efforts, assess outcomes in terms of access to employment, and identify the determinants of these variations (for example: Weber and Mahringer, 2008). What is of interest here are job search descriptors - how the job search is characterized. Various methods are set out, including "passive methods" such as "waiting for a call from a public employment office" and "active methods" (Bachmann and Baumgarten, 2013). The active ones are generally used to describe proactive job search behaviours such as contacting a public or private employment agency; making direct approaches to companies; soliciting the help of friends, relatives, trade unions or other actors; responding to classified ads or advertising an application; collecting and using job offer ads, or participating in a recruitment interview or test.

A recurrent distinction in the literature is formal and informal job search channels (for example: Rees, 1966, or Pultz and Sharone, in press). Job search channels described as formal typically refer to contacts with public employment agencies, and more broadly to the mobilization of private institutional intermediaries and/or formalized media such as advertisements. Those described as informal refer to the use of relational networks (whether personal or professional) and more broadly to direct research through canvassing and company visits. Research tend to suggest that informal channels are more effective in obtaining employment, despite variations across the populations studied: racialized youth (Holzer, 1987), women (Drentea, 1998), managers (Granovetter, 1973), or migrants (Waldinger and Lichter, 2003). In any case, it should be stressed that, in general, the job search imperative has become more central to the experience of unemployment. The main reason is the rise of activation policies (see part II below), with the consequence that the unemployed are increasingly obliged to participate in active measures and strongly supported or controlled by institutions that transform the experience of unemployment.

In line with this, some scholars emphasize the centrality of social policies in constructing the meaning and experience of unemployment. Trying to draw all the consequences of the activation logic for this experience, they develop a "governmentality approach" to understand unemployment (Caswell and al., 2010; Boland and Griffin, 2015; Pultz, 2017). In this view, unemployment is analysed as an experience shaped by people's interactions with the welfare organizations and institutions. Henceforth, unemployment experience is increasingly overwhelmed by the search for work, because the institutions responsible for spreading norms, distributing roles and governing behaviour do transform it. Such studies underline the potency of the obligations that weigh on the unemployed, transforming the job search into "the work of unemployment" (Griffin, 2015: 123). In other words, the unemployment experience is to a large extent tantamount to looking for work, which cannot be separated from the institutional norms that frame it. But of course, institutional backgrounds are quite different across Europe,

some PES being much more prescriptive in what they ask in terms of job search than others so that the pressure on the unemployed is variable (regarding job search requirements, job take-up criteria – see below, part 2).

Such a perspective complements analyses of the unemployment experience in terms of loss. Indeed, job search efforts are aimed at repairing or erasing this loss. More importantly, the job-search obligation pushes the unemployed towards new activities that fill the void created by the loss. This loss is more global than the loss of a job, because work is a time-consuming activity, sets the pace of the day, imposes its constraints on other activities, and has a strong influence on daily life. Thus, the loss of employment, and more broadly unemployment, erases the reference time. Unemployment time is then considered to be the flip side of working time, a framework stripped of its content: an empty and unstructured time, a time to be "killed" (Burman and Rinehart, 1990). And the unemployed are confronted with a stretched, a long time that does not pass: an "excess of time" (Bourdieu, 2000). If unemployment alters the temporal reference points and rhythms of life (Roche, 1990), it imposes new temporal frameworks, since job search is, precisely, time-consuming. This leads to the hypothesis of a change in the temporalities organizing the experience of unemployment: on one hand a contraction of empty time under the pressure of statutory job-search requirements, and on the other the imposition of an active, prescribed and normative time.

Unemployed people's attitudes towards job search and the place of this activity in their daily lives are essential parts of the unemployment experience. Research have pointed out that the place of job search in this experience is subject to strong tensions between "disciplining" institutionally driven (Boland, 2016) and "self-discipline" tinkered by people (Demazière, 2020). On the one hand, job search tends to pervade and colonize the experiences of the unemployed, since active job search not only meets institutional and normative requirements, but also aspirations to escape unemployment quickly. On the other hand, the unemployed attempt to channel and frame job search in order to limit the pressures it imposes. If it is too intrusive, job search can generate discouragement, undermine individual determination and degrade the efforts made. This tension in job search suggests that the experience of unemployment is not homogeneous and that we have to pay attention to its differentiations.

Key take-aways:

The inclusion of job search in the analysis of unemployment experiences calls for special attention to some other dimensions of this experience: the relationship of the unemployed with the institutions - and their professionals - that frame and support this experience, as well as the temporal organization of this experience and the place of job search within it. These institutional dimensions of the experience of the unemployed, such as the relationship with specialized institutions, the relationship with employment professionals, the relationship with standards of conduct, in particular the obligation to search for work, are decisive in the contemporary period. More broadly, the literature suggests that there is tight link between how the unemployed people are governed and how they govern themselves. We must therefore pay particular attention to these issues in the context of our project.

I.3. A heterogenous and differentiated experience

Whether one focuses on the negative consequences of unemployment or on the normative requirements of job search, the experience of unemployment is not homogeneous. A various range of characteristics of unemployed (gender, education, children in the household, disabilities/health, etc.) impact on how coping with job deprivation and on how easy finding a new job will be. Its heterogeneity has been highlighted since the 1930s. Thus, different ways of coping with unemployment characterize Marienthal's unemployed, defined around family types: "stable families", "resigned families", "desperate families", and "collapsed or apathetic families". This family-centred approach points out that it's not only the individuals who are concerned with job deprivation but also their families, which also shape the experience of unemployment. This classification shows different steps in a disintegration of social relations process. It should also be noted that it is unidimensional: "we have distinguished various types of attitudes: one more active, more confident than the more representative category of resigned, and two others, more despondent and desperate. But in the end, we assumed that these were probably only successive stages of psychological decline, parallel to the reduction of resources and reserves" (Jahoda and al., 1972: 129). In that sense, the variations highlighted here are thus modulations of a typically negative experience of unemployment.

Another line of analysis was followed at the same time to describe "adjustments to unemployment" (Bakke, 1933, Chapter 4). These adjustments are reflected, in particular, in differentiated relations to the institutions, and more specifically to unemployment compensation. The differences noticed are cross-checked with categories of unemployed (skilled and unskilled workers, young workers and adult workers). So, as early as the 1930s, it appears that the relationships between unemployed and specialised institutions – in other words the PES – are variable. And Bakke's research concludes that a minority of the unemployed see "the insurance fund as a source of income from which to derive maximum profit (without there being an ounce of dishonesty in their attitude)" (Ibid.). This specific relationship to unemployment largely concerns three categories of workers: unskilled or casual workers whose jobs are of little interest and are poorly paid; unskilled workers, deprived of their jobs and assigned to basic tasks; and young workers who have not integrated the demands and satisfactions of work because they lack sufficient work experience. This research places work, i.e. occupational positions and relationships to work, at the heart of the analysis of the variety of experiences of unemployment. It is a fruitful research direction, which has been followed many times so far.

Thus, the hypothesis of differentiation in unemployment experiences between men and women, between age groups, between manual workers and managers or professionals is repeatedly tested. The comparison between men and women is based on the idea that unemployed men are plunged into a "gender role crisis" because they are deprived of the social status and material resources to play their role as breadwinners (Fodor, 2006). According to this analysis, men have no choice but to organize their lives around employment, while women have the additional option of organizing their lives around home and family. This difference is, of course, the product of social norms: "As long as the male-female

differentiation is perpetuated by the sociocultural norm, the gender-role definition will continue to be a relevant personality variable mediating the effects of work and work loss conditions on adjustment and well-being" (Bartell and Bartell, 1985: 45). The experience of unemployment thus depends on the sexual division of labour, that is professional work on one side and household work on the other. This is not uniform across societies, including within the European Union, where the availability of alternative statuses to unemployment and the accessibility of institutions and particularly child-care vary widely. Besides, the growth in women's employment and the rise of dual-earner marriages have also reshaped the gender gap experience of unemployment (Potuchek, 1997). Indeed, although differences persist between countries, an overall trend has been observed: women tend to attach the same importance to employment as men (Gallie and Vogler, 1994; Hammer and Russell, 2004). Finally, men's and women's experiences of unemployment are not similar, because of the persistence of the gendered allocation of household tasks matters too (Crompton and al., 2005). Of course, these differences in unemployment experiences are more or less accentuated depending on the country, but also in relation with other factors such as degree or socio-professional category (Demazière, 2019). Thus, we cannot say that female experience is very distinct from male experience. But in any case, it is important to pay attention to the legitimacy of women's employment and to family configurations in order to understand how unemployment is experienced, especially by women who have to bear heavy family burdens. The case of single mothers speaks for itself in this respect: the surveys on this category - which is highly vulnerable to unemployment - show the magnitude of the material repercussions of job deprivation and the importance of the barriers erected on the path to employment (Jackson and al., 2001).

Considering the consequences of age on unemployment experiences is another important issue. Indeed, youth unemployment has long been an alarming problem in most European countries, and unemployment among older workers is also as troubling. With regard to the study of youth unemployment, the main focus was on comparing young people's transitions from unemployment to employment (for example Eichhorst and al., 2013). In the huge literature on youth unemployment, qualitative methods describing the lived experiences of unemployment remain marginal, even if a recent book analyses the hard consequences of the Great Recession (2008-2009) for young people, using both quantitative and qualitative approaches (O'Reilly and al., 2019). In this book the authors point out the long-term effects of youth unemployment: it potentially increases the risks of precarious work and of recurrent unemployment and reduces their satisfaction at work. One of the main interesting results of the research is that the precocious situation of unemployment is partly "inherited": young people whose parents were unemployed for long-time periods are more likely to face this situation. This inheritance creates a remarquable cleavage between the young people of such a generation. More generally, the book alerts that youth unemployment rates tend to increase in Europe. Many other researches highlight the risks of social exclusion, understood as a combination of impoverishment, poor health and social isolation (Kieselbach, 2013), which affect unemployed youths. These consequences are particularly stressed for those who have low levels of education and qualification and are therefore experiencing long periods of unemployment (Weil and al., 2005). In addition, the working identities of these unemployed

young people frequently appear fragile and uncertain, because they didn't have jobs or have worked only episodically. And unemployed graduates are in a similar situation: they do not have a work identity to fall back on and therefore also experience it as an identity vacuum (Pultz and Hviid, 2016). In fact, the question of working identities in commotion is much more addressed than that of the experience of unemployment. But the research shows in a hollow way that the fact of never having been - or so little - integrated into employment degrades unemployment experience, because job deprivation tends then to be lived as an overall social exclusion, not just a professional one.

Older unemployed are studied with different but echoing questions. They have had a long working life, but have, with differences between countries, low chances of finding a job and are unequally targeted by social protection (Ogg, 2005; Sharone, 2013b). For them, work and employment are pillars of their professional identity, which appears as a "non-working work identity" (Riach and Loretto, 2009). These pillars have been weakened with unemployment, and they collapse with long durations of unemployment, especially if the unemployed highly value their profession, such as managers (Gabriel and al., 2010; Newman, 1988). Thus, their experience of unemployment is marked, to varying degrees according to individuals, occupational categories and countries, by a tension between the persistence of the willingness to work and the degradation of job search through discouragement (Berger, 2006). The downward revision of chances to getting a job while failures are accumulating reinforces this tension, which transforms the experience of unemployment into an increasing contradiction.

Analysing the experiences of the unemployed through the prism of age leads to identify a number of underlying variables. These variables differ a little bit according to the age categories considered, the oldest or the youngest. But they mainly concern career paths: having or not having significant work experience seems to be an important element that characterises young people threatened by exclusion; having or not having minimal chances of obtaining a job, and being or not strongly attached to the job that has been lost are also relevant elements that underpin the situation of the oldest unemployed. These underlying variables do not erase the importance of characteristics that are easier to capture and measure, such as the level of education and qualifications for young people, which is a powerful factor in threatening exclusion, or the socio-professional category for older people, which is a factor in differentiating the experience of unemployment.

The influence of previous occupational position on the unemployment experience is difficult to model because analyses on this point are fragmentary and partial. Surveys that consider socio-professional stratification compare unemployment rates or exit chances (see below, part III) but neglect lived experiences. Moreover, qualitative fieldworks suggest that it is a better solution to pay attention to the characteristics of the professional career rather than to the static occupational position. This has been shown for various populations: industrial workers with stabilized careers (Linhart, 2002), artists engaged in project-based careers (Pilmis, 2010), self-employed workers with unstable careers (Louvion, 2018), managers with upward career mobility (Pochic, 2001), etc. In each case, a particular type of career influences the unemployment experience. Let us take two examples. The unemployment experience of

executives has two specific features. Projections into a future career are central to it, in different ways: executives have greater confidence in their ability to find a job, they are particularly involved in job search, and they receive a great deal of advice on how to conduct a "career project" (Ibid.). At the same time, these career projects often evolve according to the duration of unemployment and the accessible opportunities (varying with age, gender, type of occupation) and with time tend to deteriorate and become more flexible (Gabriel et al., 2013). Time spent without job leads to revising occupational expectations or to moving towards a self-employed status for lack of a salaried job. The experience of unemployment is particular, but also more homogeneous, in the case of artists engaged in project-based careers made up of discontinuities between worked and unemployed periods (Lingo and Tepper, 2013). This kind of career supports a more neutral, even positive, use of unemployment, which can be experienced as complementary to employment. This is especially true when the lack of job is compensated with specific schemes of « artists insurance » as in France (Pilmis, 2010; Menger, 2012). Consequently, the entrepreneurial dimensions of artistical activities, which support career continuity and coherence, also help to fade unemployment and can blur the boundaries between employment, work, unemployment and inactivity.

It is therefore an acquis in the field that the variety of unemployment experiences is not reducible to degrees of intensity of a typical form - the loss experience or the job search experience. Diversity of the experiences means significantly different ways of experiencing unemployment and investing meaning in it (Schnapper, 1981). These forms are highly contrasting because they involve combinations of elementary and underlying variables that support unemployment experiences. Perhaps the length of unemployment appears to be the only factor of homogenization. Indeed, long-term unemployment accentuates the negative consequences of joblessness, erodes occupational aspirations, causes a slackening of job search, leads to increasing discouragement (Clasen and al. 1997; Cottle, 2001; Sharone, 2013). And these dynamics are developing regardless of age, gender, social category, previous employment history, even if these factors play on the speed of the discouragement process.

Key take-aways:

Exploring the heterogeneity of the unemployment experience leads to discuss the effects of basic social characteristics such as gender, age, occupational position. Of course, variables such as ethnicity or sexual orientation, which are poorly captured by surveys, could be added. It is further established that behind these variables, less visible and underlying elements matter. They have in common to characterise positions with regard to professional activity, for example: attractiveness and social legitimacy of substitute statuses, family burdens for single mothers especially, lack of work experience and qualification for some young people, closure of the professional future for some older unemployed, properties of the careers and labour markets, etc. These variables are therefore of great interest to scope the variety of unemployment experiences. Their effects on the unemployment experiences cannot be ignored, even if these consequences are modulated according to the social policies specific to each country, but also to the variation of stereotypes on the labour market and discriminatory practices during recruitment.

I.4. An experience made of diverse activities

A large set of research studies the experience of unemployment, focusing on the activities and sociability of the unemployed. The starting hypothesis is twofold: the negative effects of unemployment do not wipe out all social life; job search does not pervade all activities of the unemployed. Unemployment undeniably affects social ties and heightens the risks of isolation. But these effects are far from being systematic, and there is a wide variety of consequences depending on a number of key variables such as age, social position, cultural capital, gender, and more broadly the effect of specific processes of socialization (Chabanet and al., 2016) and labour market institutions that shape subjective responses (Sharone, 2013b; Pultz and Sharone, in press). Thus, unemployment does not mechanically imply a cumulative breakdown of social ties, like relationships within the couple and the family, affinity and friendship relationships, and ties of political citizenship and participation (Paugam, 2006). Unemployment tends to weaken and disrupt social relations, but these effects are not uniform and widespread. The unemployed vulnerability to social isolation considerably varies between societies, depending on patterns of household, forms of sociability or social policies and welfare (Gallie, 1999). The experience of unemployment must not be reduced to disqualification, desocialisation and marginalisation, even if joblessness may lead to this.

The experience of unemployment has been analysed as a set of secondary adaptations for making the condition of being unemployed more acceptable. In this vein, various activities have been identified and described, that help the unemployed: voluntary work, self-production, leisure, informal work, etc. Investigating the multiple activities of the unemployed is a way of not reducing their experience to either job deprivation or job search. This may lead to describing, as it has been noticed in the 1930s (Bakke, 1940, chapter 4), the leisure activities of the unemployed, forming a wide range of practices, doing sports, meeting friends, recreation, cultural activities, etc. But currently, the participation of the unemployed in collective practices, in the frame of leisure, voluntary action or activists' groups, is little studied. With regard to leisure, psychologists note a significant difference between employed and unemployed people: the latter engage less often in collective leisure activities than the former and more often in solitary leisure activities (Waters and Moore, 2010). The results also suggest having meaningful leisure activities has positive effects on the ways to cope with job deprivation. As for the activist commitment of the unemployed, little analysis has been done. But it has been old-established that they are also very much in the minority and sporadic (Orwell, 1937; Demazière, 1996). Recent investigations, in France, show surprisingly that a significant part of the members of struggling unemployment groups had no prior activist socialization, and that some of them are unemployed people who are durably out of work. For them, this participation is often a means of temporarily changing the condition of the unemployed (Cohen and Dunezat, 2018). An active participation in activist groups supports dynamics of self-esteem and self-assertion, drawing a reversal of stigma and leading sometimes to lasting changes in social and professional paths.

In situations of unemployment, these activities (leisure, activism or volunteering) take a back seat because they have little legitimacy in the face of the obligation to search for work. But

other kind of activities of the unemployed receive more attention and provoke multiple discourses and judgments. These are ways of coping with job and resource deprivation through the search for income-generating activities; not job search, but practices of undeclared temporary work, informal work, resourcefulness. Empirical research is lacking to accurately assess the role granted to informal work in the experiences of the unemployed. But, it has become particularly popular at present to argue that the unemployed in the European Union disproportionately participate in, and gain from, paid informal work and thus that many of them enhance their standard of living with such illegal earnings (Williams, 2013). However, some studies show that informal work is not easily accessible because it requires resources, both relational and material, to engage in it. And these conditions for moonlighting practice exclude many of the unemployed, especially the least qualified and most marginalized. In the French case, informal work is much more often a complement to an official job, whether manual or not, than an activity that substitutes for unemployment and job deprivation (Laé, 1989). And in the English case, evidence suggests that those in employment are best placed to do other forms of work as well (Pahl, 1987).

Nevertheless, informal work is a component of the experience of some unemployed people. What does it mean then for the unemployed who use it, and how does it transform their experience? There is no systematic research to answer this. But some researchers unexpectedly came across this issue in interviews with unemployed people in various European countries. They point out that the activities of the unemployed in the informal labour market are part of "survival strategies" (Rubić, 2013), even if they do not precisely evaluate the gains obtained. It appears that informal paid work is at best no more than a temporary buffer or survival mechanism for impoverished unemployed people (Henry, 1982). If it improves subjective wellbeing it might be quite different in the long run as this strategy perhaps keep people on the margins of the labour market (Pultz and Teasdale, 2017). The informal work activities of the unemployed are also analysed with regard to the challenges of exiting unemployment. Their meaning then appears ambiguous (Demazière and Zune, 2021). On one side, they immediately improve the living condition, providing income even irregular and low, restoring a sense of usefulness and enhancing relational networks. On the other side, in the longer term, they entail serious risks: increasing distance to employment, abandoning the search for work and settling into a way of life on the margins.

This result leads to a larger issue: how do the experiences of the unemployed articulate and combine mandatory job seeking activities and, moreover, other invisible and illegitimate activities as informal work, but also domestic work, leisure practices, voluntary or activist commitments? Are these two sets of activities incompatible or even contradictory in the sense that the second set of activities would distract from job search requirements? The codification of the legal status of the job seeker around job search is along this line. And this may also explain why social scholars paid little attention to the second set of activities. Or could these two sets be considered compatible even complementary, with the idea that job search could be strengthened by the other activities (Demazière, 2020)? We may also notice that there are similar questions with regard to participation in active labour market policies. In the long run it might improve the unemployed chances of finding a (suitable) job particularly if it is

training. In the short-run it might lock them into unemployment though as they have less time to search for employment. These questions are still open. But the fact remains that the unemployed put the job search at the heart of their experience, when they recount their experience to social scientists, and even more so as they talk about it at the PES counter. On the contrary, they tend to minimize or withhold other aspects or their experience and diverse activities they carry out. These are concealed because of their weak legitimacy or hidden for fear of punishment. However, these activities, including illegal ones such as undeclared work, could be relevant information for advising and supporting the unemployed. Indeed, when the unemployed do informal work, pure economic motivations do not predominate. Instead, such work is principally used to help out others, or to cement or forge social networks, or both (Williams, 2001).

It can be hypothesized that all activities of the unemployed are signs of participation in relational networks and are opportunities to strengthen these networks. From this perspective, they are not so different from the job search itself, for which the issues of relational networks and social capital have been highlighted by both social scientists and employment professionals. We know that social capital, in the form of access to networks, facilitates individuals' progress in the labour market (McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005). Furthermore, it is clear that social networks, whatever their impact, are at least considered to be important by many job seekers, and appear to play a crucial role in regions where formal employment services are less advanced or less used (Lindsay et al., 2005). However, multiple research show that unemployed people who have significant unemployment durations and who live in disadvantaged territories are also more isolated from the various social networks that may contribute to the job search (Hedstrom, 2003; Lindsay, 2010). If having weak social relations is a handicap for finding a job, it is also a handicap for participating in the multiple social and collective activities that are considered normal and desirable when one has a job. The fine description of the activities, of all kinds and not only of job search, of the unemployed then becomes a challenge to understand the ways of dealing with the unemployment situation as well as the ways of coping with the job search.

Key take-aways:

For understanding the lived experiences of the unemployed, it appears important to take account of additional dimensions: their social practices of all kinds (informal work, leisure, volunteering, activism, etc.) and the relational support mobilized through these activities. These components contribute to the dynamics of the unemployed situations, even though they are underestimated, and often invisible or even hidden. These practices, and the networks they are inserted in, are indeed important secondary adaptations to unemployment: on the one hand, they make it possible to fight against the negative consequences of job deprivation, and on the other hand, they make it possible to avoid reducing the experience of unemployment to the mere search for a job.

II. The 'government' of the experiences of the unemployed

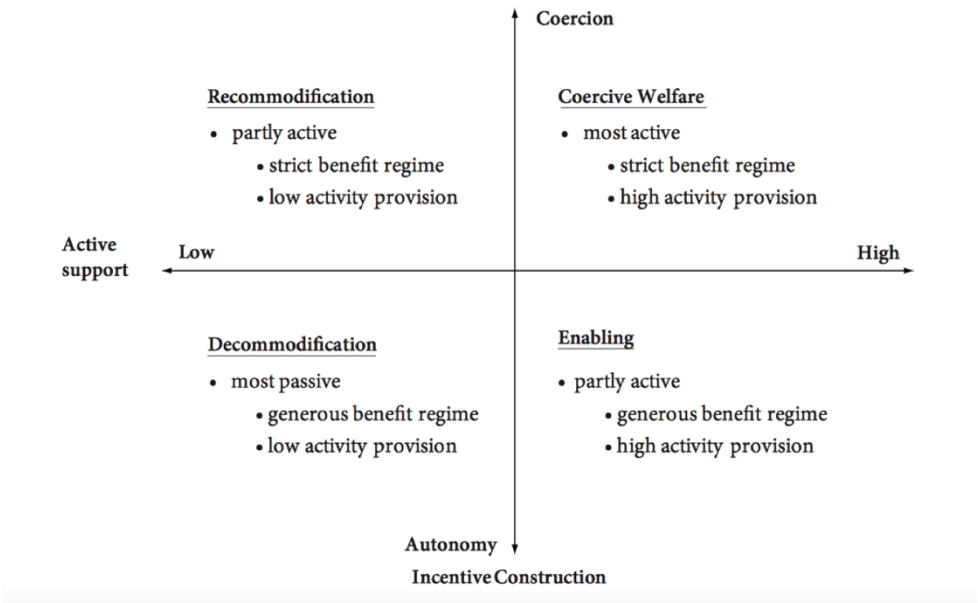
The so-called activation of the unemployed is widespread in Europe, invading public policies, steering of institutions, management systems, technical instruments. The activation of the unemployed consists in the implementation of a set of measures that more or less strongly encourage or coerce the unemployed to find a job, and to take it quickly whatever its qualities. So, in many European countries a governance of the unemployed has more and more shaped the experiences of joblessness. This phenomenon can be described, in the wake of Foucault's work, as "governmentality" or government of the experiences and conducts, because the aim is to socialize and mould individuals into compliance with normative requirements, according to a "strategic programming of an individual's activity" (Foucault, 2008: 223). For the Hecat project, the feedback produced on these public policies and institutions is a decisive source of information for designing a decision support system involving counsellors and the unemployed. So, we must analyse the links between the activation reference framework and the experiences of the unemployed. This leads us to observe that the monitoring of the return to work is strengthening (II.1), that a socialisation scheme to autonomy and self-responsibility becomes more pronounced (II.2), that control of unemployed diffuses (II.3) and that profiling methods are promoted as efficient techniques for governing the unemployed (II.4).

II.1 Activating the unemployed people

Over the last decades, the 1997 European Employment Strategy and the 1994 OECD Job Strategy set an activation reference framework that has been translated into national public employment policies (Triantafillou, 2009, 2011; Immervol and Scarpetta, 2012; Boland and Griffin, 2015; Neil and Van Voorhis, 2017). In this frame, accessing the resources provided by welfare policies, such as replacement income or unemployment benefits, is increasingly conditional on an effective and active job search. This is because a series of ideas tied to activation construes unemployment as a problem residing in the behaviour of the unemployed, whether this is inadequate skills, irresponsibility, lack of incentives or immobility (Hansen, 2019). Thus, activation leads to an ongoing quest of identifying the characteristics of the unemployed – hence the need for profiling tools. In other words, in this logic, an unemployed person who does not make sufficient efforts to search for a job could be deprived of his benefits and legal protection. This is part of a broader movement at the heart of welfare state reform to increase conditionality in access to social assistance (Dean, 2004). The watchword is the activation of people (first and foremost, unemployed people) - that implies boosting both their sense of personal responsibility and their ability to work (Serrano-Pascual and Magnusson, 2007). This principle has become predominant in socio-economic and political debate (Eichhorst and al., 2008) as well as in labour market reforms (Clasen and Clegg, 2006; Van Berkel and Borghi, 2008). This frame of reference has spread in a differentiated manner and at varying rates in Europe, with the development of Welfare-to-Work. And in some countries, it converges with ultra-liberal states (for example, in Great Britain, Australia and the United States, see McDonald and Marston, 2005).

A comparison of activation policies in different European countries identifies the models of new public management that dominate in Europe: business type management, typical of Switzerland, the Netherlands and Finland; centralized management, typical of the United Kingdom; self-governing management, typical of Germany and Sweden; and procedural management, typical of France (van Berkel, de Graaf and Sirovátka, 2012). The traditional administration model remains in Italy and the Czech Republic. Activation policies are thus expressed through these models and have contrasting effects on the management of unemployment. In some countries (unfortunately Slovenia is not analysed), the effects are modestly efficient, as in the Netherlands, Sweden, France, Finland, Switzerland or Germany, due to more flexible services and a more individualized follow-up of the unemployed. But more negative effects are noted in the Czech Republic, Italy and the United Kingdom, such as a much less individualised care and a high degree of standardisation of tools. The authors distinguish three "governance regimes": the "committed marketizers", which include the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Germany, where the market provision of services is very strong and management is also a strong element while procedural and network governance are rather weak elements; the "modernizers", which include Sweden, Finland and France, where the elements of procedural governance, marketization, management and network governance are mixed without the strong dominance of any of them. These countries did not go too far in marketization, compared with the first group, and adopted a deliberate strategy to counter-balance some of the reforms - like marketization or decentralization. The third category is that of "slow modernizers, which includes Italy and the Czech Republic, where reforms are less advanced with more emphasis on procedural governance. Even if the links between activation policy and governance regimes are difficult to establish, the "slow modernizers" seem to have a less assertive regulatory policy.

In another article, Patrizia Aurich empirically establishes the main dividing lines between unemployment policies, which she summarizes in the following diagram (Aurich, 2011):



She makes a more precise comparison between three countries, Germany, Denmark and the United Kingdom, which are generally opposed in the studies because of their different Welfare States regimes - a regime perceived as very generous in Denmark, and very liberal in the United Kingdom. In fact, the major differences between these countries concerns the extension and strength of activation. In Germany, coercion leads to reduced benefits and more sophisticated sanctions in case of job refusal. In Denmark and in the United Kingdom, coercion means an increased obligation to participate in intensive supervision programs, but these programs are different across the welfare states: in the first one it is a lot about participating in active labour market policies after a set period of unemployment whereas in the second one it is a lot about monitoring of job search. Sometimes activation policies have had close effects on countries that were then seen as very different. In these two countries, for example, activation was a mix between incentive logics promoted by Conservatives and integration process valorised by Social Democrats.

Activation policies across Europe take different forms and have contrasting effects (Gallie and Paugam, 2002; Clasen and Clegg, 2003). But everywhere the vision of unemployment and unemployed people evolve: less than a dramatical hardship that requires reparation unemployment become a devaluated condition that enforces personal mobilization to escape of it. Thus, the lived experiences of the unemployed are de facto included in a binding frame of reference. Their duties are brought to the forefront in reference to a norm of activation that has become self-evident. It is through their behaviours and ways of dealing with their job deprivation that the unemployed are monitored. Moreover, the activation norm is widely diffused in European societies where it settles in the collective representations, and activation is imbued with various and often conflicting moral views on the unemployed (Hansen, 2019). The unemployed then experience suspicion, the suspicion of not being active enough, the suspicion of not really wanting to work, the suspicion of taking advantage of the situation. On a macroscopic level, the consequences of this European trend are important: they are an inflection of the welfare state with the weakening of Bismarckian insurance logic, and the change in the social status of the unemployed who have to become active job seekers (Serrano Pascual and Magnusson, 2007). Slovenia, where the social protection policies, especially for people close to retirement and unemployed, are generally considered as quite generous, has received recommendations from the OECD to strengthen its activation policy, by providing less social assistance and delivering more active support for the unemployed in order to bring them into employment (OECD, 2016). This logic is increasingly reinforced in European countries, even differently so the activation devices need to be examined more closely.

Key take-aways:

Over the last decades, the development of activation policies has transformed the joblessness into active job search. This movement has macrolevel consequences on the Welfare system and also microlevel effects on the experience of unemployment. Of course, the differences between countries remain important, but the pressure put on

unemployed people to seek a job tends to increase. This normative and institutional context is a significant parameter for the ethical and social objectives that the Hecat project pursue.

II.2 Socializing to autonomy and self-responsibility

In Europe, activation policies lead to the implementation of many Active Labour Markets Programs (ALMPs). These programs can be defined as a "set of interventions directed at individuals who are currently unemployed or at risk of becoming unemployed that aim to increase their likelihood of employment" (Borland, 2014). Their main objective is to increase the efficiency of job search and the rate of return to employment from a macroscopic perspective. At the individual level, it implies a more constraining and sustained monitoring of the unemployed; some programs target a particular sub-population of unemployed people who are considered more vulnerable, such as the young and older ones, the low-skilled, the long-term unemployed, or the disabled ones. Strong differences between these unemployment policies remain, that can be attributed to different types of welfare regimes, corresponding to "many worlds of activation" (Barbier and Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2004; Serrano Pascual and Magnusson, 2007). While each state implements measures that it considers appropriate to the national context, these ALMPs can be grouped into three main types: job-search programs encouraging the unemployed to be more active and efficient; work experience programs which provide subsidized employment in the public or private sectors; training and education programs designed to increase the skills of the unemployed or enable them to professional reconversion. These programs have often undergone significant quantitative developments. Participating in them is therefore becoming part of the experience of many unemployed people, especially those in the target categories. Besides, public employment services or their private subcontractors offer these programs to the unemployed through coaching, personal accompaniment or recurrent interviews with counsellors. In some countries, activation is obligatory after a specific period of unemployment, and the unemployed are forced to participate, thus showing their goodwill towards the institution.

ALMPs are fully in line with the model of an active job-search (Sharone, 2007; Boland, 2016). Many studies evaluate the effects of these programs, often conceiving them in terms of access to work. It has been established that, for long term unemployed, such actions have a huge cost and limited effects (McQuaid and Lindsay, 2002). In a sense it is a little bit tautological as this category is the most alienated from the workplace, as indicated by its duration of unemployment. Anyway, different analyses provide a nuanced picture of the effects of ALMPs on the long-term unemployed, in several European countries and after the Great Recession (Bentolila and Jansen, 2016). According to this book, ALMPs (and its two models "work first" or "train first") have a vital role to play, if they are well designed and hit the unemployed before they experience long-term unemployment. Denmark is the example of a country that manages its Public Employment Service to prevent long-term unemployment, unlike Spain where personalised support tools lacks.

The evidence on the effectiveness of ALMPs is very mixed with the effectiveness varying across group, time, place and also indicator used to measure employment integration: is it about leaving the benefit record or is it about suitable and sustainable employment? "Work first" or "train first"; there is an ongoing debate on the respective merits of these two approaches, and on effectiveness according to the categories of unemployed persons concerned (Bussi, 2014). For some, return-to-work programmes are cheaper and give better results in terms of return to employment than training courses, as has been argued in the Swedish case (Sianesi, 2008). This result converges with broader studies of OECD countries, showing the same positive effects of employment subsidies for the most vulnerable categories of unemployed: the disabled, the young, the low-skilled and the long-term unemployed (Martin and Grubb, 2001). However, other studies demonstrate that training programs are effective for the vocational reintegration for young people, for example in Slovenia (Juznik Rotar, 2012).

A comparative analysis, including 19 countries and 139 programs, was carried out to assess the effects of programmes for the unemployed (classified into five types: services and transactions, training, private sector incentives, public sector employment, and out-of-work income support – see table 2: The ALMPs evaluations database: core features). The core question was: "what program works for what target group under what (economic and institutional) circumstances?" (Kluve, 2010). It appears that the effects on access to employment are variable, although results are better for programs that are themselves closer to employment: private sector incentives rather than training for example. Despite great national differences sanctions-based programs seem also effective in getting people back to work. Effectiveness also depends on the characteristics of the unemployed, for example it is rather low for youth programmes, when training appears more useful for the long-term unemployed. So, it is not easy to settle definitive conclusions. Moreover, these approaches have two limitations in relation to our project. On the one hand, the measurement of the strict return to employment is insufficient: the characteristics of the job obtained matter, just as much its consequences on the personal, social and economic situation of the unemployed accessing a job. On the other hand, these evaluations remain focused on the exit from unemployment, and therefore fail to examine the effects of programs on the experiences of the unemployed, especially those who remain unemployed after exit.

The effects of the ALMPs also need to be analysed at the level of unemployment experiences: do they change unemployed 'behaviour, in particular with regard to job search, do they have a broader impact on the experience of job deprivation, etc.? This question is crucial because activation is also conceived as a kind of empowerment of the unemployed. Studies carried out within organizations specializing in adult education, coaching, and competence enhancement examine how unemployment experience evolves (Garrett-Peters, 2009; Gabriel, Gray and Goregaokar, 2013; Boland and Griffin, 2015). A finding emerges that is true across all these fields with regard to various categories of jobless people (managers, white collar workers, and professionals): the problem of unemployment is handled with on a strictly individual level, which tends to transfer the responsibility for the situation to the unemployed themselves.

This issue has two inseparable aspects: it is about becoming able to conduct your job search on your own, to manage to get a job; and it is about becoming responsible for your job search and therefore for the results obtained. In other words, activation is a conversion process that entails persuading yourself that you have control over, and responsibility for, your own situation (Uchitelle, 2006; Smith, 2010), and that access to employment depends on you (Sharone, 2013). As a result, the job search now means working on oneself and exercising personal discipline; rather than finding work, it means transforming oneself to become recruitable, attractive and employable. It becomes a "governance of the self" (Boland, 2015: 146) that comes in several varieties, each of which amounts to no more than a precept – stay positive, build connections, know how to sell yourself, make new contacts, etc. All of which implies that you will take charge of your own destiny, becoming the entrepreneur of your own self. Much of the fieldwork demonstrates this conversion, a process that consists of convincing yourself that you are both on top of, and responsible for, your own situation, and that finding a job depends on you alone, in other words a conversion to a "self-help paradigm" (Sharone, 2007: 406).

The institutions and devices that target the unemployed are therefore places in which people are socialized toward finding a job, where methods and techniques are learned, and above all where a new self is manufactured, in line with the logics of individualization and responsibilization that dominate current social policy (Ferge, 1997; Hamilton, 2014). It is all about producing active (and indefatigable) jobless people (or, to be more precise, job seekers) whose to-do list endlessly grows, who are autonomous and responsible, who are convinced that their future depends on the effort they put in, and who are willing and able to believe in their own capacity to be transformed into the ideal candidate for a job. Learning self-government and self (personal) work can be more or less successful, more or less long-lasting. Doubts can undermine both the job search and the belief in personal work, and even distort its meaning: "from boost to bust" (Sharone, 2007: 416). Such a reversal has often been noted among the long-term unemployed, who are easily discouraged (Cottle, 2001). In contrast, fieldwork carried out at vocational counselling organisations underlines the extent to which institutional norms influence the job search experience, by promoting self-discipline and self-transformation. These effects cannot be reduced to an alignment with a repressive control, they are signs of an ideology of the self-becoming a belief for the unemployed, that is in Foucault's terms the trace of a "productive power". However, these analyses fail to examine precisely the extent of these effects of institutional actions on the unemployed. Focused on institutional logics, they often and implicitly, consider the unemployed to be converted, more or less acutely, to activation and self-responsibility.

We still lack precise knowledge about the ways in which the unemployed internalize institutional prescriptions, adapt them, modify them, neglect them, transgress them. The fact remains that institutions penetrate into lived experiences, that they become a dimension of those experiences. In any case, the effects of the ALMPs are depending on the way they are implemented and managed at national, or even, regional, level. And the force of job search compliancy monitoring, and sanctions in case of failure, matter.

Key take-aways:

Activation policies have led to the implementation of various programmes, divided in work first or train first logics. The effectiveness of ALMPs is uncertain and much debated. It is acquired that the measurement of the strict return to employment is insufficient, because the qualities of the job obtained matter as its consequences on the personal, social and economic situation of the unemployed accessing a job. But activation aims to monitoring the unemployed, for activating them as to become job seekers, autonomous and self-responsible of their own future. The unemployed have to prove that they really want a job, have to make efforts to get one, and have therefore to deserve the support. The effective consequences on the unemployed experience need to be more deeply studied, despite we know they consist in socialisation to self-responsibility. Anyway, it is important to integrate the institutional project and the ensuing actions for the understanding of unemployed experiences.

II.3. The rise of controls and sanctions

Traditionally, the missions of Public Employment Services (PES) towards the unemployed are hybrid, combining accompaniment, placement and control. In the last decades, due to activation paradigm, monitoring and checking the unemployed has been strengthened. In many countries, job search monitoring is based on a contractualization of the relationship between the unemployed person and front office advisors (Brodkin and Marston, 2013; Dubois, 2013). This trend gives an important role to front-line advisors, whose work has an important discretionary and interpretative part, which nevertheless depends on the prescriptions induced by the profiling instruments (Ludwig-Mayerhofer, Sondermann and Behrend, 2007). It also has contrasting consequences. Thus, sanctions have therefore developed in all countries, but with different degrees. The checking methods are highly differentiated for several reasons: national public policies have been more or less permissive; the PES have undergone varying degrees of reform preserving their autonomy to a greater or lesser extent; and control is a more or less problematic component of the professional identities of advisors. Sanctions, whether in the form of suspension of benefit payments or deregistration, are also very heterogeneous, both in terms of frequency and modalities.

Some countries are often mentioned as weakly sanctioning the unemployed who do not respond to all the requests generated by the ALMPs. This is the case, for example, in Denmark and France, where social assistance is considered generous, when it is more strongly conditioned by the active search for employment in Germany and United Kingdom (Fossati, 2018). In France, the deregistration of the unemployed from Pôle Emploi is relatively rare: those who miss their appointments are temporarily suspended and are threatened with loss of benefits for a week, but they are not excluded from the scheme. This does not prevent them from having to show good will in their job search, which is frequently monitored: the monitoring system in France is increasing, but it is nevertheless facing some institutional resistance (Dubois, 2009). Advisors themselves tend to be reluctant to endorse monitoring activities: they perceive them as contradictory to coaching and supporting the unemployed. This is a phenomenon that can also be observed in other countries (Demazière and Zune,

forthcoming). But research is still lacking to describe and understand how PES advisors react to the implementation of policies for activating and controlling the unemployed, and also perceive the consequences of these policies on their recipients and on the experience of job deprivation (Dunn, 2013).

In the United Kingdom, more severe sanctions are imposed to unemployed people: unemployment benefits are cut much more quickly, while deregistration is more frequent with difficult returns to the institution. This punishing system is often singled out as a route to poverty among the unemployed (Newman, 2011), especially since unemployment insurance is not generous. More generally, while most of European countries adopted activation policies, some have done it mildly, such as Lithuania and Bulgaria. Other countries, for their part, combine rather weak sanctions with very unequal social protection to the unemployed, such as Spain (Eleveld, 2016). Each country is more or less a hybrid between "soft" and "hard activation" (Barbier and Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2004), between models using "the stick or the carrot" (Serrano Pascual, 2004), but with a tendency towards more rigorism. However, the concrete consequences of activation policies for the unemployed, and especially of job search monitoring, depend strongly on how they are implemented in practice. Thus, the severity level of legislation is not a reliable indicator of its actual impact on job-search behaviour, especially because managers and advisors in PES have, with national variations, a great deal of discretion in the local application of legislation (Martin and Grubb, 2001).

Observing unemployment public policies in the various European countries, OECD called, for a long time, for more sanctions and less generosity in terms of social assistance for the unemployed. The argument is that sanctioning the unemployed increase the rate of leaving unemployment. But this result has to be cautiously examined. Indeed, several studies show that sanctions are not really effective in the long term, because they do not lead to better jobs and can discourage the unemployed (Arni, Lalive and Van Ours, 2012). It is a questionable way to get the unemployed back into work quickly and to lower unemployment rates (Abbring, Van den Berg and Van Ours, 2005). The sanctioned unemployed who gain access to a job risk staying in employment for a shorter period of time because those jobs are of low quality. As an example, the effects of sanctions have been studied for young unemployed Germans (Van den Berg, Uhlendorff and Wolff, 2017). Their benefit is withdrawn for three months when they fail to comply with their obligations, with the exception of missed appointments. In fact, while the sanctions speed up the return to employment, it helps to steer these young people towards jobs with very low incomes. And the researchers note that the consequences are particularly problematic for those who live alone and experience important economic hardship despite their job.

The affirmation of the active job search model has led to an increase in controls and sanctions. The effectiveness of these is open to debate. Their effect, considered positive, is to increase returns to work and reduce length of unemployment. But their longer-term effects are uncertain. They do not allow for sustainable employment insertion, and they do not protect the unemployed, especially the most vulnerable, from a return to unemployment. And many studies suggest they may even have negative effects, especially as conditionality and

incentives are intensified (Wright, 2012, 2016; Dwyer and Wright, 2014). It should also be pointed out that many parameters are neglected or under-estimated: the quality of the jobs obtained, the ignorance of the long-term pathways of the unemployed, the failure to account for the evolutions of their living conditions and, finally, the imposition of a normative constraint without regard for the experiences of the unemployed. Indeed, the effects of controls and checks on the experiences of the unemployed are mostly ignored. Yet, it can be hypothesized that the pressure of a demanding and binding normative model significantly alters the unemployment experience, especially for those unemployed who fail to conform to the active job search model.

Another consequence of the job search checks is that the controls tend to standardize the job search because they encourage job hunt initiatives which can be convertible in written evidence. A recent research conducted in Belgium has thus shown that unemployed persons written off for failure to search for a job were, in fact, looking for a job, and actively (Demazière and Zune, forthcoming). These sanctioned unemployed people had a dual job search. They occupy lower positions in the labour market, and lower ranks in the unemployment queue, and they have failed to accumulate the tangible evidence and traces necessary to satisfying the institutional job search check. But at the same time, they have been engaged in processes they perceive as relevant to obtaining work, even though these are difficult for them to prove, because these are informal processes. They do so because they prefer methods that allow them to highlight their informal and uncoded qualities and they limit their involvement in approaches that, according to them, tend to highlight their weakness in terms of the usual employability signals. Job search is thus seen, within the supervisory institutions, in a way that is decoupled from the unemployment situations and experiences in which it is nevertheless deeply rooted. Unemployed persons are thus struck off the register while they continue to search for jobs in their own way, but this search is invalidated. This phenomenon is similar to "carelessness", observed among other unemployed people in difficulty (Bowman and al., 2016).

In Europe, the tendency is therefore to control and/or support the unemployed. Another effect of this dynamic, much less analysed, concerns the professional identity of employment advisors. They are caught between attitudes of help and empathy towards the unemployed, and an injunction to control and sanction them. A study on the relationship between unemployed people and advisors in Switzerland shows that maintaining a professional distance with little empathy promotes a rapid return to employment (Behncke, Frölich and Lechner, 2009). But the consequences of this tension on counsellors and the ways they carry out their work remain unknown. A field study in the French PES show that controls, and even more sanctions, devalue the representation that advisors have of their occupation and destabilise their professional identity (Clouet, 2018). It can be hypothesized that, depending on the country, the advisors' professional cultures and rewards based on the results achieved on control activities, sanctions can be a source of valorisation or devaluation of counselling work. In our Hecat project, an important dimension of the fieldwork therefore also concerns professional advisors: given that there are still few studies on their relationship to their own

work, it is very important to understand the construction of their professional identities so that the platform to be developed does not betray their aspirations.

Key take-aways:

European countries differ from one another in terms of the degree of control and sanctions. Nevertheless, the recommendations of control and sanction strengthen since they are linked to activation policies, and similar instruments are in use in most countries – job centres, job search courses, job consultants, profiling tools, individual action plans, online control mechanisms, regimes of monetary incentives, etc. Evaluations of their effects are too often limited to the short-term measure of access to employment (or worse, simply getting out of unemployment). They neglect the experiences of the unemployed and underestimate the negative effects of these policies on the unemployed who fail to comply with the requirements of active job search. Also, the effects of sanction and control policies on employment advisors are often overlooked: they are subject to growing tension - or contradiction - between control and advice, sanction and support. The increase in controls is therefore becoming an inescapable component of the experiences of unemployment: that of the unemployed and that of counsellors, and has to be considered as such.

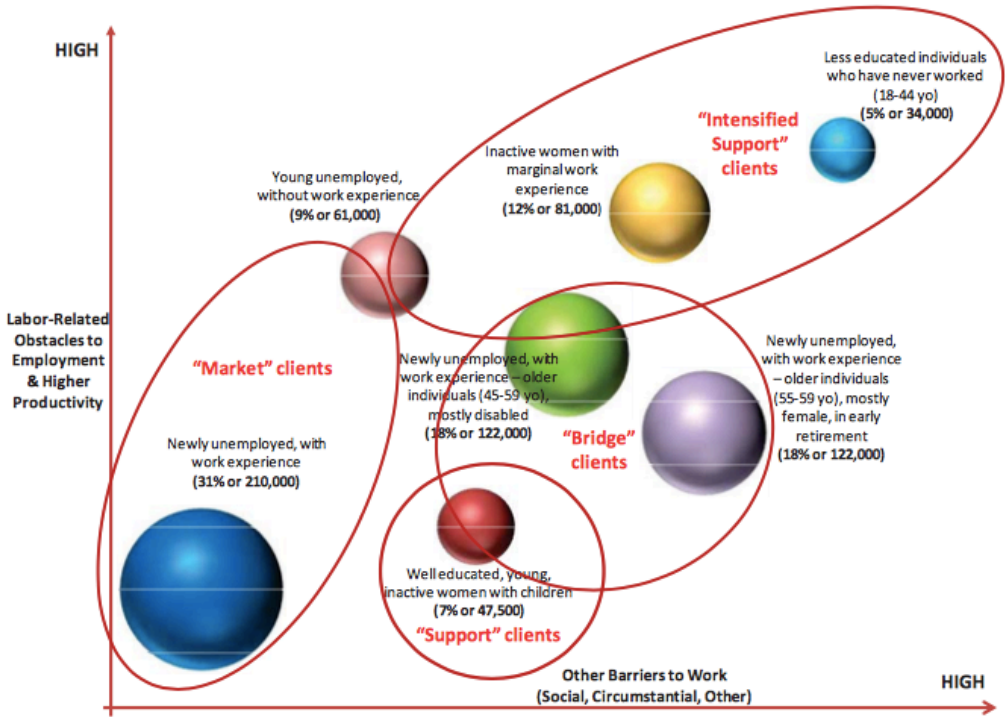
II.4. Profiling methods and tools

The first unemployed profiling techniques based on predictive systems were developed during the 1990s in the United States and Australia. Many European countries have since also implemented techniques for profiling the unemployed: these are methods that aim to identify and categorize the unemployed in order to offer them support that matches their profiles. Looking at the profiling methods currently in use in Europe, the aim here is to examine to what extent and under what conditions they are effective tools for advisors and the unemployed. Often, profiling is based on econometric models designed with no consideration for the experiences of advisors and the unemployed: it is therefore an external tool, assigned and prescribed to the advisers and that as such may offend their professional practices and identities. These econometric models work with a range of variables, like: job seekers' age, sex, gender, residence area, marital status, educational level, immigrant status, disability, unemployment duration, and countries characteristics as unemployment rate, active labour market policies, or market history (these variables were for instance included in a Danish model used between 1999 and 2003, see O'Connell, McGuiness, Kelly and Walsh, 2009).

Very different is the at-risk group method, using descriptive statistics to identify vulnerable categories. The categories thus defined are generally: young or older unemployed, unskilled people, long-term unemployed, disabled unemployed, or else single mothers. As a concrete example, a 2014 report from the Central European Labour Studies Institute explains how the World Bank team conducted a macro-level analysis based on 2009 EU SILC data, using a Latent Class Analysis (LCA) method, which is an exploratory technique to create the optimal number of groups of non-working individuals with the most similar characteristics (Kureková, 2014). Crossing the labour-related obstacles to employment and other barriers to work, seven

distinct groups have been distinguished. The application of the model on the case of the Slovak Republic leads to produce graphic representations of these clusters, as shown below (Ibidem).

Figure 4. Indicative segmentation of target groups among the unemployed and inactive in the Slovak Republic



Source: Staff calculations based on EU-SILC 2009 data.

A third type of method begins to emerge and is being debated. Based on the mobilization of the expertise of professional advisors or even the experiences of the unemployed, it allows to include richer and more varied information: for instance, the living conditions of the unemployed (type of accommodation, number of people in the same household, available income, personal constraints like having a medical monitoring, dependent children), his or her social circles (friends, family, and other relationships), the potential weak ties he or she can mobilize to search for a job, etc. Gathering such qualitative data implies time and budget, and from an economic point of view, states are also looking for profiling tools with limited cost. Such a data collection also requires the cooperation of advisors and unemployed people, and a crucial point is that profiling can be voluntary or compulsory: Denmark for example allows the unemployed to opt in (by filling in an online-questionnaire) or not. It also raises ethical issues relative to the protection the unemployed. Such a method spotlights the role of advisors, their expertise and know-how. Doing so, the service delivered to the unemployed could be more relevant, better adjusted and more effective.

The selected variables change from one model to another one, depending on available national and administrative data. The different approaches just described below have been examined in a recent publication, through an international comparison of profiling tools. Identifying the main characteristics of statistical profiling models across the OECD (see table

1, Desiere and al., 2018), the authors show for instance that while some countries use more administrative data, some others favour personal interviews and questionnaires. The statistical models deployed are also different: big data models are minor whereas logistic regressions are more widely used. Regarding the type of information catched in the database, they divide them into five types: work experience and labour market history of the unemployed; "hard skills" like educational level and "soft skills" like job aspiration; the jobseeker's behaviour and motivation to seek a job; the job opportunities within local labour market. All these variables and models aim to measure the probability of long-term unemployment and/or the labour market integration and exit from unemployment.

Let's give some example of variations between countries. In Ireland, statistical profiling automatically determines the frequency and timing of contacts and assignments to different service streams. Profiling, based on a relatively rigid econometric model, predict the vulnerability of the unemployed, i.e., the risk to stay unemployed for a long time; but advisors have little leeway over the use of the tool and are dependent on it (O'Connel, McGuiness, Kelly and Walsh, 2009). In some countries, as Sweden and Denmark, the caseworkers have the capacity to neutralize the profiling system. In others it is more integrated in professional practices. In Flemish Belgium, the PES applies machine learning techniques, whether for shoving the unemployed to work or for evaluating training programmes (Cockx, Lechner and Bollens, 2020): the profiling model estimates a jobless's probability of being unemployed for more than 6 months using a model that captures hundreds of different variables (more administrative ones). Some of them are classical descriptors of employability (age, proficiency in Dutch, previous periods without work in last ten, and also two, years, education level, sickness, disease history, ALMP participation history during previous unemployment spells, etc.), others inform on job search (methods, frequency of procedures carried out, occupational preferences and their correspondence with professional experience, etc.), others concern the socio-economic situation of the unemployed (household composition, income level, debts, housing conditions, etc.). And it is possible to include data collected in the field by professional advisors. In addition to that, information is collected automatically through the "click data" tool, which monitors the activity of the unemployed on the PES website. In Austria (Allhutter and al., 2020), a tool has just been developed using only existing administrative data. In addition to the classic individual variables on the unemployed, the tool also includes information relative to the professional path of the unemployed: length of the previous jobs, types of contracts, unemployment history, functions exercised, etc. The algorithm ranks the unemployed into three categories: high, medium and low chance of labour market reintegration. The position of each unemployed person in this classification then becomes a relevant information for the advisors. These two profiling tools created in Flemish Belgium and Austria are still too recent to be properly evaluated, but the European Commission qualify them as innovative (OECD, 2018).

Basically, statistical profiling techniques provide an estimated probability to become long-term unemployed. This information makes it possible to direct the most advanced and reinforced services towards the most vulnerable unemployed. However, the models are sometimes imprecise especially when they process relatively poor data from a unique

administrative source. And some scholars argue that statistical models that integrate a wide variety of data are the least prone to error (see again Desiere and al., 2019). A comparative study identifies two profiling models that stand out in European PESs: the first is the American model and the second is the Dutch model (Georges, 2006, 2007). The American model is defined as a "pure statistical" model: an econometric method sorts the unemployed according to their statistical risk of long-term unemployment. The Dutch model is described as a "negotiated profiling" model: it follows the unemployed according to a pathway logic, and is a tool at the service of the advisor who can manage it. The underlying reasoning is very different: a ranking hierarchical logic for the American tool, a managing logic including the PES service offer for the Dutch one. This one is much more difficult to achieve and then to evaluate. Despite this, it appears to be the most desirable in Europe because it is more adjusted to the Welfare systems. In the United States the Welfare is based from the outset on a radical sorting of vulnerable people and on very limited aid, hence the suitability of pure statistical profiling tool. This tool classifies the unemployed between those who are "good" job-seekers and concentrate the qualities to quickly find a job, and those who are "bad" job-seekers and are less efficient and less active in the job search. On the other hand, in Europe, where a social protection logic prevails, with sensible national differences, the main issue is to considerer the various situations and problems of unemployed, with the objective to organize relevant supports and provide available aids. A number of countries developed "combined models", such as Germany, France and Finland, and others, such as the Netherlands and Denmark, are less convinced of the usefulness of profiling. But the key issue is the role devoted to the PES worker, and furthermore the agency given to unemployed. The British case highlights the fact that profiling systems are national context depending. The pure statistical profiling method was imported from the USA to the UK, but the results were disappointing (George, 2006). A main reason is that the vulnerable clusters representative of the unemployment situations encountered in the American labour market were not adjusted to the British one. So, one of the most important critics targets the problem of replicability of such models and their circulation at larger scale - international and also inter-regional.

Another limitation of the pure statistical model, pointed out by the assessments in Europe, lies in its focus on the objective of rapid return to employment, regardless of the quality of reintegration (e.g. suitability and sustainability of employment). The latest trends and current developments in profiling methods in European Public Employment Services show a preference for mixed models, combining four types of methods, refining their choice over time and experimenting with other models: statistical profiling, based on administrative data and predictive variables; rules-based profiling, based on administrative and legally defined rules; soft-profiling, which brings together defined rules, predictive models, and the discretion of advisors; caseworker-based profiling, founded on expertise of the advisors on the data available to them (Barnes and al., 2015). Increasingly, European states are becoming aware that a model using only one type of data has too many limitations (Pieterson, 2017).

But these studies have their proper limitations, as they tend to evaluate the effectiveness of the tools without sufficiently discussing their acceptability and legitimacy. Many reports propose diverse recommendations aiming the improvement of profiling methods, but the

desirability of establishing such methods is much less addressed. However, this issue is crucial in our view, and for Hecat project. How to bring into the tool the lived experiences of the unemployed without reducing them to a set of disjointed variables, and how to integrate the meanings and beliefs underlying these experiences? How to include the advisors in the production of the method and in the collection of information, and how to conceive and provide a tool linked with their professional practices? Also, building unemployed categories to provide them special support may have paradoxical hidden effects: for example, stigmatizing some clusters as vulnerable or not employable, excluding other invisible categories, and so on. In order to ensure the fairness of profiling approaches, it is important to: include the experiences of both unemployed and advisors, use the tool to support rather than control and punish jobseekers, develop a positive narrative for profiling tools.

Key take-aways:

Profiling the unemployed is, regardless the methods, a strong trend in Europe. In other words, the belief in the virtues of profiling the unemployed is widely shared. On the other hand, the methods arouse many debates, particularly focused on the kind of information to be considered, collected and codified. As a result, the interest in integrating often neglected variables pertaining to the behaviours, and more broadly the experiences, of unemployed people is pointed out. It is equally clear that PES advisors are accumulating such expertise in the labour market and the unemployed that their knowledge cannot be neglected and left aside. Also, the tool must be suitable for the advisors and the unemployed, rather than being, like certain purely statistical profiling models, a restrictive framework which is forced on them. It is a crucial stake in the perspective of Hecat platform project: how to include into the tool the counsellor's expertise and professional practices and also the lived experiences of the unemployed and the meanings and beliefs underlying these experiences?

III. The inequalities within unemployment

Activation tend to treat and present the labour market as a rational and fair place in which the best (most mobile, responsible, entrepreneurial, skilful, etc.) are chosen. But it does not, at all. The situation of the unemployed on the labour market is greatly diverse. And being at risk, may be related to factors beyond the control of the unemployed such as ethnicity, age and gender, etc. These elements, and the strong inequalities they entrench, are relevant for designing a decision-making tool for labour market actors. Such heterogeneities are endless; for example, a senior manager who goes through a period of unemployment in order to find a new and interesting job is not in the same situation as a skilled worker suddenly laid off but who expects to quickly get another job, or as an unskilled woman searching a job after having stopped working many years to raise her children, or as a young unemployed person with a basic diploma, who had some precarious jobs and did not get any hire after a training course. Between the singularity of individual situations and the overall category of unemployed, it is necessary to consider characteristics that differentiate the unemployed and have an impact on their lived experiences.

Differences between the unemployed derive from several factors such as socio-economic and historical contexts, public policies, by institutional tools for managing the unemployed, recruitment and selection practices, local peculiarities of local labour markets, the professional and personal paths, and so on. Here, the objective is not to provide explanations for this diversity. The aim is to underline that the unemployed do not form a homogeneous category, far from it: their situation is very heterogeneous in relation to employment and work. And these inequalities, to be called 'inequalities within unemployment', must be included in the analysis of the unemployed experiences because they have consequences on them and could be relevant to build profiling tools. Several major dimensions of these heterogeneities are presented, in order to emphasize their importance for our project: the vulnerability to unemployment and the risks of experiencing job deprivation (III.1), the margins of unemployment (III.2), the employability and the unemployment exit chances (III.3), the exit conditions and the qualities of the jobs obtained (III.4).

III.1 Vulnerabilities to unemployment

Unemployment does not affect the labour force uniformly. Some categories are overexposed while others are less exposed. The risk to be unemployed varies depending on some well-known factors, similar in many countries: gender, age, training level and socio-professional category. Other variables also matter, such as territorial (at different scales), sectoral or ethnic dimensions, even if surveys unequally measure them. The most important thing for us is to note that the level of vulnerability to unemployment can influence the ways of experiencing job deprivation. For example, a social category with a high level of unemployment may live this situation as more common because it is broadly shared or, conversely, as an emphasised drama; or may be stigmatized as marginal and lazy or on the contrary be seen as disadvantaged and needing special help; or may anticipate unemployment as an inevitability or as an inacceptable situation leading to protest, etc.

The first three variables well identified in surveys to influence vulnerability are gender, age and socio-professional position. A lower unemployment rate in some countries does not automatically means that women are more protected from joblessness than men in these countries (Karamessini and Rubery, 2014). It greatly depends on the level of the women inactivity rate, which provides information concerning integration of women into employment and female marginalisation on the labour market. However, the levels of activity, or inactivity, of women are sharply contrasted from one country to another. And these are elements that inform about the social legitimacy given to women's professional activity. In this sense, women's vulnerability to unemployment, but also their experience of it, are related to the way in which professional activity is perceived for women and men. It can be assumed that the smaller the gender gap in labour market participation is, the more similarly unemployment is perceived, and the lower is the risk of unemployed women being pushed back into inactivity.

It is obvious that gender gaps have narrowed since the early 2000s. But the explanations are manifold, and cannot be reduced to a progression of gender equality. Indeed, it should be underlined that many women are not classified as unemployed, either because they have atypical, precarious and involuntary part-time jobs (very present in Germany), or because they are considered inactive although they are looking for a job - after a long period of unemployment due to domestic constraints, for example (Faďoš and Bohdalová, 2019). In addition, gender discrimination in hiring has to be mentioned, even if it is not detectable in labour force surveys. Despite national policies encouraging parity in public institutions and businesses (Laufer, 2018), women are still considered less efficient in certain positions and may be discriminated against because they have family responsibilities, such as children (Guergoat-Larivière and Lemière, 2019), especially if they raise them alone (Jackson, Tienda and Huang, 2001).

Age is a second significant factor of vulnerability (Hammer, 2003). Access to employment for young people is a long-standing and still topical issue in Europe (O'Reilly and al., 2019). The unemployment rates for young people are dissimilar across European countries, but they remain high, compared with other age groups. For the EU-28 in 2016, unemployment rate stands at 18,5% for the young people aged 15-29 years. The most unfavourable situations are found in Greece (47%), Spain (44,8%) and Italy (37,6%), while the rates are, for instance, 24,7% in France, 15,1% in Slovenia, 12,2% in Denmark and 7,2% in Germany. Youth unemployment concerns so called "outsiders", without strong professional experience, trying to enter the labour market. It is concentrated among the least educated, for whom access to employment seems almost closed in some countries. These dire straits led to the emergence of the NEET issue in Europe (the young people not in education, employment and training), a central concept in the European policy agenda and a heterogeneous category (Mascherini, 2019). According to Eurostat, the NEETs within young people aged 20-34 years stands more than 16% in the EU-28 in 2018, the proportion fluctuating between less then 10% and almost 30% across countries.

Inequalities in exposure to unemployment have consequences for the experiences of the unemployed: in countries where young people are highly vulnerable, the passage through

unemployment is an almost compulsory sequence (especially, but not only, for those with fewer qualifications) of pathways. It does not mean that it is more bearable because anticipated or more unacceptable because unescapable. But it is stated that the youth unemployment strongly transforms their situation, contributing to the affirmation of a specific juvenile life age, inserted between school and work. This experience is disconnected from the job search, and the latter is currently trimmed down to its smallest dimension. It corresponds to a typically juvenile lifestyle, combining uncertainty, postponement of professional integration and various social, ingenious or leisure activities (Behrens and Evans, 2002).

Unemployed young people experience special situations, even if the age limits of this category are unclear and if other social characteristics (diploma, place of residence, situation of parents, etc.) blur these specificities. Age is a variable which makes it possible to point out the particular fate of the oldest unemployed. The older people within active population (aged 50 years and more according to statistics) are not the most vulnerable to unemployment. In many European countries their unemployment rate is lower than the average. But for the older unemployed, the major issue is that of returning to work (see III.3), especially in a period of longer working lives and delayed retirements. For them, unemployment is more than a career break, but also threatens to be the end of their career, leading to a very different life experience (Riach and Loretto, 2009).

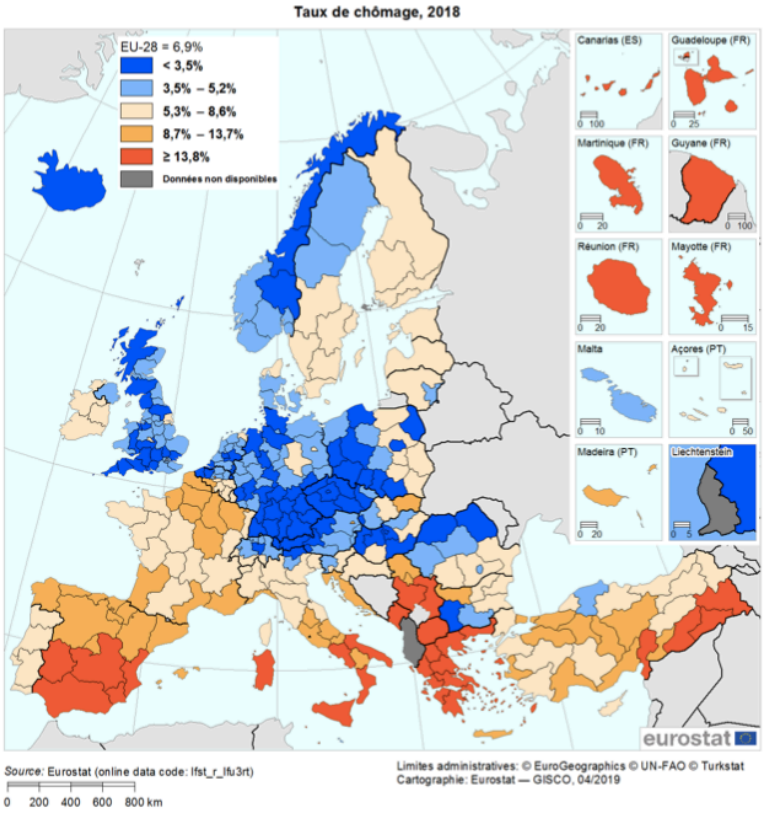
Occupational position is a third significant factor of vulnerability. Unemployment risk inequalities are very high in certain countries. In France for example, the managers unemployment rate has been 3 to 4 times lower than that of blue-collars for 30 years. In 2019 it stood at 3.2%, compared with 12.5% for blue-collars, and 17.7% for unskilled workers. In general, blue-collar and also other manual workers and unskilled employees have greater risk to be unemployed. And on the contrary managers, professionals, and holders of a higher education diplomas are less exposed. But other parameters disrupt this unequal distribution of employability: having a professional or a general education certificate, being in mid or late career, living in a dynamic or depressed area, working in a buoyant or recessive sector, etc.

Vulnerability to unemployment is multifactorial, and variables have to be cross-referenced. The effects of gender, age, and occupational status on vulnerability are thus magnified or attenuated when they overlap with other variables. These variables are less well documented in the literature, but are gradually beginning to be incorporated into it. Race (taken in the sense of its social construction) is a significant factor in vulnerability to unemployment, but it is still difficult to establish at least statically. But some surveys show that the unemployment rate is higher among immigrant populations or populations of immigrant origin, other things being equal (Pager and Pedulla, 2015). In the United States, the phenomenon is better known (Wilson, Tienda and Wu, 1995). This high vulnerability also exists in Europe, where many immigrants remain on the margins of the labour market (Calavita and Kitty, 2005). The longer-settled immigrants or their descendants are also exposed to over-unemployment. Some nationalities (effective or in origin terms) are more affected than others: for example, in France, people from North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, and in Germany, people from

Turkey (Cousins, 1998). And the third country national are often more exposed then EU migrants.

The over-unemployment of immigrant populations or those of immigrant origin results from different processes. Part of these population holds jobs at risk of unemployment: they are blue-collars workers or non-skilled employees, or they failed to obtain the recognition of their diplomas in host countries (Dean and Wilson, 2009). Ohers, and especially immigrants' descendants managed, for part of them, to graduate. But they face racial discrimination when looking for jobs (Wrench, Rea and Ouali, 2016). We assume that the discrimination, and the feeling of being racially discriminated, can have strong consequences on the way people live unemployment. Indeed, discrimination is perceived and interpreted by the individuals who are subjected to it, and it is therefore incorporated into their experience. This observation is valid for racial discrimination, which is the most studied. But it can extend to other cases for which a characteristic appears - and is perceived - as a critical impediment to get a job: to be too old, to have stayed in prison, to have young children, to live in a stigmatized area, etc.

A variable that is often overlooked is that of territory, at various scales. Strong disparities may appear within the same country - or even the same city - combining characteristics of the local economy and productive system with properties of the resident population and labour force. This can cause depressive vicious circles to emerge (Overman and Puga, 2002). Productive dynamics and job creation and destruction sometimes widen the inequality gap between regions, bringing out declining industrial basins which are very numerous in Europe or poorly served and fairly isolated rural regions (Heidenreich, 2003). The map below gives a quick view of unequal unemployment rates among regions in European countries.



Living in a labour pool with high unemployment and few job prospects, or, on a smaller scale, living in a city or neighbourhood with similar characteristics, has strong consequences on the experience of unemployed people, and undoubtedly of workers too. In addition to doubts about the possibilities of finding a job, there are also phenomena of stigmatization resulting from belonging to, or being confined to, territories that are themselves devalued. The identification of the most depressed areas sometimes leads to territorial policies to boost employment, which are often disappointing. An interesting study has been carried out on specific welfare-to-work programmes in the most disadvantaged areas of the United Kingdom (Theodore, 2007). In the early 2000s the government set up programs for activating the "workless class" as to promote a rapid return to employment and to avoid long-term unemployment. However, these programs have not been successful, due to the concentration of very poor-quality jobs in these areas. The list of variables that can potentially affect employability is endless: sectors of activity, industrial relations, and also lot of individual properties such as health problems, physical appearance (disability, morphology), language, clothing (as shown by studies on facial discrimination), or religious belief. These factors more directly affect the experiences of the unemployed when there are perceived as key obstacles to get a job. And more paradoxically, many unemployed have become unemployed because their job was turning them ill, meanwhile the activation logic insists that work is their cure (Hultqvist and Nørup, 2017).

Key take-aways:

The vulnerability to unemployment depends on a range of variables: some relating to career paths of the unemployed, others to the areas where they live, others still to more personal or less visible characteristics. Some are well known, even if they have effects of different intensity across countries, and others are more difficult to catch and deserve further ethnographic investigation. Reasoning on the basis of a variable is limited, and it is necessary to cross variables and to adopt a system thinking to be able to get a good grasp of the profiles of the most at-risk unemployed. Furthermore, the lived experiences of unemployment are only partly shaped by these variables, in particular when these are invested with perceptions, meanings and representations by the unemployed themselves. The differentiated vulnerabilities of the unemployed are central to the construction of the Hecat platform, so that it can be adapted to different audiences, and not just to a typical model of the unemployed.

III.2. Unemployment and its margins

Unemployment is not a uniform condition. It occupies differentiated places in individual paths: its sequences have variable lengths and its forms are more or less at a distance from employment. This is not without consequences for lived experiences. Time spent in unemployment is a first source of variation. It manifests itself in long-term (one year) and in very long-term unemployment, and the respective shares of which are very different from one country to another. These accentuated forms of unemployment affect social statuses i.e. the

probability of access to employment and the risk of being pushed to the margins or outside the labour market. These perspectives are decisive for the analysis of experiences. The links between unemployment and employment have also evolved as more and more unemployed people work in parallel. Traditionally, unemployment is the opposite of employment. But in the last decades, the links between the two have become more complex, with the emergence of diverse cumulations of unemployment and employment. These hybrid situations, which span the borders of unemployment and employment, have varying forms and weights depending across countries.

One of the most striking trends is the increase in long-term (more than 12 months) and very long-term (more than 24 months) unemployment. This trend affects various countries, some with high unemployment levels, others less affected. In 2018, according to the OECD, the proportion of long-term unemployed among the unemployed is particularly high in Greece (more than 70%), Italy (59%), Belgium (49%), and also in Slovenia (42%), Germany (41%), Spain (41%) France (40%) -the OECD average is 29%. (Very) long term unemployment is not distributed equally, it is concentrated in particular among the oldest unemployed, and also those who combine factors of vulnerability mentioned above.

On the labour market, long-term unemployed are considered the least productive. For most employers, a period of unemployment is a negative signal, even a sign of incapacity for work. Such a representation has direct effects: they are rarely recruited (Jackman and Layard, 1991). And this view is also sometimes widely shared, in public opinion or by other actors in the labour market, up to professional advisers. The long-term unemployed themselves often share this same perception which becomes stronger as they accumulate failures and disappointments in the job search (De Witte, Hooge and Vanbelle, 2010). Consequently job-seeking efforts decline when the duration of unemployment increases, and degenerate into discouragement (Lindsay, 2002, 2010). It is therefore clear that the duration of unemployment is changing experiences: hopes of landing a job are weakening, the future is getting darker, the capacity for action is being reduced. At the same time, the others project negative perceptions on the long-term unemployed, which accentuates the deteriorating experiences. In addition, long-term unemployment greatly increases economic risk: the development of "new poverty in the European Union" (Room, 1990) results in part from the longest forms of unemployment. This is easy to understand: unemployment benefits are paid for specific periods ... which leads to rights-end. The long-term unemployed can then, according to the specific rules of each country, become social assistance recipients. This causes drops in income, but also negative symbolic effects, analysed as a status degradation (Demazière, 2018). And, despite the existence of more or less protective social benefits in Europe, the strengthening of job search controls is an additional threat to the long-term unemployed (Hansen, 2019). In other words, long-term unemployment displaces jobless on the margins of unemployment. It draws attention to the halo around unemployment (Coudin and Thélot, 2009), which is of utmost importance for understanding the experiences of unemployment.

The cumulation of discouragement, impoverishment and stigmatization reinforces this marginalization. But the halo around unemployment is also the result of public policies,

aiming to provide support, leading to status degradation, and finally rendering unemployment partially invisible. For example, early retirement schemes targeted at older laid-off workers prevent them from becoming unemployed by providing them with an inactive status (Palier and Martin, 2007). In the face of the injunctions from Brussels to increase the employment rate of seniors there has been a trend in abolishing early retirement even if it is still used in many countries at least as partial early retirement. But the situation of the elderly unemployed - and other categories who are struggling to find a job - is difficult to improve. The risk that they will be pushed to the periphery of unemployment and to the margins of inactivity is serious. These margins are marked out by multiple devices which regulate transitions from the status of unemployed to inactive statuses. In some countries, occupational incapacity and invalidity systems are often used to regulate patterns of activity and reduce the number of long-term unemployed. In the Netherlands, for instance, such programs have been extensively implemented. And in the 2000s, the number of persons receiving a disability pension strongly increases while certain unemployed people had been reclassified (Wierink, 2002). In the United Kingdom, in the early 2000s, a program entirely devoted to help « disabled adults » eligible for disability benefits find a job has be implemented. It illustrates the porosity of the borders between situations and status. With the active participation of advisors, this program has had significant effects on the social and professional identities of the people concerned, without however allowing them to truly re-enter the labour market (Angeloff, 2011). More generally, unemployment and inactivity are strictly connected issues. And if statistical definitions produce a sharp divide between the unemployed and the economically inactive, but in reality, one should consider all those without work as being on a spectrum (Gregg and Wadsworth, 1998). And public policies can move with these porous and blurred boundaries.

Admittedly, transfer policies from unemployment towards schemes of assistance, oriented on the least employable unemployed, have slowed down during the 1990s. But other movements lead many unemployed to various fuzzy situations of inactivity. This concerns, first and foremost, the unemployed who are unable to escape from this condition: for example the so-called discouraged unemployed, who wish to work but do not search jobs and are therefore classified as inactive; or those vulnerable and disoriented young people whom the European Commission labels as NEETs (Eurofound, 2012), or even lone mothers who are the target of redistributive policies (specific income of assistance or allowance for the education of children) encouraging their inactivity (Demazière, 2017). There are therefore various forms of invisible unemployed, that is to say people wishing to work but who occupy inactive status. The lingering unemployment spiral fuels this process, as do public policies. These deterioration processes are part of the experience of unemployment, obviously of some unemployed, the most disadvantaged, but also of those who join the ranks of invisible unemployment.

The limits between unemployment and employment are also blurring, leading to the emergence of an increasing number of unemployed people who nevertheless work. These phenomena are known as “underemployment”. According to the ILO definition, underemployment means underutilisation of the productive capacity of the employed population. This underutilisation has some consequences which bring the individuals

concerned closer to the unemployed, placing them between employment and unemployment: their wages are insufficient to live, they want to work more, they are looking for better jobs. Involuntary part-time jobs are an important form of underemployment, and the number of involuntary part-timers has increased in many European countries. According to Eurostat, for 2018, part-timers who would prefer to work more hours represent 25% of the part-timers in EU, 64% in Italy, 55% in Spain, 41% in France, 10% in Germany. Part-timers, involuntary as well as voluntary, are classified as workers and not unemployed. Underemployment has "human effects" (Burris, 1983) and strong consequences on everyday life (Wilkins, 2007; Heyes and Tomlison, 2020). But these effects are not uniform, because underemployment is heterogeneous. So, the part-timer's distance to unemployment depends very much on their hours worked and their wage earned. However, the multiplication of the working poor (Andrez and Lohmann, 2008) indicates that having a job does not protect from difficulties shared with the unemployed: poor standard of living, job search, etc.

Other forms of employment, generally called atypical, are part of the same dynamic. Unstable and precarious forms of (under-)employment have developed at a high rate in many European countries, offering ever weaker protection to the most vulnerable workers (Duell, Thureau and Vetter, 2016). Beyond the strong growth in temporary jobs, we should note the development of what can be called piecemeal jobs: either very short contracts (a few days at most), or very reduced working times (a few hours per week), or contracts without guaranteed income (everything depends on the actual activity), or multi-contracting jobs (with very few hours), or new forms of so-called self-employment (without any social protection), etc. The fragility of the contractual relationship, the short working time, the low remuneration, are all elements which place these workers at a short distance from the unemployed condition. Besides, some of them are registered in the PES. Consequently, these fragile forms of activity, and we can add informal work to them, can be considered as characteristics of contemporary unemployment -and not only of employment. There is no need to provide a detailed picture of these well-known forms of underemployment (see The European Pillar of Social Rights; e.g. Bednarowicz, 2019). A few examples are enough to argue their proximity to unemployment, and consequently the interest of considering them for our project.

Let's mention, for example, mini-jobs in Germany, which are very short part-time jobs sometimes supplemented with benefits, tending to increase since the Hartz reforms and to substitute "real" jobs with decent pay for unskilled workers and disadvantaged unemployed. In the United Kingdom, "zero-hour contracts", which guarantee no working time for the employee but oblige him/her to be available, are the apogee of the very flexible system. In France, a reform of unemployment insurance in the late 1990s introduced the possibility of gainful employment while being on unemployment benefit. This measure, called "activités réduites", aims to make it attractive to return to work, even part-time, even for very limited hours, even for very short periods. At the end of 2019, this affects almost 40% of the unemployed, which means that a large proportion of the unemployed also work. Furthermore, in many European countries, we observe a strong growth of the self-employed in many service activities. These self-employed are legally independent but economically dependent on a company (various forms of solo work and platform workers). These new forms of

employment, and the legal rules which favour their development, are often presented as a springboard to get out of unemployment. They can make it possible to gradually reconnect with the labour market. However, they carry the risk of locking the unemployed into a precarious situation. Furthermore, stricter job-take up rules introduced in unemployment benefit systems push unemployed to take these kinds of jobs. Some unemployment benefit systems also provide direct incentives (for example support to unemployed who want to become self-employed) to take up sub-standard/atypical employment.

Some scholars observe the growth of a "precariat" (Standing, 2014), coexisting in many European countries with a highly skilled and well-protected segment (Lallement, 2011). This precariat gathers a mix of durable unemployment, rapid transition between work and joblessness, dependant subcontracting, very short-term contracts, jobs with some working hours, informal jobs, etc. A significative, but variable across countries, proportion of those categorised as unemployed work in one way or another in order to survive; they have "a job but…" (McKee-Ryan and Harvey, 2011). These working unemployed are part of unemployment, just as those whose are rejected in the margins of inactivity.

Key take-aways:

The unemployed have extremely diverse situations on the labour market. They also have quite different statuses, varying across European countries and their public policies and legal rules. But everywhere the margins of unemployment blur, towards employment and towards inactivity. The unemployment margins are multiple: unemployed people who work, somewhat or irregularly, formally or informally; people who want to work but are not registered as unemployed either because they have become discouraged or because they have inactive status as defined by national social policies. Being on the margins of unemployment can have consequences, notably on job search, attendance at the PES, and more generally on the experience of each person deprived of employment. In any case, these situations, on the margins, must be included in our Hecat project, as they concern people who are in different ways excluded from employment in one way or another.

III.3. Employability and unemployment exit

A major dimension of the heterogeneity of the unemployed situations concerns the probabilities of exit from unemployment and access to employment. Unemployment is exit-oriented, as it is defined as a job deprivation. However, the chances to get a job are very unequal, depending on the major classical variables, the same as those of vulnerability mentioned above: age, educational level, socio-professional status, etc. Some of these inequalities are common to a large number of countries, the one to the disadvantage of the oldest unemployed, or the lowest levels of education. The unfavourable situation of certain categories of unemployed is crystallized and lasting. It leads to identify of sub-populations with very low chances of getting to job, sometimes targeted by public policies. Complementary with the concept of vulnerability, the statistical approach of employability makes it possible to assess the flows of unemployed people into the labour market: those who

remain jobless and those who escape. Vulnerability refers to the probability of becoming unemployed within a given population and during a given period. While employability can be defined as the probability of exiting unemployment by gaining access to a job (McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005). It is "the objective expectation or probability that a job seeker has a higher or lower probability of finding a job" (Ledrut, 1966). The concept of employability permit to estimate inequalities between categories of unemployed persons with regard to access to employment. For example, one category is said to be less employable than another because it has a higher proportion of long-term unemployed, indicating lower average chances to get a job. Other employability indicators, such as exit rates from unemployment or access to employment, are calculated with data from surveys using longitudinal follow-up of cohorts of unemployed or with more recent experimental methods. Such analyses invariably point out that employability varies according to key variables of the most classical sociological explanation: gender, age, length of unemployment, professional status, etc.

The influence of these factors, whether favourable or unfavourable, is generally small when taken in isolation, but increases if they are combined. National labour force surveys highlight combinations of variables favourable to the return to employment: for example, according to the French survey, the most favourable combination is as follows: male, young, graduate of higher education, recently unemployed. On the other hand, there are unfavourable variables: being elderly, long-term unemployed, being a woman, being without a diploma, and also not being registered in the PES. The cumulation of such properties more strongly fixes the unemployed in their situation. But length of the unemployment period is again particularly unfavourable since it is poorly perceived and reduces motivation in the long term, and this throughout Europe (Bentolila, García-Pérez and Jansen, 2017). The (very) long-term unemployed thus "queue up" behind others, and are stuck in a vicious circle of waiting. From this perspective, the lower employability of the oldest unemployed reflects a queuing phenomenon such that newcomers are placed ahead of the oldest in the queue. Unemployment durations largely result from this distribution of ranks in the queue, which appears wild or reversed. Exit from the queue is governed by a simple rule: who has waited will wait. Thus, even when the flow increases, the unemployed with the longest seniority do not rapidly exit the queue, and are rather the last to leave the queue.

Many hypotheses are put forward to explain the differences in unemployment exit. Unemployment duration can be interpreted as: the track of unfavourable characteristics (age, diploma...) for getting a job; the sign of different behaviour among the unemployed (discouragement and weakening of the job search, or trade-off in favour of waiting for a better job opportunity); the index of persistent mismatches between the characteristics of the unemployed and locally available jobs; a negative signal for potential employers who are reluctant to select this labour force, etc. The explanations remain uncertain, or in any case multiple. It is therefore preferable to adopt an open approach, integrating a wide range of potential factors, conditions for exiting unemployment. In particular, three sets of factors can be considered: the social and biographical characteristics of the unemployed, without limiting them to the variables used in the statistical surveys; the behaviour and trade-offs of the unemployed, which should consider job-seeking but also other aspects of unemployment

experiences; the properties of the local contexts in which the unemployed are registered, which concern both economic and labour market situations and the behaviour of employers and recruitment practices, since the concept of employability is clearly relational (Gazier, 1990). In other words, employability cannot be captured with only the standard variables. It is necessary to extend the range of information, to include the behaviours, beliefs and experiences of the unemployed, which are components of employability.

It is also difficult to characterize the processes that make it possible to find a job, beyond the predictive variables. And there is little research on the processes underlying good -or bad- employability. A fieldwork, based on in-depth interviews with formerly-unemployed individuals having managed to land a job provides some results on employability as measured by activities leading to employment (Demazière, 2020). It shows first of all that, even in the context of a depressed but not isolated employment pool, getting a job concerns unemployed people with very varied profiles. This confirms the complex, composite, and evolving nature of employability. In addition, it provides results on the relationship between getting a job and job search behaviour. The job search of the formerly unemployed appears both active and consistent, but this does not mean that they acted in line with institutional norms and frameworks. On the contrary, they got some capacity to adapt, and a mindset that allowed them to distance themselves somewhat from the normative model. A successful job hunt thus appears to be both moderate and mitigated, keeping the activation norm at one remove. And, above all, such a moderation and self-limitation help to maintain the motivation to look for a job and the ability to overcome the failures inherent in the job search.

In this sense, employability is also about coping with unemployment and the setbacks of the job search. Employability is part of the unemployed people's experiences. Indeed, the unemployed perceive, sometimes confusedly, intuitively and also intimately, their employability each time they try to get out of unemployment. A conception, informal, of employability -a practical knowledge concerning employability- crystallizes little by little, which influences the ways of behaving, of living, of thinking, in short, the experiences. The behaviour -understood in the broad sense with its symbolic dimensions- of the unemployed during the unemployment spell is crucial for understanding their failures or successes, and the dynamics of job search experiences (Riach and Loretto, 2009; Wanberg and al., 2009). However, it is also necessary to analyse what it means to obtain a job, i.e. to examine the characteristics of jobs obtained after leaving unemployment.

Key take-aways:

Getting out of unemployment and accessing employment are crucial issues. Regarding to that, inequalities between employed people remain strong, but not easy to explain. It is necessary to combine multiple categories of variables: relating to individual characteristics and behaviour, but also - and this is important even if poorly studied - relating to the local contexts in which the unemployed live, and also to the behaviour of employers - of the actors in the labour market more generally - towards them. In other words, employability is part of unemployment experience. This argues for not producing hasty and simplistic employability judgements and evaluations. All the more so as it

appears that employability, whether weak or strong, is not closely related to different degrees of compliance with the job search standards disseminated to the unemployed.

III.4. Leaving unemployment, getting which job?

The dynamics of the labour markets, and in particular the characteristics of the jobs on offer, matter to analyse the situation of the unemployment and their exit routes. Indeed, unemployment is not, in many cases, a latency period before access to regular and sustainable jobs. So, it is important to describe the properties of jobs taken. Of course, the unemployed do not have the same resources, in quantity as in quality, to find a job. We were able to observe this by analysing employability or the margins of unemployment. But the unemployed are all outsiders: employment is for them the job offers, the jobs available. They are therefore dependent on the qualities of these jobs. It is therefore useful to consider the labour markets and the job opportunities they offer. It is also necessary to examine whether the return to employment leads to a downgrading in professional situations or not. From a viewpoint of profiling instruments this growth leads to a main stake: what should be considered reintegration to employment? What are the differences between getting any job, getting a suitable job (occupation-skills match), getting a sustainable job, etc.?

The social science literature uses a range of different terms to describe the splintering of employment relationships in the form of shorter working times, fixed-term contracts, freelance employment, or agency-based employment. But the classifications used are variable. For example, an analysis of strong variations of these forms from a country to another has been based on a distinction between very-short part-time work, short fixed-term contracts, employment based on oral contracts, and zero hours contracts (Eurofound, 2010). To characterize the overall trend, some scholars use the category of "nonstandard employment" (Goldthorpe 1984; Green, Krahn and Sung 1993; Kalleberg, Reskin and Hudson 2000), others prefer "atypical employment" (Córdova 1986; Grip, Hoevenberg, and Willems 1997); precarious (Vosko, 2010), flexible (Barbieri, 2009), bad jobs (Kalleberg, 2011) are other terms to describe what is a powerful dynamic of labour markets. The growth of low-quality jobs thus appears to be a fairly general movement, albeit of varying magnitude across countries.

A comparative analysis of the growth of atypical employment in Europe between 1996 and 2011 (Almendiger, Hipp and Stuth, 2013) shows that both the levels of atypical employment and its distribution vary greatly across the 21 countries studied. The picture is quite different, according to the various forms of atypical employment. In the bulk of the continental European countries part-time work is the dominant form of atypical employment. The authors distinguish between marginal and substantial part-time employment (for example, more than 20 hours per week). Substantial part-time work is the dominant form of part-time work in all the countries studied. This kind of employment, primarily devoted to women, is usually associated with low incomes, poor social insurance, and considerable employment insecurity and can therefore certainly be described as "precarious". Fixed-term employment is the most common form of atypical employment in Spain, Portugal, Poland, and Slovenia, and plays an

important role in France and Finland. In these countries, fixed-term employment is strongly associated with lower incomes and insecurity pathways. The categories of population particularly likely to be in fixed-term employment are not the same for all countries. In four of the countries where fixed-term contracts are the dominant form of nonstandard employment, young people are particularly likely to be in fixed-term contracts. However, in Portugal, Spain, and Poland this also applies to the middle age category (30 to 49 years old). The differences between countries are also important according to education levels or gender. Another main form of atypical employment, that is solo self-employment, is the dominant form of atypical employment in countries such as Romania, Greece, and the Czech Republic, and is growing, sometimes rapidly, in many other countries. Solo self-employment may be associated with lower income, insufficient social insurance coverage, considerable insecurity, and a lack of professional development prospects, but this is not necessarily the case. But it is an ambiguous phenomenon because in some countries, as Greece, both poorly qualified and highly qualified individuals are particularly likely to be in solo self-employment. The same in principle goes for fixed-term employment where parts of the fixed-term employment are project-workers who are highly paid.

The de-standardization of jobs in Europe is often described as unfavourable to workers, who do not benefit from the same social protection related to standard jobs, i.e. full-time, often salaried jobs (Lind and Moller, 1999). Several studies show that it is above all the weak protections of these jobs that disturb workers (Schmid, 2010). The general rise in non-standard employment across Europe thus poses problems common to all countries, and the growing number of non-standard jobs is a major challenge (ILO, 2016). This challenge is particularly acute for the unemployed and the institutions and professionals responsible for supporting them towards employment. Indeed, the unemployed are specifically exposed to these non-standard jobs. An econometric analyse based on an indicator of Involuntary Non-standard Employment (INE) show that young and old workers, women, the low-skilled, non-nationals, and those who have been unemployed for more than a year are at greatest risk of INE (Green and Livanos, 2015). Other scholars argue that non-standard jobs are supposed to get the workforce into work through increased market flexibility, and are often offered to the unemployed. They appear as a temporary employment that provides a "stepping stone" to stable, full-time, secure employment. But this temporary situation often persists, if not deteriorate, pushing the most vulnerable people massively into lasting forms of precariousness - even poverty (Gutierrez-Barbarussa, 2016). The question of the qualities of the jobs obtained by the unemployed who manage to work is therefore crucial.

And a remarkable phenomenon at the exit from unemployment is that of downgrading. If it is crucial to measure how many unemployed get a job, and who are these persons, it is equally important to analyse the jobs they got, and what are their qualities compared with the jobs lost. Few researches focused on the gap between jobs required and jobs found by unemployed persons. For the case of France, we know that professional mobility of the formerly unemployed who found a job is very intense, only 25% among them keep the same profession (Lizé and Prokovas, 2009). Mobility is often identified as constrained, associated with job quality problems and poor working conditions. An upward mobility, which is sometimes

evoked, is not precisely studied, even if it is suggested that becoming self-employed could be considered as such, especially for manual workers becoming craftsmen. The downgrading phenomenon is important for those who are highly educated as they exit unemployment, especially for women. However, the most highly educated workers are also those who are most likely to be in the best jobs available (Evans, 2003). But the measure of downgrading strongly depends on the indicators used: the job's qualification and/or socio-economic group is often adopted while the salary level is rarely selected, but it is also possible to choose indicators as the contract type, the time worked, and many other elements regarding working conditions. As the deterioration in employment conditions and employment contracts is an important phenomenon at a macro level, the indicators chosen often refer to these changes in the job offer. However, it should not be overlooked that downgrading can also concern the content of work, the qualification, the loss of a valued trade, etc.

Then, it appears that long periods of unemployment favours downgrading. Many other factors matter, as being low-skilled, working in a declined sector, and the main variables degrading employability. All things being equal, the probability of downgrading increases with certain variables: this is the case of age (from 50 years), duration of unemployment, precarious and part-time employment experiences. The characteristics of career paths matter in different ways. Thus, the unemployed who have already had precarious jobs are likely to have new ones, at the risk of being trapped in precariousness. On the other hand, the redundant unemployed who have lost a stable job might find a more unstable contract, and are thus exposed to the same vicious circle. This is particularly stressed in depressed areas, for skilled manual workers, and for the unemployed at the dawn of the end of their career. In addition, some categories of the active population are able to find only low-skilled jobs and / or precarious contracts despite their previous experience or their qualifications. This is the common fate of immigrant populations in many countries. In Italy, for example, new immigrants face the impossibility of finding skilled non-manual jobs, and they also experience serious difficulties in entering self-employment (Fullin and Reyneri, 2010). Among the factors little studied in the literature, we can mention disabilities and illness (Schmitz, 2011). People whose illness may develop during the period of unemployment, sometimes as an invisible consequence, may be judged unable to get the same skilled a job they had.

Regarding this type of situation, but this can be extended to others in which the question of working capacities is not formulated in terms of illness or disability, the role of employment intermediaries and professional advisors can be decisive. This role is performed in difficult conditions and is often affected by strong tensions. This is shown by a study, carried out in England, on advisors working in special employment centres specifically dedicated to disabled adults (Angeloff, 2011). These advisors are constantly facing a dilemma. On the one hand, they invite unemployed disabled people to think about the ideal job they would like to do. On the other hand, they encourage them to be realistic and to revise their plan according opportunities available to them. If the dilemmas are particularly clear in the situation studied, they are more general in scope. They indeed express a tension between access to employment and the qualities of the job: to what extent achieving the objective of leaving unemployment can, or should, lead to accepting a deterioration in the target situation qualities? Any

unemployed person looking for work faces such a question. And any professional who advises the unemployed is just as much. Beyond the extent of the downgrading after unemployment, the stakes are important, because they directly concern the experiences of the unemployed as well as those of advisors who both face job offers.

Key take-aways:

Full-time, salaried employment is a common model of standard employment that has spread across Europe, but has been challenged for several decades. Non-standard forms of employment (mostly short-term contracts, part-time and self-employment) have increased, with various speed within European countries. For now, they do not secure workers from the vagaries of the economy and activity, in the absence of social protection adapted to these atypical forms. And the unemployed people, especially those disadvantaged in various ways, are generally forced to move to these low-quality jobs. The transitions from unemployment to employment often follow the path towards these bad jobs, and often cause occupational downgrading. The injunctions imposed, more or less severely, to the unemployed to quickly get a job and to downward their professional aspirations also contribute to it. This constitutes a challenge for the support delivered to the unemployed and for the tool to be developed in the framework of the Hecat project.

Conclusion

In this report, we have not provided a comprehensive overview of unemployment in Europe, of the unemployed, and of the institutions that care for them. Rather than listing the endless list of studies and publications devoted to unemployment in Europe, we tried to articulate the most relevant knowledge for discussing three dimensions of unemployment experiences: the lived experiences of the unemployed, the government and the institutional framework for these experiences, the inequalities regarding unemployed condition. Getting an extensive understanding of qualitative and experiential aspects of unemployment is a crucial issue for Hecat project: it is a condition to develop tools and algorithms based on our fundamental ethics: work with the unemployed rather than on them.

Also, the three main points examined in this report provide valuable guidance to develop and deepen Hecat project: analysing unemployment from the point of view of those who experience it and live alongside it (unemployed and advisors), in order to be able to develop a tool that is both usable by these populations and effective in the fight against unemployment. The arguments developed in this report show that unemployment is a complex phenomenon, and that it is essential to understand its various facets, even the most difficult to study through surveys. It has been widely established that relying on fluctuations in unemployment rates and exits from unemployment to assess the quality of public policies to return to work is far from sufficient: what matters is where the unemployed are heading for and which problems and support they encounter, at a time of great uncertainty on the labour market in Europe.

For several weeks now, this uncertainty has only increased with the rapid and massive expansion of the covid-19 pandemic. European States and European Commission have taken different measures to counter it, but all economies are strongly affected by the slowdown in activity necessary to contain the spread. In response to the crisis, different policies aim to protect workers and reduce the material and socio-economic impacts. However, these workers are currently in very unequal situations: some are teleworking while keeping their salary, others are on short-time working and have only part of their pay; some have lost their jobs, while others are on the front line every day to ensure basic necessities. And then there are all those who are unemployed and whose job search is slowed down, and all those who have recently become unemployed. Public policies will not be sufficient to stem the devastating effects of the crisis on the most vulnerable. The next period, with its renewed difficulties and stakes regarding unemployment, will undoubtedly put new research questions and practical challenges for the Hecat project. Henceforth, this unpredictable situation strongly reminds us of the need to heavily and stringently consider the varied experiences of unemployed people in order to design relevant and effective tools and algorithms to fight unemployment, and enabling to work with the unemployed rather than on them.

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