



Being a NEET with a sociological lens: Determinants and Consequences

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3 issues

Welfare state regimes and practices of the country,

Policies and practices regarding the transition from the education system to work

Cultural differences that define the criteria for adulthood

- The origin and development
- Young people positions in the labour market
- School-to-work transition



What do we know

Uncertain Times, Unsettled Lives: Shaping our Future in a Transforming World

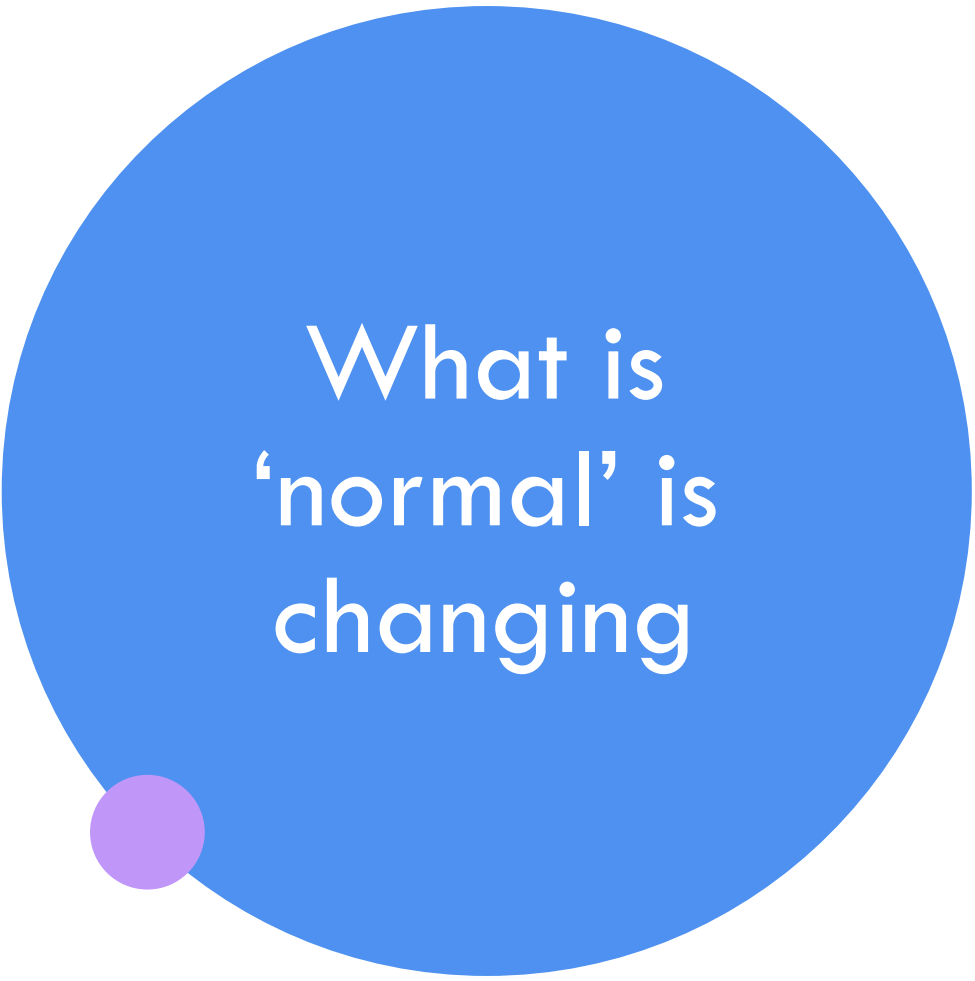
Current World population: 8.1 Billion People

- Today the world is home to the largest generation of young people in history (1.2 billion people),
- the expansion of education, with more young people participating in upper secondary and tertiary education than ever before,
- Eighty-five (85) per cent of the world's youth live in developing countries.
- In developing countries, 200 million young people have not even completed primary school and need alternative pathways to acquire basic skills for employment and prosperity.
- Across the world, today's youth are three times more likely to be unemployed than other adults




What do we know

- Inequalities, insecurity and vulnerability are rising
- Quality of jobs available for youth is declining
- Underemployment and poverty for youth is on the rise
- Young workers are disproportionately represented in low-paid work
- Most young workers in developing countries are in the informal economy.
- Temporary employment and lack of permanent employment for youth is rising
- More insecure and slower transition from school to work



What is
'normal' is
changing

'Normal' transition to adulthood:

- Having a normal job,
 - Having a home
 - Having a partner
- 



Definition

Definition is important: knowing the size and the characteristics of these groups is essential

There is no universally agreed upon definition of youth. For statistical purposes however, the UN Secretariat defines 'youth' as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24.

Many different definitions are used globally to define NEET youth. EUROSTAT and OECD define youth as those aged between 15 to 29 whereas the World Bank defines youth covering the age of 15-24.



The concept

The term 'NEET' was introduced in the UK in 1996 by a Home Office official report as an analytical category aiming to identify those young people aged 16-18 who got lost in the transition from school to work (Yates and Payne 2006).

«early school leavers»

Weakness of young people's participation in the labour market

The consolidation and spread of the term, however, came the specific indicator for NEETs used by Eurostat since 2009 that summarizes their **main conditions**: unemployment and non-education or training activity (European Commission 2010).



Age matters

Poor outcomes for independence

Istance and colleagues (1994) used the term Status 0/Status Zer0 (later changed to "Status A") to refer to a group of people aged 16-17 years who were not covered by any of the main categories of labor market status (employment, education, or training).

The term Status 0/Status Zer0 was merely a technical term derived from careers service records, where Status 1 referred to young people in post-16 education, Status 2 to those in training, and Status 3 to those in employment.

The term Status Zer0 was by no means intended as a negative label



Some critical views

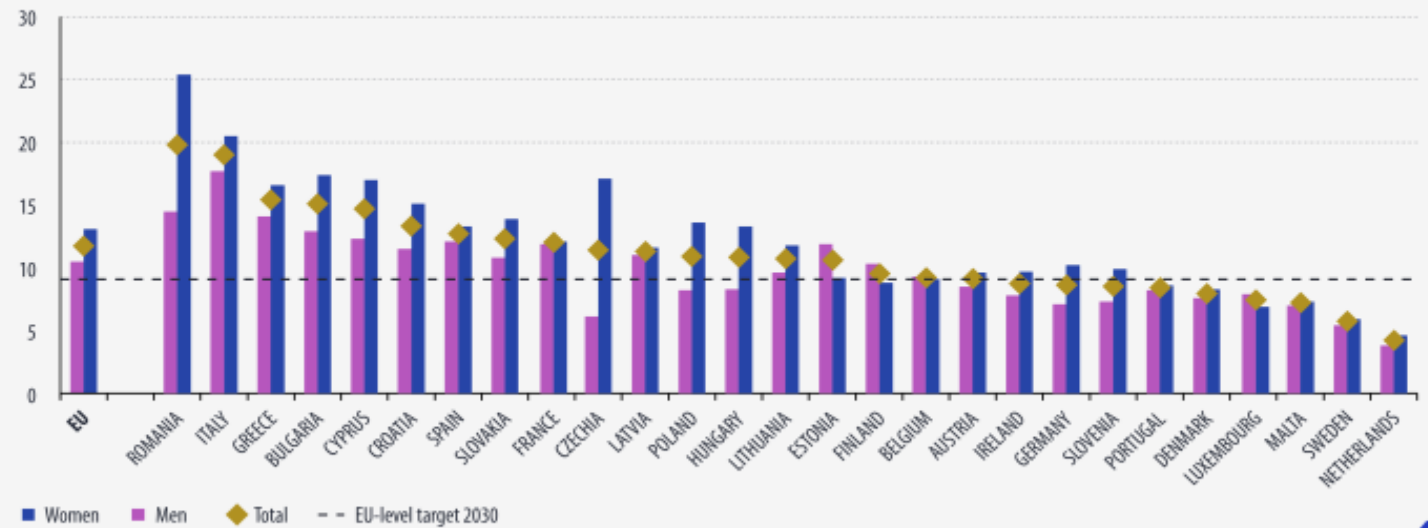
- excessively extending a negative label to youth transitions and life courses (Furlong 2006; Yates and Payne 2006);
- depicting being NEET as a function of the individual, ignoring the contribution of broader social inequalities (Zyngier 2008);
- a new label of the typical 'moral panic' of upper classes (Avis 2014);
- country and context specific and not easily comparable (Cuzzocrea 2014).
- individualization of risks and the socialization of costs of underemployment

NEET Rate

NEET rate = $\frac{\text{number of young people not in employment, education or training}}{\text{total population of young people}}$

Young people (aged 15-29) neither in employment nor in education and training, 2022

(by sex, in %)



Note: ranked on the average share for men and women (aged 15-29).

eurostat

In 2022, 11.7 % of 15-29 year-olds in the EU were neither in employment nor in education and training.





Previous Studies:

The number of NEETs around the globe is increasing.

- Individual risk factors
- Intergenerational transmission
- Quality of education
- Public expenditure on education
- Passive labour market policies

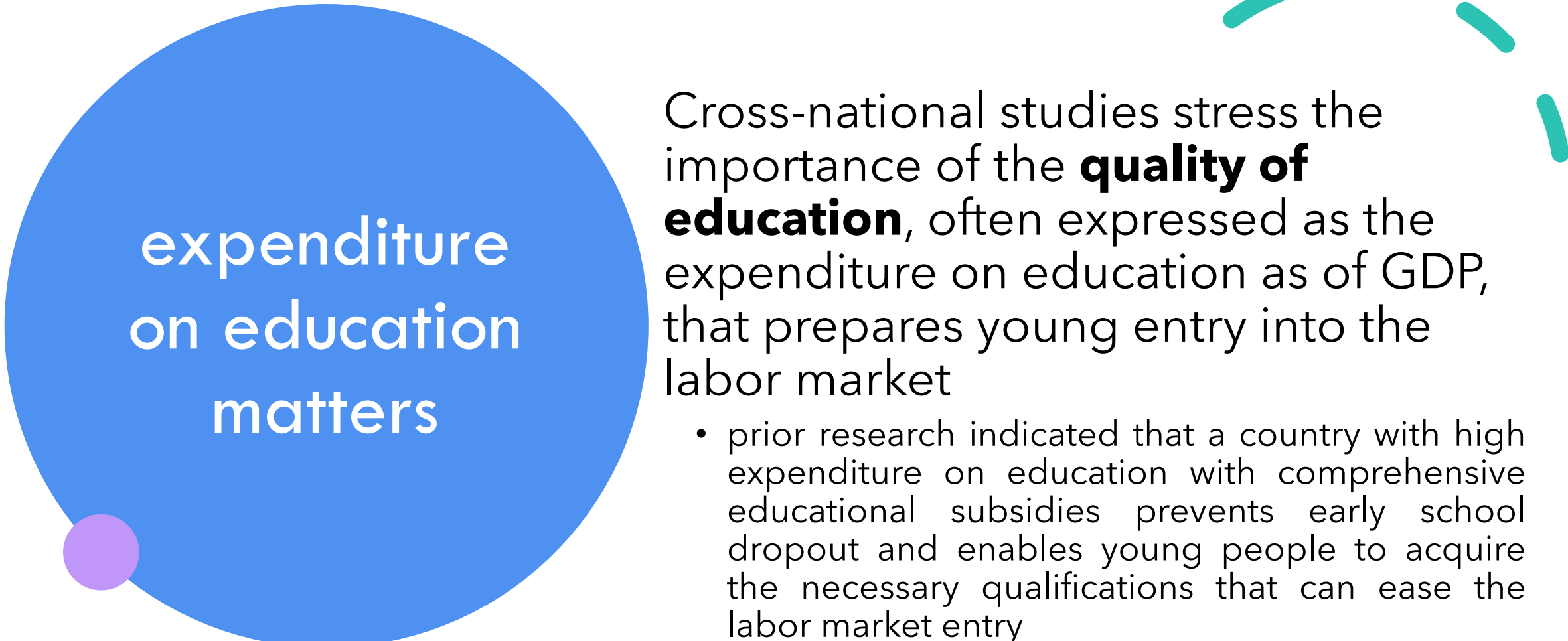


Determinants:

- Gender: majority of countries around the world, women are more likely to become NEET compared to men.,
- Marital status: NEET men are more likely to be single while NEET women are more likely to be married
- Age group of youth
- Education: Low educated and low skilled youth are overly represented among NEETs
- Socio-economic status: Socioeconomic status and household income level are other important predictors of being NEET,
- Type of living area: urban/rural
- Immigrant families, and
- Single-parent families

Additional factors such as low family income, disadvantaged family background, migratory background, disabilities and family responsibilities are also important in increasing the risk of becoming NEET. Having parents with a history of unemployment or divorced parents have also proved to increase young people's likelihood of becoming NEET.

As NEETs accumulate less work experience, they become more likely to earn less in the future.



expenditure
on education
matters

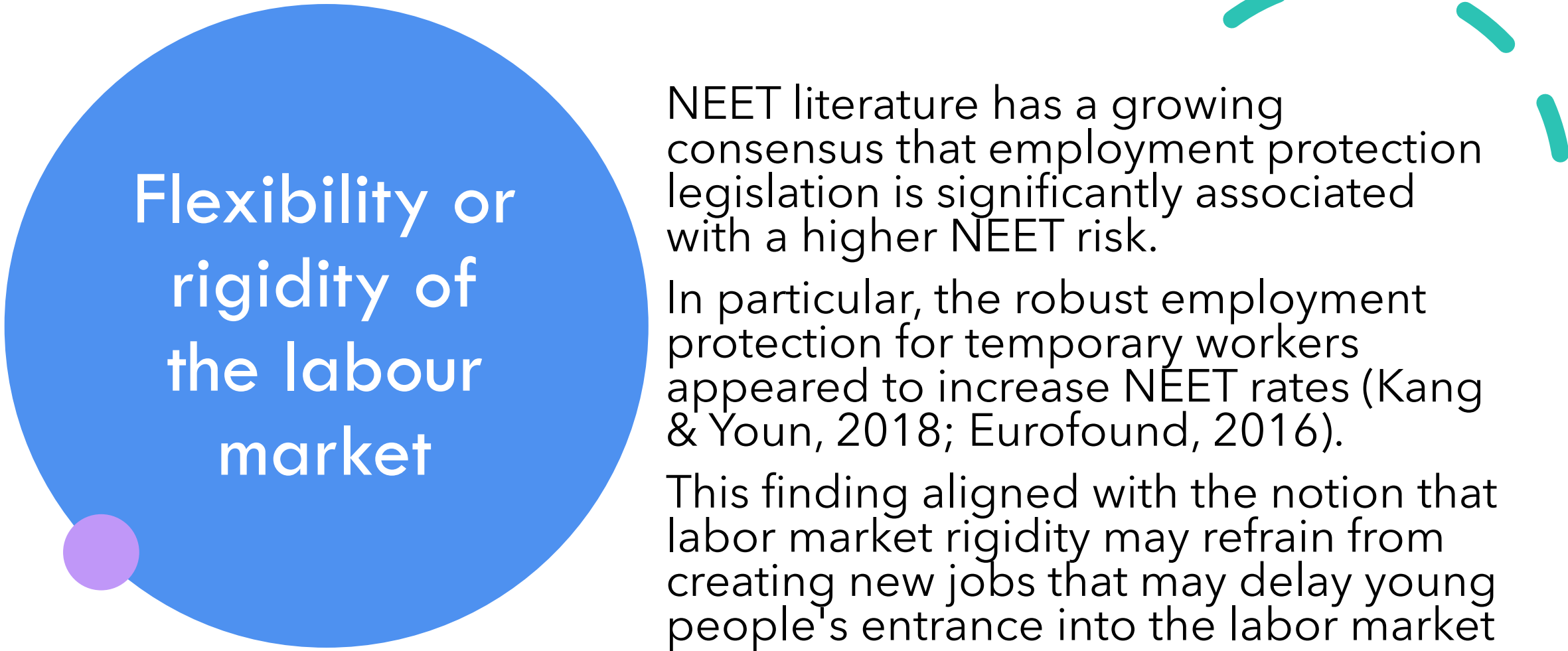
Cross-national studies stress the importance of the **quality of education**, often expressed as the expenditure on education as of GDP, that prepares young entry into the labor market

- prior research indicated that a country with high expenditure on education with comprehensive educational subsidies prevents early school dropout and enables young people to acquire the necessary qualifications that can ease the labor market entry



Active labour market policy

- job search assistance programs,
- training courses,
- hiring and direct job-creating subsidies,
- and public employment services
- a large share of the NEET population is observed in countries with passive labor market policies like Southern and Central Eastern European countries.



Flexibility or rigidity of the labour market

NEET literature has a growing consensus that employment protection legislation is significantly associated with a higher NEET risk.

In particular, the robust employment protection for temporary workers appeared to increase NEET rates (Kang & Youn, 2018; Eurofound, 2016).

This finding aligned with the notion that labor market rigidity may refrain from creating new jobs that may delay young people's entrance into the labor market



welfare state benefits

The increase in public social spending significantly reduced the risk of being NEET of young people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds (Kang and Youn, 2018)

An institutionalized form of family support through the welfare state may **'de-familise care'**



Gender: being woman

In 119 of the 146 countries, the NEET rate is higher among women.

According to the OECD (2016) reports females are 1.4 times more likely to be NEET than men, and the share of inactive female NEET is more than three times higher than males (OECD, 2019).

The gender gap in the NEET rate tends to widen as women enter their mid-20s.

Labor discrimination against females is another structural constraint that makes women withdraw from the labor force.

The insufficient number of publicly accessible early child care centers raises the reservation wage, the lowest wage level that an individual is willing to work, for females, which discourages job search or labor market participation.



Labour
Market:
inflation of
qualifications



there is not such a high and constant demand for highly skilled jobs.

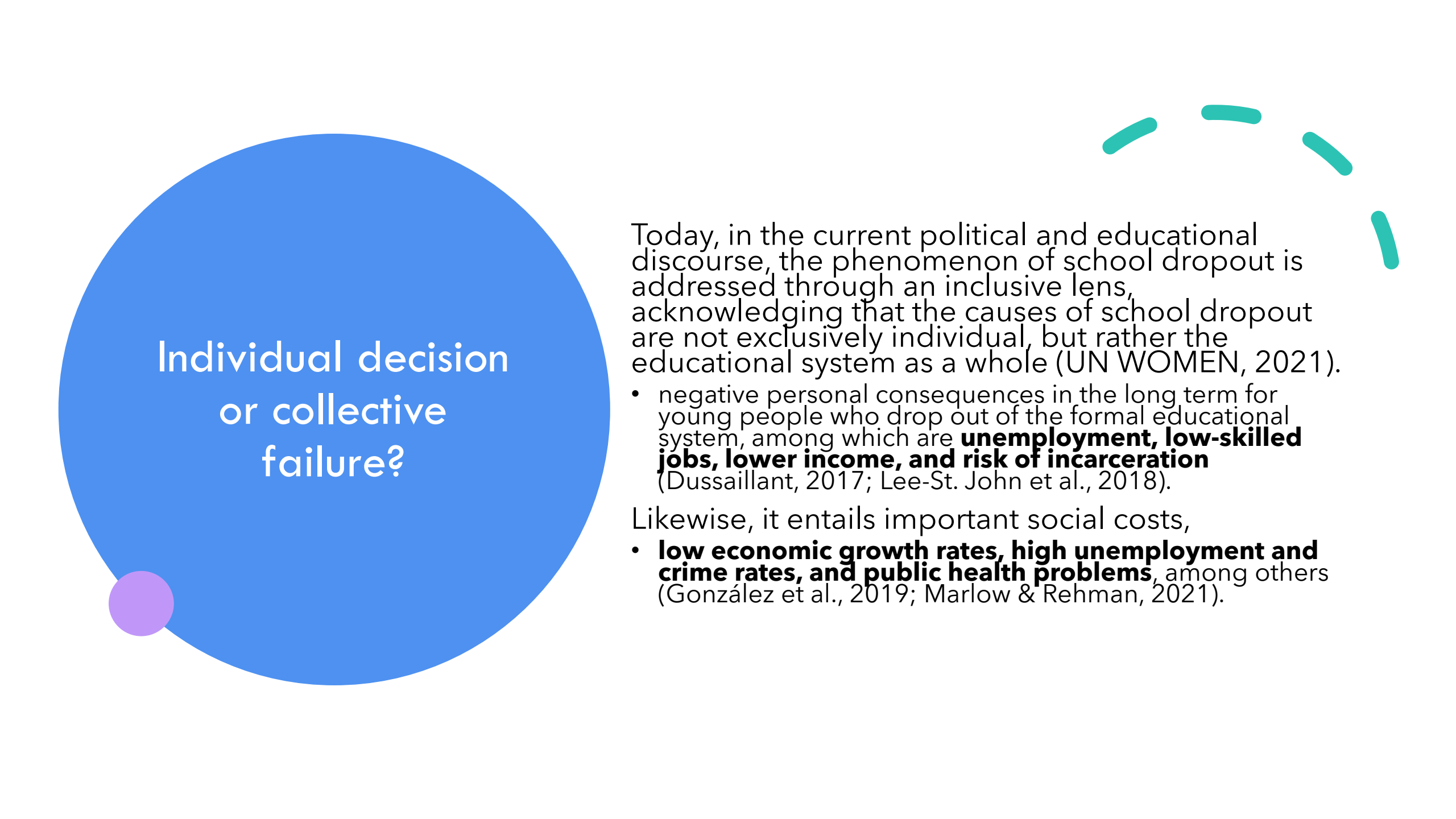
This situation creates a mismatch for young workers and produces down-skilling and underemployment.

The NEET condition therefore appears to be not a problem about lack of employability of youth, but more likely the outcome of **a systemic mismatch between the economic system and the educational system that characterizes the accelerated development of capitalism in contemporary societies.**



different stages of life

Younger age groups (19-24 years old) were more influenced by the school-to-work transition process, while older age groups (25-29 years old) were closely linked to the functioning of the labor market



Individual decision or collective failure?

Today, in the current political and educational discourse, the phenomenon of school dropout is addressed through an inclusive lens, acknowledging that the causes of school dropout are not exclusively individual, but rather the educational system as a whole (UN WOMEN, 2021).

- negative personal consequences in the long term for young people who drop out of the formal educational system, among which are **unemployment, low-skilled jobs, lower income, and risk of incarceration** (Dussailant, 2017; Lee-St. John et al., 2018).

Likewise, it entails important social costs,

- **low economic growth rates, high unemployment and crime rates, and public health problems**, among others (González et al., 2019; Marlow & Rehman, 2021).



Consequences

a loss of young people's potential.

long-lasting consequences, with a negative effect on future employment outcomes and earnings as well as on physical and mental health.

involvement in criminal activities and social exclusion

The negative consequences can extend beyond NEETs themselves and have an impact also on their family and on society as a whole.

all with high societal costs



Consequences

most dropouts-and the most dangerous dropouts-were male.

"the primary causes for the high rate of dropouts among women is undoubtedly early marriage.«

Education is the most important variable, and it has the strongest effect in influencing the probability of being NEET.



Profile of a NEET in Turkey

Age: 25-29

Gender: Young women

Motherhood Status: married
NEET women

Regional Factors: Regional
development disparities

Education: low school
attendance or poor school
performance

Disability Status:
Being a Refugee



Conclusion

the heterogeneity of the NEET population across gender or age.

This evidence suggests that the NEET issue around the globe is largely the problem of women with family responsibilities, which indicates the need to consider the divergent causes of varying NEET populations to maximize policy efficiency when policymakers weigh the tradeoffs involved in investing in designing NEET preventive policy.