



# Políticas sociales ante horizontes de incertidumbre y desigualdad

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## **From dualization to continuum. Exploring dimensions of Outsiderness in Southern Europe.**

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## **Abstract**

In this paper we advance an original theoretical proposal for analysing the consequence of deregulation in Southern Europe labour markets. Instead of conceptualizing dualization as a binary combination of insiders/outsideers, we propose a model that explores different dimensions of outsidersness along a continuum of positions from the core to the margins of the labour market. Assuming an intersectional perspective, we analyse these trends in six Southern European countries characterised by different timing of labour market reforms, different welfare regimes, and different economic performances along the crisis (Spain, Italy, France, Austria, Croatia, Greece). Our main source will be the European Labour Force Survey microdata (2000-2016), aiming at identifying involuntary non-standard work characterised by a potential risk of contractual misuse.

## **Keywords**

*non-standard work, dualization, Southern European model, involuntariness, contractual abuse*

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## 1. Introduction

The research agenda in European sociology on labour markets has for many years put a strong emphasis on theories of labour market segmentation (Atkinson and Heritage, 1984; Gallie et al., 1998) according to which countries of Southern Europe are characterized by an employment regime with a strong insider/outsider divide (Plougmann, 2003; Kalleberg, 2003; Rueda, 2015). This dichotomy has been highlighted in many studies as a consequence of the way deregulation was introduced and reproduced in the labour market in Southern Europe (Rueda, 2014; Rueda et al., 2015), leading to the emergence of new social risks for certain categories of workers (Taylor-Gooby, 2004). In southern Europe the process of dualization of labour markets has been amplified in recent decades by labour market reforms characterized by a common imprint: deregulation has always been introduced "on the margins" (Barbieri, 2009; Jessoula et al., 2010; Emmenegger et al., 2012; Checchi and Leonardi, 2016), that means, the new rules were applied only to new entrants, while keeping intact, or almost, the regulative framework concerning the standard and permanent employment relationships already in place at the moment of implementation of the reform (Vesan, 2015).

However, in this article we argue that, considering the recent evolution of labour markets, a dualistic insiders/outsiders approach is inappropriate for describing specific work conditions that are analytically inconsistent with a mere dichotomous classification. The dual analysis approach on labour markets has so far focused mainly on the institutional aspects of labour market regimes and their integration into social protection systems, whereby outsiders are those who are less protected from social security and less integrated in the labour market, i.e. non-standard workers, unemployed and discouraged (Davidsson and Naczyk, 2009; Sacchi et al., 2009; Emmenegger et al., 2012; Lindvall and Rueda, 2012; Schwander and Housermand, 2013; Rueda et al., 2015;). In line with previous studies that have highlighted the limitations of an insiders/outsiders dichotomy (Halleröd et al. 2015; Jessoula et al., 2010, Marques and Salavisa, 2017), the approach of this article questions the theoretical premises of the dualization approach, while shifting the analytical focus from the level of macro-regulation to the level of employment relations. Our analytical perspective seeks to provide a framework that underlines the emergence of a continuum of work situations at the micro level, from the most central and protected positions to those most at risk, investigating more in-depth the regulatory dynamics of employment relations. This approach leads us to the identification of new risk profiles (Taylor-Gooby, 2004, Bonoli, 2007), whose instability, fluidity and heterogeneity affect today a significant percentage of employed and under-employed in many European countries. We therefore propose a new theorization of the concept of outsidersness: our perspective does not consider non-standard work as such as a condition of outsidersness in itself;

instead, a non-standard employment turns to be a situation at risk when other aspects such as involuntariness and risk of contractual abuse come into force.

The article presented here pursues the following objectives. First, it intends to provide a theoretical framework showing how the dualistic perspective is too simplistic to grasp the complexity of current labour markets. At the same time, it engages in a more comprehensive concept of outsidership, which is instead understood as a continuum of different categories of workers. Second, it presents an empirical analysis of involuntary non-standard work and work at risk of contractual abuse through the European Labour Force Survey microdata (2007-2016), in six European countries (Italy, Spain, Austria, Greece, France, Croatia). In particular, we intend to study the different intersectional categories (age, gender, level of education), in which the contracts most at risk are concentrated. The choice of countries is related to a specific geographic area that is South Europe, including those countries that are included in the South European model (Ferrera, 1996), like Spain, Greece and Italy, and other three countries, Austria, France and Croatia, that are geographically located in the South of Europe despite their social policy system being substantially different.

The final objective is to contribute to dualization debate (Emmengger et al, 2012) by presenting an analysis of the degrees of outsidership in the labour market, distinguishing three main analytical dimensions: differentiation by social groups, territories, and generations. The differentiation by social groups will show intersectional inequalities in the labour market. As for the territories, the analysis will provide a picture of different models of outsidership between and among countries, focusing on regional difference at NUTS2. Finally, we consider age as a fundamental dimension in the analysis, as far as deregulation in those countries has been addressed mainly to new entrants and more specifically to young workers.

## **2. Literature review and theoretical framework**

Comparative studies that support the dualization hypothesis focused on the institutional dimension as a fundamental factor for defining the insider/outsider categories. They argue on the concrete possibilities of access to social protection systems for outsiders, in the sense that outsidership is defined by a low integration in national welfare systems (King and Rueda, 2008; Davidsson and Naczyk, 2009; Sacchi et al., 2009; Lindvall and Rueda, 2012; Emmenegger et al., 2012). Under this perspective, outsiders are those who have a non-standard contract or excluded from labour markets (unemployed or discouraged), since, because of this, they have a reduced access to social benefits.

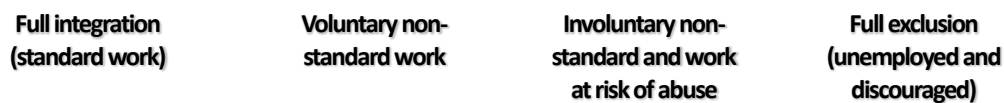
However, another strand of literature has questioned a merely dualistic approach. In particular, Jessoula et al. (2010), analysing the Italian system, has highlighted the emergence of different groups in the labour market categorized by a different scale of integration, identifying, in addition to the already mentioned insider and outsiders categories, also the category of mid-siders. This includes small entrepreneurs, self-employed workers, workers employed in small and medium-sized companies and the various atypical and precarious workers. Mid-siders do not have access to the same (high) level of protection of insiders, but, on the other hand, they are employed and, to a certain extent, may be entitled to social security schemes. Other authors have questioned the approach that identifies workers' labour market integration exclusively on the base of their current contractual position (fully employed vs. atypical or unemployed), arguing that also their expectations and perceptions about their (future) risks on the labour market are important element to consider when defining working positions in labour market (Schwander and Houser mann, 2013).

Stemming from critics to dualization, the analytical frame applied in this work puts under discussion the perception of outsiders as a whole. First, it distinguishes between person employed (although with non-standard contracts) and those who are excluded, as they would like to work but are currently not employed (discouraged or unemployed). Secondly, among those who are employed with non-standard contract it differentiates those who have willingly chosen this condition (voluntary non-standard work) and those who are unwillingly accepting it. Their condition might be defined as under-employment (Bodnár, 2018): they would like to work as standard workers, but they were not able to find an equivalent full-time permanent job. Thirdly, among those who are involuntarily non-standard employed, we identified those profiles who might be considered at risk of abuse. In fact, the process of deregulation 'at margins' in Southern Europe has led to the consolidation of micro-level regulatory practices in which different categories of non-standard workers have found themselves in a weak bargaining power, which has often resulted in the abuse of their contractual position (Firin u, 2015). Taking as a reference the neo-institutionalist approach (Streeck and Thelen 2005, Crouch 2005), the implementation of policies in a context of conflicting interests necessarily implies a process of mediation by the actors involved in employment relations - i.e., employers and employees. These actors exploit a certain space of action and formulate their choices on the basis of their power as well as of their normative and cognitive preferences (Scharpf, 2018). However, given the asymmetry of bargaining power between employers and employees in employment relationships, outcomes of deregulation reforms were in general more favourable for employers than for employees.

Figure 1 identifies the different groups of our analysis, from standard workers to the most marginal ones, up to exclusion from the labour market. In opposition to standard employment, we identify

different positions among outsiders using an analytical frame that perceive outsidersness as a continuous phenomenon, differently from previous literature which identifies outsiders dualistically by separating those who are not standard workers and are not protected from social security. In a continuous model of outsidersness, abuse on non-standard contract and involuntariness in a non-standard employment position add up to the most marginal dimension of outsiders identified in the condition of exclusion from the labour market (unemployment and discouragement).

**Figure 1. For a continuum model of outsidersness**



**Source: authors' elaboration**

Meanwhile, feminist studies on women's labour market participation have focused on the intersection of several risk factors affecting different categories of workers. Intersectionality (Crenshaw 1991) argues that the unequal effect of some personal characteristics (such as gender, age, school level) is amplified by the intersections between these dimensions of disadvantage (Maestriperi and León, 2019). The added value of complementing an intersectional approach in the dualization debate is represented by the possibility of considering labour market inequalities from a more dynamic and multidimensional point of view, with the intention of highlighting the heterogeneity of the outsiders' area, instead of perceiving it as a single whole.

Dualization in Southern European market has originated from the implementation of labour market reforms that have deregulated labour market while keeping intact the rights and protection of standard workers (namely, male adult breadwinners). In this sense, outsidersness is defined on the basis of comparison with the "standard" position in the labour market. As already identified in the literature (Hipp et al., 2015), standard workers are those who enjoy the maximum benefits associated with participation in the labour market for access to social protection systems, thanks to full-time and time-dependent employee employment: they are insiders from an institutional point of view, as they fully enjoy the rights associated with employment. The centrality of standard work is also determined by the fact that it is still the dominant form of employment (as seen in paragraph 4), even if the non-standard labour quota has increased steadily since the introduction of labour market deregulation in the last decades (Hipp et al., 2015). Women, young people and workers with

migrant origin have on the contrary been significantly exposed to the progressive precarisation of their working conditions, because they were considered workers whose condition of secondary earner would have not impacted the welfare of families (Vesan, 2015). As highlighted by Marques and Salavisa (2017), given that post-industrial labour markets are characterized by an increasing number of jobs in private services, generally with more precarious and less regulated collective agreements with respect to the manufacturing sector, it is not surprising that newcomers are more vulnerable to insecurity and low wages. While the older generations were able to safeguard their work condition by referring to employment guarantees (especially in the public sector), a significant proportion of young people entered the labour market in sectors with low density trade union (which has been falling since the late 1980s) and non-standard employment, especially in the private sector. As a result, young people are more affected by the increase in precariousness because in the process of deregulation there is a clear temporal dimension, as it affects young generations, exposing them to precarious, intermittent and discontinuous occupations (Rizza and Maestripieri 2015). Gender and age are characteristics that further diversify the groups of insiders, going beyond the mere institutional point of view.

In the perspective of labour market segmentation, it is important to underline that the status of non-standard workers can assume a diversified position within the segmentation model, laying in the boundaries between insiders and outsiders (Allmendinger et al., 2013; Gutierrez Barbarrusa, 2016). Although all of them enjoy less rights compared to standard workers (Hipp et al., 2015), certain types of non-standard workers can find themselves in a weaker position on the basis of the involuntary nature of their non-standard work and the possible risk of abuse of their contract. The different categories of outsiders are taken into consideration in our analysis in the following paragraphs.

### **3. Research objectives and methodology**

The article here proposed aims at studying outsidersness in Southern European countries, following its trends in the last 10 years on the basis of a continuous model of insiders/outside's cleavages in the labour market (§ section 2). In particular, in the article we identify outsiders on the basis of two non-standard contracts: part-time and fixed-term contracts.

First, we focus on involuntary part-timers, who are those part-time workers who are part-time because they could not find an equivalent full-time job. Among them, we consider in a more marginal position those workers who are *bogus*, meaning those who work more than 30 hours/week despite officially having a part-time job. Secondly, we take into consideration those fixed-term

workers which are involuntarily temporarily employed as they were not able to find an equivalent permanent contract. Among them, we differentiate those workers those who are *bogus*, meaning that, despite having a three-months contract, they work with the current employer for at least one year. In both cases, we are convinced that the working situation of the worker might be considered at risk of contractual abuse, because it is not voluntarily chosen and it contradicts the temporality or the partiality of their non-standard conditions. In fact, we assume that in both cases of *bogus* non-standard employment their contract is only formally non-standard, as in practice the requirements of their working position are full-time (in the first case) or permanent (in the second case).

To explore those trends, we compare involuntary non-standard work and work at risk of abuse in six countries in south Europe: Italy, Spain, Greece, France, Austria and Croatia. Three of these (Italy, Spain and Greece) are usually framed as Mediterranean countries in welfare regimes debate (Ferrera, 1996), as they have common characteristics that distinguish them from the continental cluster of Esping Andersen (1990). We suppose that France and Austria have different ways of integrating workers into non-standard contracts which are more similar among them and different from the other countries, as they are considered fully belonging to the model of continental countries. On the contrary, Croatia should have a different profile, for its story of post-communist country. A supposedly different welfare regime of the countries involved in the study should help us in highlighting trends which are specific of the Mediterranean countries. With our analysis, we aim at supporting our hypothesis that the exit from crisis has implied a widening and complexification of the separation insiders/outsideers' which is more evident in the countries belonging to Southern Europe.

These six countries have peculiar characteristics that make them interesting to be compared (see table 2). First, the distribution between employed, unemployed and inactive population is particularly different between the countries: as shown by Eurostat, in 2016 we have 71,5% of employed persons in the 15-64 age in Austria, but only 52% in Greece. Speaking of unemployment, Spain and Greece have more than 20% of the labour force looking for a job, while Italy, France and Croatia have about 10% and Austria 6,1%. Regarding inactivity, highest values are to be found in Greece, Italy and Croatia, where more than 30% of the 15-64 y.o. population is not actively participating to the labour market. But the countries also differ in terms of education, which is supposedly directly related to a dualization process (Emmeneger et al, 2012): the highest share of tertiary educated persons are in Spain (32,2% in 2016), followed by France (30,8%) and Austria (28,9%). Italy is the country where tertiary educated individuals are the lowest percentage of 15-64 y.o. population, with only 15,7%. Italy is also the country with the highest share of ISCED 0-2 persons, together with Spain (around 40%): but the very same percentage means a different



distribution in the two countries. In Spain, there is a strong polarization between those who have low and high education; in Italy, there is a general lower level of education compared to the rest of the countries in the sample (Maestripietri and Leon, 2018).

**Table 1 – Labour market’s indicators in the six countries, 2016**

	<b>Austria</b>	<b>Spain</b>	<b>France</b>	<b>Greece</b>	<b>Croatia</b>	<b>Italy</b>
Employment rate (15-64)	71,5	59,5	64,2	52	56,9	57,2
Unemployment rate (15-64)	6,1	19,7	10,1	23,7	13,3	11,9
Inactivity rate (15-64)	23,8	25,8	28,6	31,8	34,4	35,1
% ISCED 0-2 (15-64)	19,6	41,9	25,4	30	20,6	41,6
% ISCED 3-4 (15-64)	51,5	24,4	43,5	43,5	59,4	42,7
% ISCED 5-8 (15-64)	28,9	32,2	30,8	26,4	20	15,7

*Source: Eurostat database, ELFS data*

The six countries clearly differentiate also in the way the crisis has impacted their economies and labour market, with Spain and Greece, as it is well known, who had suffered the most among the European countries. Nevertheless, table 3 helps seeing how in Italy and in Greece the crisis had begun even before the 2009, with two recession phases (2008/2009 and 2012/2013). In Austria and France, on the contrary, the second phase of the crisis only implied a slowing down, instead of a real downturn. Croatia is an exception: at the beginning of 2007 it showed growth rates superior to the other countries, but the impact of the crisis was stronger and lasted longer than in Greece and in Spain.

**Table 2 – GDP variation rates compared to the previous year in the six countries, 2007 – 2016.**

	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
Austria	3,7	1,5	-3,8	1,8	2,9	0,7	0,0	0,8	1,1	1,5
Spain	3,8	1,1	-3,6	0,0	-1,0	-2,9	-1,7	1,4	3,4	3,3
France	2,4	0,2	-2,9	2,0	2,1	0,2	0,6	0,9	1,1	1,2
Greece	3,3	-0,3	-4,3	-5,5	-9,1	-7,3	-3,2	0,7	-0,3	-0,2
Croatia	5,2	2,1	-7,4	-1,4	-0,3	-2,2	-0,6	-0,1	2,3	3,2
Italy	1,5	-1,1	-5,5	1,7	0,6	-2,8	-1,7	0,1	1,0	0,9

*Source: OECD database*

The main source of data for our analysis is the European Labour Force Survey microdata (2007-2016). At the micro level, we opted for an intersectional approach in the idea that the unequal effect

of personal traits (like gender, age and educational level) might be amplified by the concomitant presence of more than one of those personal traits. For example, the analysis hypothesises that being at the same time woman, young and low educated has a stronger negative impact on the labour market performance than the pure linear sum of those characteristics. Because of this, in the following analysis on part-time and fixed-term contract, the different intersectional categories will be taken into account to identify the groups in which there is the higher risk of marginality.

The analysis of the specific groups has been conducted within the population between 25 and 49 years old, the so called prime age, in the hypothesis that it is the most relevant population segment for studying the social and economic effects of ‘at-the-margins’ regulation (Hipp et al, 2015). From one side, those workers have completed their educational path and work is now their primary activity; from the other, they are in a period of their life in which the productivity is at its highest but reconciliation problems are also more frequent. As a matter of fact, a separation between the two age classes (25-34 and 35-49) will help us highlighting the effects of the deregulation in labour market, as the youngest are persons who have been active in the labour market just after the introduction of non-standard contracts. In this regard, it is important to remind the two European directives that have homogenised the regulation at European level: for part-time, it was the directive UE 97/81, while for fixed-term contracts is the 99/70. The almost contemporariness of the two laws allows to hypothesise a possible generational effect for those who have entered the labour market after the deregulation. For instance, those who have 34 y.o. in 2015 (born in 1981) had 16 years old when the part-time regulation was enforced and 18 for the fixed term one.

At a meso-level, we compared countries by focusing on their regions (NUTS 2). In fact, we want to test the empirical heuristic capacity of the Southern European model by analysing differences in the effect of labour market’s deregulation, while exploring if there are regional clusters that associate regions from different countries. The hypothesis is that the progressive internal fragmentation, even in the presence of a unique national macro frame, might be an indicator of a territorial diversification of occupational practices, which are reflected by the presence of working situations in contexts affected by a higher economic vulnerability. Therefore, we assume that workers are more likely to be involved in outsidership in those territorial contexts in which the access to labour market is more difficult. This occur even if formally the institutional frame is the same at the national level.

Finally, the empirical analysis covers the last ten years, from 2007 to 2016. This period is particularly interesting because it allows analysing the pre-crisis years (2007-2008), the most acute phase of the crisis (2009-2012), and the following period (2013-2016). Our hypothesis is that the

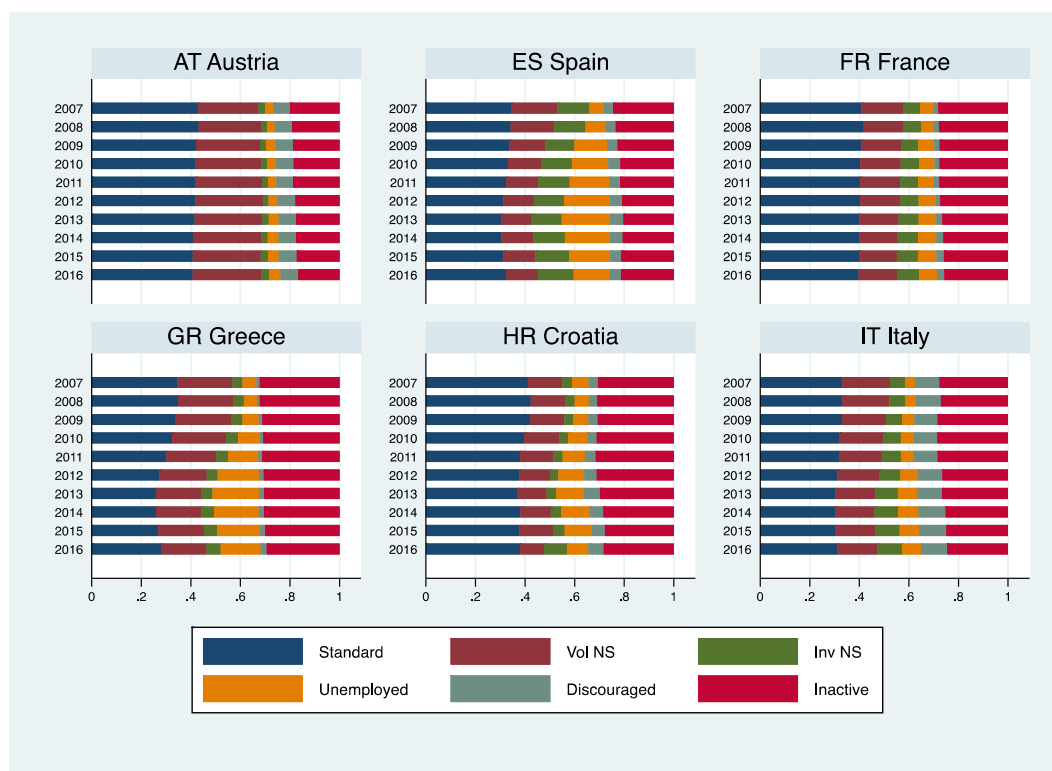
extent at which the crisis has impacted on labour markets is differentiated by social groups and countries, magnifying the negative effect of the economic downturns for those individuals who are positioned at the most disadvantaged intersections. The impact is differentiated at country level by the national social protection systems and at meso level by the economic performances of the local productive systems (Cucca and Maestriperi, 2015; Cucca and Maestriperi, 2016).

#### **4. Investigating the insiders/outsiders cleavages**

In this section, we focus on the convergent and divergent dimensions of the different labour markets and the effect of deregulation the insiders/outsiders cleavages. As put in evidence in section 3, across countries there are different level of employment rate, but also different trends along the crisis. In general, in the last 10 years we found a trend towards the reduction of inactivity, in view of a different distribution of unemployed and discouraged individual across countries. If France, in fact, shows a superior percentage of unemployment compared to Austria (in 2016 it was about 7% vs. 4,6%), it is also true that Austria has a superior rate of potential workers, who would be available to work but are not currently looking for a job (discouraged). The inactivity rate, however, is superior in France (25,7% in 2016) than in Austria (16,7%).

On the contrary, Greece and Spain show clearly the negative effect of the crisis on employment: in the last ten years, the rate of unemployed individuals has grown sharply to 14,7% in Spain and to 16,2% in Greece. In both countries, the discouraged are a minority (respectively 4,4% and 2,4%), while this group is relevant especially in Italy (10,5%). The growth of unemployment is also clear in the case of Croatia, but the magnitude of the growth is lower and it is also followed by a reprise in the last two years (it was 11,5% in 2014, while in 2016 is 8,7%). In this outlook, Italy shows peculiar patterns: on one side, there is a rate of discouraged employment seekers which is higher than any other country and is growing along the years. The concomitant reduction of inactivity can be explained by recent reforms that have changed the requirements for retirement, favouring the reduction of pensioner in working age from 7,2% in 2007 to 3,7% in 2016 (Firinù and Maestriperi, 2018). Even from a first descriptive analysis, it is already clear how the six countries differentiate in terms of access to labour market, as long as the distribution of inactivity, unemployment and discouragement is particularly unequal. The most traditional dimension of outsidersness, which is the exclusion from labour market, occurs with evidence in Spain, Greece, Croatia and less in Italy. Exclusion also grows in correspondence with negative economic outlook and, generally, it scores higher in these countries compared to what we observe in France and Austria.

**Graph 3 – Percentages of employed by countries and years, population 15-64**



*Source: authors' calculations on European Labour Force Survey, 2007 - 2016*

Nevertheless, graph 3 shows also particularly interesting data as to regard the insiders/outsideers continuum previously theorised, if we focus on non-standard work and, in particular, on the involuntariness of this condition. France and Austria are clearly distinct from the other countries since the rate of standard work on the total labour force in working age remains stable in the last 10 years and superior to 40%. We found the same stability in the rate of voluntary non-standard work in Austria, but a drifting from voluntary to involuntary non-standard work in France. Especially in Austria but also in Greece and in Croatia, non-standard work seems to be wanted by workers, with less than 5% of the individuals between 15 and 64 years old that are involuntary non-standard employed<sup>1</sup>. Regarding the countries that have mostly suffered from the crisis, it is possible to highlight that in Greece the higher unemployment has been to the detriment of a relevant rate of standard work which has been lost in the last 10 years (from 34,5% of 2007 to 27,9% of 2016), while in Spain and in Croatia there is a reduction among the number of voluntary non-standard workers. Even if graph 3 does not allow us to see in detail the reasons why people voluntarily chose a non-standard job, it is possible to say that in Greece and Croatia the most salient concern regards

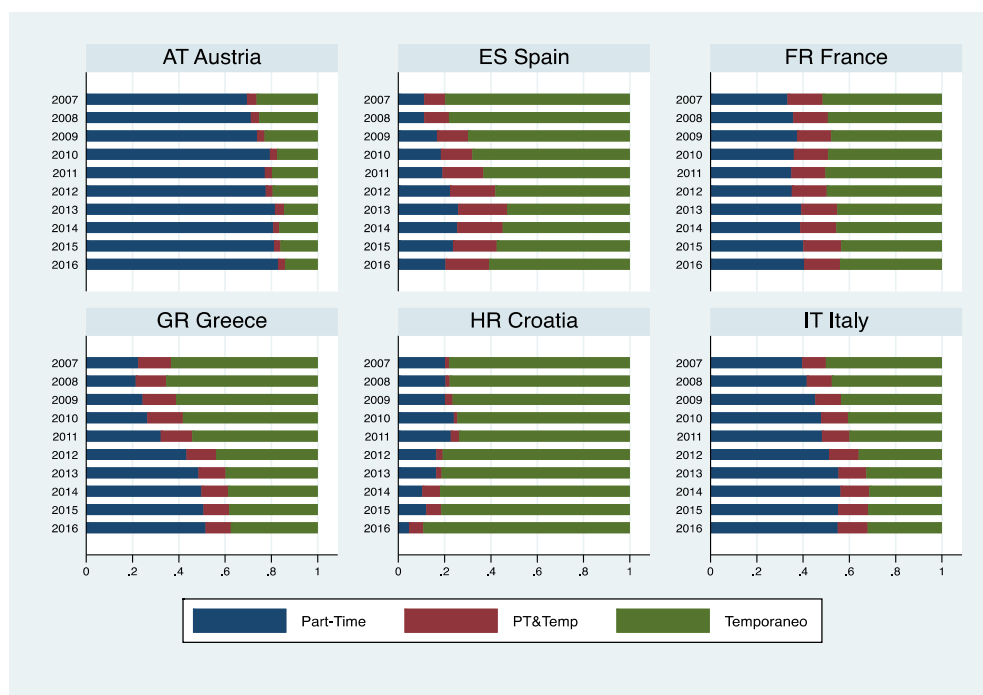
<sup>1</sup> Data shows a dramatic increase of involuntary non-standard work between 2015 and 2016 in Croatia, which we suppose it is due to a change in the way data are collected in the country. The rate changes from 4,8% to 9,2%, a difference which is too high to be explained by a change in the labour market.

the exclusion from work (18,6% and 14,9% respectively, counting both discouraged and unemployed individuals). On the contrary, the involuntary condition of non-standard work, which belongs to the new social risks related to deregulation in labour market, is particularly relevant in Spain (14,4% in 2016), Italy (10%) and France (8,9%). Nonetheless, Spain and Italy are peculiar because there is a consistent rate of exclusion from work (19,1% and 18,2% respectively in 2016) and of involuntary non-standard employment, while in Greece and Croatia exclusion is high but they don't have not a relevant rate of involuntary non-standard work (5,4% and 4,8% in 2015).

However, it is important to say that in voluntary non-standard work it is also included self-employment which, especially in Italy, represents an important part of employment, concentrating especially among adult men: in Italy, 21,5% of employed is self-employed, while 11,8% in Croatia, 10,9% in France, 15,9% in Spain and 10,8% in Austria. Only Greece has a higher rate of self-employment, about 29,5%. Nevertheless, one of the limits of the ELFS is that it is not possible to estimate how much of this self-employment might be unwilling: it does not exist, in fact, a question asking the interviewees if they were forced to work as self-employed for lack of alternatives or forced by their employers, as it happens for *bogus self-employment* (Pedersini and Coletto, 2010) or if they voluntarily wanted to start an entrepreneurial activity. Outlier values which are evidenced in Italy, in Greece and in Spain (even if it is lower), make us think that part of the observed self-employment is involuntary and probably due to practices of contractual abuse that force workers unwillingly into independent employment.

Italy, France and Spain distinguish from other countries for the higher relevance of involuntary non-standard work, which grew in the last 10 years. In 2015, involuntary non-standard work involves 23,6% of employment in Spain, 17,6% in Italy and 13,6% in France, but the distribution of this work is very different from country to country. Graph 4 helps us entering the composition of involuntary non-standard work, showing how part-time and fixed-term jobs distributes in the six European countries. In Spain, Greece and Croatia, involuntary fixed-term jobs prevail, but only in Spain they represent a relevant part of the total employment. In Austria, France and Italy, on the contrary, involuntary part-time contracts are prevailing. France and Italy also show part of involuntary non-standard employment which is fixed-term and part-time at the same time. The same phenomenon is almost irrelevant in Austria. The growth of involuntary part-time is another element that distinguishes countries like Italy, Spain and Greece, but in this last one the rate is inferior.

**Graph 4 – Percentages of involuntary non-standard workers by countries and years**



Source: authors' calculations on European Labour Force Survey, 2007 - 2016

Who are the involuntary non-standard workers?<sup>2</sup> Table 5 helps us answer this question. With the exception of Croatia, in all countries involuntary non-standard jobs affect more women than men, with an intense segregation in Italy, France and Austria (but in this last country, the phenomenon relates to a minority of workers). Moreover, the presence of migrants is also particularly important: this is true especially in Austria, where foreigners are one third of this group, while representing only 17,5% of the population.

Involuntary non-standard work is a dangerous phenomenon not only for the individuals, but also for the entire economic system: in fact, it concentrates mainly among *prime age* workers (25-50), those workers who are at the more productive working age. For its own definition, in fact, involuntary employees are those workers who would like to work more but cannot, because their contracts are shorter in terms of hours or in terms of duration. In the economic debate, they are subjected to partial unemployment (Bodnár, 2018), as they would have like to work more than what they actually can in the labour market. This concentration into prime age implies a potential waste of human resources, which is as intense as higher is the rate of involuntary non-standard work on total

<sup>2</sup> Given the methodological problems evidenced in note 1, authors prefer to use 2015 as year of reference for the description of involuntary non-standard work and for the following territorial analysis.

population. Data demonstrate that this phenomenon is particularly worrying in countries which belong to Southern European model, as Italy and Spain.

Involuntary non-standard workers are mainly present in the secondary labour market: in general, they are less educated than standard workers, they concentrate in traditional services, in qualified or manual positions. Nevertheless, there is a consistent part of involuntary non-standard workers who possess a tertiary education, between 25% and 35% in Spain, Greece, Austria and France. Exceptions are Italy and Croatia: in these two countries this rate is lower than in other countries. Another important point to raise is the educational level of involuntary non-standard workers: only in Italy and Spain, the rate of tertiary educated individuals among involuntary non-standard work is higher than the average education across the working population. It implies that education is not a protection from the risk of being involved into involuntary non-standard work.

**Table 5 – The features of involuntary non-standard work, 2015**

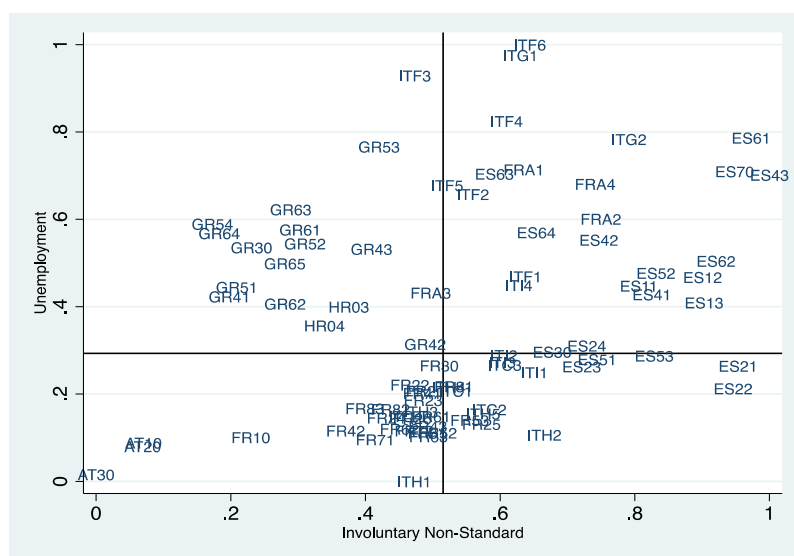
	<i>Southern European countries</i>			<i>Other countries in the South</i>		
	<b>Spain</b>	<b>Greece</b>	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Austria</b>	<b>Croatia</b>	<b>France</b>
% fixed-term contracts	76,4%	49,3%	44,8%	18,9%	88,1%	59,9%
% part-time contracts	42,5%	61,8%	68,1%	84%	18,6%	56,5%
% fixed-term and part-time	18,9%	11,2%	12,9%	3,2%	6,7%	16,4%
% on total employment	23,6%	10,7%	17,6%	4%	8,5%	13,4%
% women	54,6%	52%	60%	69,7%	45,8%	64,5%
% extra-UE migrants	19,6%	21,4%	22,2%	30,4%	11,4%	14,3%
age class: 15-24	10,3%	8,9%	9,6%	13,5%	17,7%	17,9%
age class: 25-34	30,7%	34,3%	26,9%	26,3%	38,2%	29,1%
age class: 35-49	41,5%	40,4%	42,4%	34,7%	30,9%	31,1%
age class: 50-64	17,5%	16,3%	21,1%	25,4%	13,2%	21,9%
<i>Tot</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100
low education (ISCED 0-2)	40,4%	29,1%	37,3%	20,4%	13,9%	24,7%
medium education (ISCED 3-4)	23,8%	44,9%	45,4%	49,8%	70,6%	48,7%
high education (ISCED 5-8)	35,8%	26%	17,3%	29,7%	15,5%	26,6%
<i>Tot</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100
Managers and Professionals	14,2%	14,6%	10,8%	17,4%	10,1%	11,2%
Technicians and Clerks	15,7%	14%	20,1%	19,8%	15,3%	24,3%
Qualified service occupations	25,1%	31,3%	27,3%	31,3%	23,3%	21,6%
Manual qualified occupations	18,8%	19%	13,9%	9,7%	31,5%	17,1%
Unqualified manual occupation	26,3%	21,1%	28%	21,7%	19,8%	25,9%
<i>Tot</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

Agricultural and manufacturing	16,3%	13,4%	17,5%	6,7%	31,5%	10,7%
Construction	6,7%	8,4%	3,8%	3,9%	9,9%	4,6%
Traditional services	30,4%	40,8%	32,1%	35,7%	33,1%	24,3%
Advanced business services	16%	14,2%	19,2%	19,5%	12,5%	15,6%
Public administration	5,7%	3,6%	2,1%	5,5%	3,9%	9,3%
Care and Education	24,5%	19,5%	25,1%	28,7%	9,1%	35,5%
Tot	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: authors' calculations on European Labour Force Survey, 2015

Even if the difference among countries in the involuntary non-standard employment might allow us to confirm the empirical validity of Southern European model, data by regions show another story. In fact, if we take into account the regional distribution of involuntary non-standard employment, we can see how some Italian, Spanish and Croatian regions differentiate from the national trends. Graph 6 shows the unequal distribution of regions in terms of involuntary non-standard work and missing participation to labour market (the combination of unemployment and discouraged individual on the total population in the working age). The two values are only slightly correlated (+0.27, with 0.013 significance at 95%). Given the empirical results of the previous table 6, we only focus on *prime age* (25-49).

**Graph 6 – Territorial distribution in terms of labour market exclusion and involuntariness in non-standard contracts, 25-49<sup>3</sup>**



Source: authors' calculations on European Labour Force Survey, 2014-2016

<sup>3</sup> The two indicators used for the graph are: normalised rate of missing participation to labour market (unemployed and discouraged workers) and the rate of involuntariness on the total non-standard employment. The population is 25-49 years. Medians of indicators are shown by the two lines in bold.



Argumentatively, nevertheless, it is particularly interesting to focus on the upper right section of the graph, where we find high exclusion from labour market (high presence of unemployed and discouraged workers) in the context of high involuntariness in non-standard work. These are regions mostly from Southern European countries. However, regions of Greece and Croatia are exceptions as they show a more traditional outsidersness, for they are characterised by high exclusion from labour market and low involuntariness in non-standard contracts.

The most interesting fact is that only some regions perform differently from the rest of their country: for instance in Spain, where the main trend is high exclusion and high involuntariness, there are regions (Payses Vascos, Navarra, Rioja, Catalunya and Islas Baleares) in which unemployment and discouragement is lower, while the high level of involuntary non-standard work is still consistent. The same occur in France, whereas the main general trend in the country is low exclusion and low involuntariness: Normandy, Bourgogne and Languedoc-Roussillon are exceptions to this trends since they have high rates of involuntary non-standard contracts<sup>4</sup>. Italy is the area in which the highest differences among territories are manifest: Lombardy, Veneto and Bolzano have performances similar to France and Austria (with low exclusion and low involuntariness in non-standard contracts), whilst the other regions of North and Centre are characterised by high involuntariness in non-standard contracts although the level of unemployment is not as high as it is experienced in the South of the country. Lazio is an exception as it is similar to Southern regions where there is high exclusion and high involuntariness. Campania is the sole region in Italy characterised by high exclusion but low involuntariness, while the rest of the South has high unemployment and high involuntariness in non-standard contracts. Results by country are resumed in table 7. The territorial analysis offers an additional empirical confirmation to previous studies (Firinu, 2015): in Italy and, to a lesser extent, in Spain, practices in non-standard work differentiate among territorial contexts. These differences are more pronounced on the axis of exclusion from labour markets (looking at unemployment and discouragement), in a general frame in which the involuntariness in non-standard contracts characterised all the country. The same territorial variability does not pertain regions characterised by a more traditional form of outsidersness. Not all the regions have the same level of involuntariness in non-standard work in Italy and to a lesser extent Spain, while there is far less variability than in other countries such as Austria, France, Greece and Croatia.

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<sup>4</sup> In the case of France, regions in group 3 and 4 are referred to Caribbean islands, not to metropolitan France.

**Table 7 – Distribution of exclusion from labour market and involuntariness in non-standard contract in the six countries<sup>5</sup>, 25-49**

	<b>Low exclusion, low involuntariness</b>	<b>Low exclusion, high involuntariness</b>	<b>High exclusion, high involuntariness</b>	<b>High exclusion, low involuntariness</b>
Austria	3	-	-	-
Spain	-	5	14	-
France	19	3	3	1
Greece	-	-	-	13
Croatia	-	-	-	2
Italy	3	9	8	1

*Source: authors' calculations on European Labour Force Survey, 2014-2016*

We now focus on a detailed analysis on the prime age, in order to understand which groups are the most involved in involuntary non-standard work and what are the predominant job within such a typology. The intersectional analysis in table 8 confirms the higher exposure of women and young with low education to this phenomenon, but with different rates among the countries. Anyway, with the sole exception of Spain, men above 35 years are less exposed to the phenomenon. The exposure also grows in all groups that have low educational skills, but it becomes intense even for men when they have less than 34 years.

The most exposed to involuntary non-standard work are women under 34 years: among this group, those who are more exposed to involuntary employment in non-standard contracts are those who have low educational level (about 40% of them in Italy, Spain and France). In Spain and Italy, however, also those who have a tertiary degree but are younger than 34 years old are particularly exposed to involuntary non-standard work: 35,9% and 29,9% among women, but still 30% and 19,1% among men. Tertiary education doesn't seem to be a protection in these countries against involuntary non-standard work.

Women's exposure reduces among older women, but only when they have a higher education: the reduction by educational level is stronger in France compared to Italy and Spain, which maintain percentages of about 15% of women involuntarily non-standard employed also among the tertiary educated adult women. The case of Greece, in which the level of non-standard work is lower than the other Southern European countries, suggests that the most disadvantaged groups are excluded from the labour market, more than being involuntarily non-standard employed.

<sup>5</sup> Low and high are calculated on the median of normalised indicators. Please see the previous note.

**Table 8 – % involuntary non-standard work by intersectional categories, 25-49.**

			<b>Austria</b>	<b>Spain</b>	<b>France</b>	<b>Greece</b>	<b>Croatia</b>	<b>Italy</b>
Men	25-34	ISCED 0-2	4,8	34,6	21,1	13,3	25,8	18,9
		ISCED 3-4	1,6	26,1	12,3	13,4	17	16,7
		ISCED 5-8	2,8	28	11	11,3	14,8	19,1
	35-49	ISCED 0-2	3,3	21,9	10,6	8,6	16,6	11,8
		ISCED 3-4	1	13,2	5,7	5,9	6,1	7
		ISCED 5-8	1,2	11,1	3,4	3,7	1,9	6,4
Women	25-34	ISCED 0-2	7,2	40,9	40,3	20	24,6	40
		ISCED 3-4	4	33,5	24,9	19,5	16,2	31,9
		ISCED 5-8	6	35,9	14,2	17,3	17,3	29,9
	35-49	ISCED 0-2	6,6	36,1	27,6	14,7	15,4	32,1
		ISCED 3-4	4,5	22,6	16,9	11,8	9,3	19,2
		ISCED 5-8	2,6	18,3	6,8	6,5	3,5	15,4
<i>On the total</i>			3	23,3	11,7	10	10,8	16,6

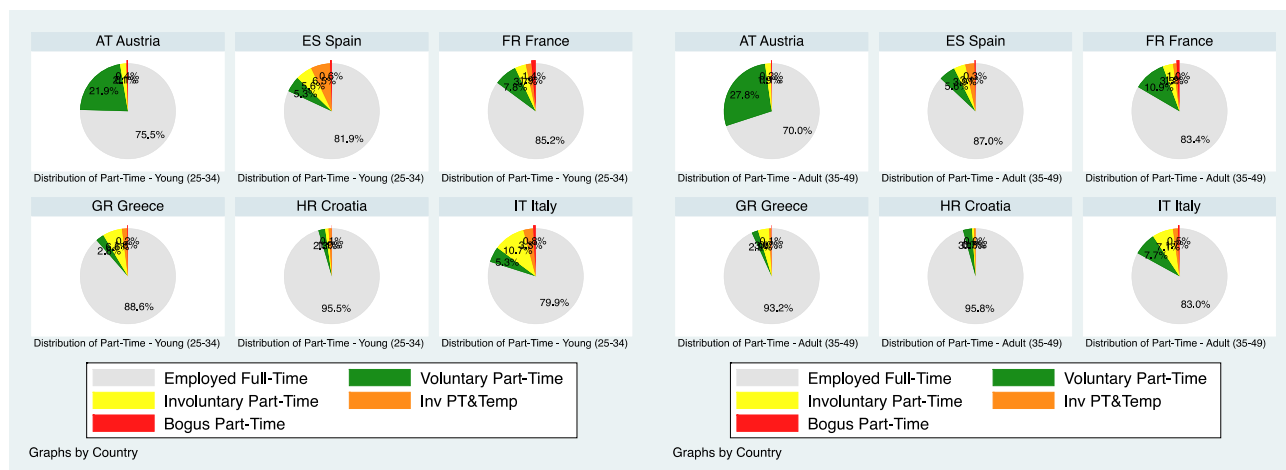
*Source: authors' calculations on European Labour Force Survey, 2014-2016*

One of our hypotheses regarded the impact of timing in the introduction of deregulation in non-standard work (see section 3, ref. UE 97/81 e 99/70), supposedly exposing more the young workers to the deregulation of employment. We assume that it occurs especially in Southern European countries where cleavages between insiders/outsiders were stronger as the regulation has tended to maintain the protection for the insiders (Rueda et al, 2015). However, trends might be different when we consider part-time and temporary employment. It is thus important to analyse in detail which type of involuntary work, in the variety of cases, we are speaking of.

First, we analyse part-time work with graph 9. Focusing on different types of part-time work, we can highlight how the six countries distribute unequally, evidencing a clear difference between the countries belonging to the Southern European model and those who are not (see table 6). In fact, despite starting from different level of involuntary part-time work (see graph 5), the three countries in the Southern European model show quite a similarity in the way involuntariness characterises this type of contract. Workers who chose part-time contracts are a minority, while these contracts often coincide with fixed-term employment, a situation which is especially evident in Spain. In Italy and in Spain, there is a value of about 3% of workers (on total part-time employment) that are just formally part-time employed as long as they work more than 30 hours work/week. The highest percentages of these workers are in France (7,1%), but the situation of the other part-timers is better as the voluntary part-time is predominant, even if it is still lower than in Croatia (which involves only 5% of employees) and Austria (about 30% of employees). Graph 9 shows clearly how the drifting to involuntary non-standard work is strong among younger workers only in Italy and in

Spain. This trend confirms our initial hypothesis: involuntariness in non-standard work is correlated with a marginalisation process for young workers, which might be imputed to the temporality by which non-standard contracts have been introduced and deregulated in the Southern European countries.

**Graph 9 – Part-time employment by countries and by age class, 25-49.**



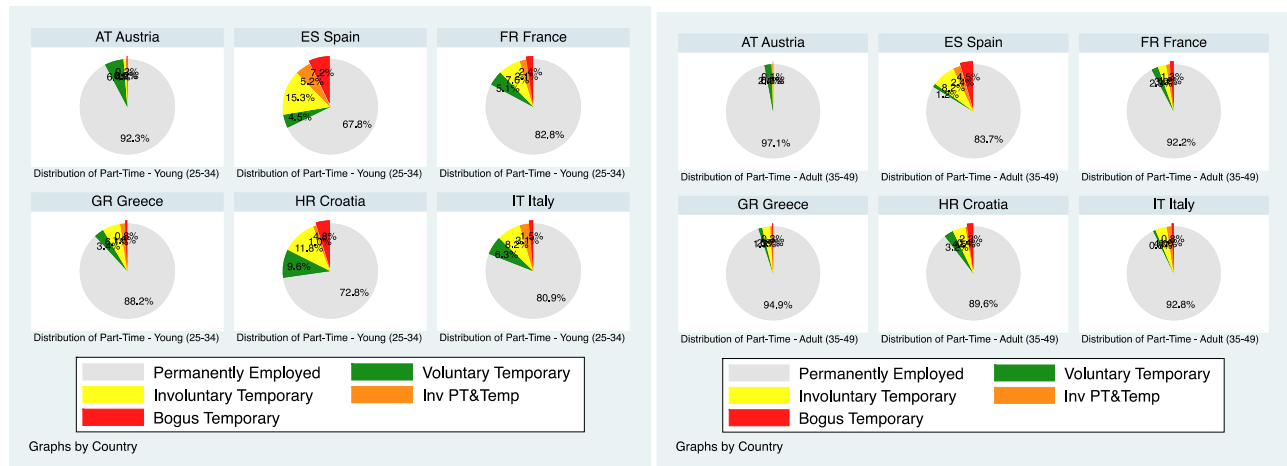
Source: authors' calculations on European Labour Force Survey, 2014-2016

Focusing on temporary work (graph 10), the countries belonging to Southern European countries shows similar trends. Greece, Italy and Spain are the countries in which the involuntariness in temporary work is more evident, while in the case of Croatia and to a less extent in France there is a relevant number of temporary contracts which have been chosen by the worker (33,7% and 29,6%). Only in Austria the majority of temporary contracts is voluntary (83,3%). The analysis of graph 10 demonstrates the distorted use of fixed-term contract: Spain, France, Italy and Greece not only show an overlapping between fixed-term contracts and part-time, but also a repeated use of short temporary contracts (less than three months), which are reiterated in habitual way by the same employer (at least for more than one year). The rate of bogus temporary work is particularly relevant in Spain, Croatia and France, but also in Greece (6%) and in Italy (9%) the phenomenon should not be underestimated<sup>6</sup>. Nevertheless, what emerges with stronger evidence in almost all countries (with the sole exception of Austria) is that the condition of temporariness concentrates mostly among younger workers, affecting a wide part of the employees in the 25-34 age class (especially in Spain and in Croatia). Moreover, in the two last countries, the phenomenon of bogus temporary work is not an irrelevant phenomenon as it is a remarkable part of the total employment in that age class. The same phenomenon is almost absent across over 35 years old workers,

<sup>6</sup> Between 2015 and 2016 the rate of unfixed temporary work in Spain has dramatically fallen, passing from 35% of 2014 and 2015 to 6% in 2016.

confirming the hypothesis by which there is a structural effect of marginalisation among the youngest workers, which we suppose is due to the way reforms have been implemented in South Europe, as authors have already demonstrated in previous work for the case of Italy (Firinù and Maestripieri, 2018).

**Graph 10 - Temporary employment by countries and by age class, 25-49**



Source: authors' calculations on European Labour Force Survey, 2014-2016

In conclusion, the empirical analysis has demonstrated that there are two different trends of outsidership among the six countries. Greece and Croatia are characterised by a condition of exclusion from the labour market and a low level of non-standard employment which is involuntary. Spain, Italy and, to a lesser extent, France, on the contrary, sustain our argument, showing how the deregulation of the last years has produced a frail integration into the labour market, marginalising certain sectors of the working population and locking them into the involuntary non-standard work. Independently from the territories considered, this phenomenon concentrates, above all, among younger generations which have paid the higher price of deregulation in terms of exposure to marginal work.

## 5. Conclusions

The article achieves two main contributions. First, starting from the theory of segmentation of labour market, it has evidenced some critical points in the dualistic point of view that characterises the separation between insiders/outside. In fact, the assumption of this theory is that in Southern European countries there is a clear division between insiders and outsiders, which is built upon institutional aspects such as the social protection and the contractual framework of a working status, while at the same time it does not investigate the multiple forms of existing work which are difficult

to frame clearly from the institutional point of view. The approach presented in the article, from the other side, focusing on practices which have consolidated in years as a long-term effect of deregulations “at the margins”, has theorised the existence of a continuum between the two poles of full integration and full exclusion. It has investigated the matter using the European Labour Force Survey microdata (2007-2016), by showing the presence of categories of workers (involuntary non-standard and at risk of contractual abuse), whose level of integration in the labour market and in the system of social protection stays in the middle between the two poles, configuring new forms of outsidership which depends only partially from their formal contractual framework.

The second outcome of the article is the use of a comparative perspective to investigate the long-term effects of the deregulations at the margins of labour market in six countries (Italy, Greece, France, Spain, Austria and Croatia), focusing on the intersectional dimensions of disadvantage (by gender, age and educational level). The analysis demonstrates how younger workers between 25 and 49 years old are more exposed to involuntary non-standard jobs compared to older workers. This condition of marginality in some countries does not spare high-skilled workers, especially in Italy, Spain and Greece, putting seriously in question the capacity of the economic system to benefit from the working capacity and human capital of new generations.

Results show that, first of all, the relevant presence of these working situations in the six countries, despite different ways and proportions. Italy, Spain and France are the countries that mostly presents the categories we have investigated: *bogus/involuntary part-time and/or temporary work*. In Croatia, the bogus and involuntary part-time is not numerically relevant, while there is a stronger presence of the *bogus and/or temporary work*. This phenomenon seems to impact softly Greece where, on the other hand, the crisis has provoked the growth of exclusion from labour market. Austria, in comparison, is the country where involuntariness and contractual abuse remains a minimal phenomenon. On the contrary, there is an element of convergence that characterises all countries except for Austria, that is, that temporariness concentrates mostly among the youngest workers, affecting a relevant part of employees between 25-34. This fact shows the possible consistency of a drifting effect (Firinù and Maestripièri, 2018), due to the way contractual deregulation has been introduced in Southern Europe, deteriorating the rights and entitlements of those who were entering labour markets (the so-called reforms “at the margins”).

Nevertheless, the evaluation of this phenomenon becomes rather diversified if we take into consideration the regional level. This is particularly true for what concerns France, Spain and Italy. Especially in Italy, the practices of using non-standard contracts differentiate particularly among regions, reflecting the standard separations between North-Centre-South. This is the empirical

confirmation that local contexts, which are characterised by a cognitive and normative orientation of actors, represent a significant variable for the consolidation of regulative strategies in occupational relations. In fact, one might sustain that involuntariness and abuse are the result of individual inadequacy or lower skills of the worker. This interpretation, however, collides with the empirical evidence of a concentration of this among the youngest generations, those who have the higher human capital and are young enough to be more productive than the average adult worker. It might be more realistic to sustain that the condition of involuntariness and bogus in non-standard work are explicit strategies of misconduct of the employers, who would like to hire a highly qualified and productive labour market without offering the rights and protection of standard jobs (Muelhbauer and Pasqua, 2009; Firinu, 2015).

In conclusion, our analysis confirms the consolidation in Southern Europe of complex labour markets, in which the traditional dichotomy between insiders/outsiders have given space to a more nuanced panorama, which is constituted by a continuum of working/non-working positions characterised by different level of outsidersness. This phenomenon might be interpreted as a possible disjunction between the institutional scheme of national social protection and local practices of non-standard contracts. The result is the consolidation of new social risks, that concentrate especially among the youngest generation. In this perspective, it is unlikely that just changing the regulation at macro level might offer to these workers a more regular and continuous access to labour market, while ensuring a substantial access to social protections. There is need for a new equilibrium of resources and power between employers and employees, especially if they are employed in a marginal condition, by increasing their bargaining power and by offering structural resources through ALMPs and minimum income schemes to empower their market position.

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