Differences in labour market resilience across Europe

EU-funded researchers have analysed employment policy differences within and between countries, focusing in particular on the labour market position of vulnerable groups from 2000 on. The findings outline national differences in responses to the financial crisis for the different vulnerable groups and labour market resilience in different European countries.

The project INSPIRES (Innovative social and employment policies for inclusive and resilient labour markets in Europe) studied the evolution of labour market, employment and social policies. Grounded in the concept of resilience, analyses and assessments focused on the ability of European countries to absorb the labour market consequences of economic shocks.

Research endeavoured to explain how structural and dynamic factors impacted the resilience of labour markets in 27 European countries. Structural factors include a country's workforce, economic structure and international competitiveness, and dynamic factors are due to innovative policy measures.

The study concentrated on four vulnerable groups: young people (under 25), older workers (over 55), ethnic minorities and the disabled. Researchers conducted an in-depth analysis covering 11 European countries to explore the impact of the economic crisis on these groups' labour market positions.

Research results show that youth and migrants were the most vulnerable groups following the recent economic crisis. Both had to contend with the highest increases in unemployment rates and the risk of social exclusion and poverty. The study also highlighted differences in the initial positions of vulnerable groups (within and between countries), and the varying impact the crisis had on them. The differences can, by and large, be explained by country-specific conditions.

INSPIRES determined that policy-related dynamic factors had little impact on labour markets' resilience. Countries that dealt relatively well with the challenges of the economic crisis implemented structural measures to enhance labour market functioning. These measures are relevant to flexibility, activation, training and education, and preventative rather than curative unemployment policies.

Project partners published various essays, an interactive map of labour market resilience, country reports, and findings specific to each vulnerable group. They also produced the European labour market resilience (ELMaR) dataset (available on the website), which other researchers can use for cross-national, multilevel and longitudinal analyses.

INSPIRES identified innovative policies that contribute to resilience and inclusiveness, and analysed policy learning strategies.
supporting development and transfer of these innovations. Project work thus contributed important knowledge in these areas, which can be applied to improve the resilience and inclusiveness of labour markets in European countries.

**Related information**


**Subjects**

Scientific Research

**Keywords**

Labour market resilience, employment policy, vulnerable groups, INSPIRES, economic crisis

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