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Assessing the quality dimensions of youth employment offers

ASSESSING THE QUALITY DIMENSIONS OF YOUTH EMPLOYMENT OFFERS

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Preface

This paper seeks to provide practical guidance on the quality dimensions of youth employment offers. Its content is the resultant of a pilot exercise that was conducted by the ILO in support of the implementation of the national implementation plans of the Youth Guarantee in Latvia, Portugal and Spain. The material that was used for this publication was developed to inform national policy dialogue between policymakers and the social partners on the identification of the elements that would be required for an ex-ante assessment (i.e. at the moment of the offer) of the quality of youth employment measures that are put in place to implement public policy. It was drawn from existing literature, international benchmarks that have been identified over the past years to define the main elements of job quality and national practice.

The information included in the publication is meant to guide representatives of governments, employer organizations, trade unions, and people affected by the measures in their consultation and policymaking processes on youth employment policy formulation and implementation as set out in the ILO's Employment Policy Convention, ratified by 26 Members of the European Union.¹

This publication is a deliverable of the joint action of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the European Commission (EC) that supports the implementation of the Youth Guarantee (YG). It was prepared by Gianni Rosas, Senior Employment Specialist of the ILO, and Valli Corbanese, Senior Youth Employment Expert. Milagros Lazo Castro assisted in the design and layout of the guide. It was developed to inform policy dialogue on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee in Latvia, Portugal and Spain. The authors would like to thank the Youth Guarantee national coordinators and teams of these three countries for their comments on earlier drafts of this brief. Gratitude is also expressed to the members of the national YG coordination teams of Latvia, Portugal and Spain for their useful comments and for their support in the validation of the preliminary drafts of this publication.

¹ For the text of the Employment Policy Convention and the list of EU countries that have ratified it see http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312267

Gratitude is also expressed to the colleagues of the EC and of the ILO that provided useful comments and inputs to the various drafts of this publication.

This publication has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014–2020).² The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the official position of the International Labour Office or the European Commission.

² For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>

Introduction

Over the last two decades, there has been a considerable research on the elements that define the quality of a job. This work has focused on the identification of the several facets that may define the quality of work and on the development of indicators for their measurement.

The rationale for ensuring that interventions that are part of youth employment policy provide young people with quality offers builds on a number of considerations. First, the negative consequences of poor quality jobs (e.g. involuntary part-time, job and economic insecurity, occupational health and safety gaps) at early stages of one's career can affect future career and earning prospects.³ Second, these negative consequences are detrimental not only to individuals but also to society and the economy at large (e.g. social exclusion, loss of productivity, and lower household consumption).⁴ Third, positive return on investments of public policy through offers of quality employment has become increasingly important in the assessment of cost-effectiveness of employment policy during evaluation.

The quality dimensions that are discussed in this publication were assessed through the implementation of a project that was piloted in Latvia, Portugal and Spain during the period January 2016- June 2017. This project consisted of the identification of key quality dimensions of youth employment offers; the development of an assessment tool for the ex-ante definition of "quality offers" and the adaptation of this tool to national circumstances. The tool was validated through policy dialogue seminars with the representatives of governments, the social partners and youth organizations.

³ ILO, *Non-standard employment around the world: Understanding challenges, shaping prospects*, ILO Geneva, 2016, available at http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_534326/lang-en/index.htm

⁴ See for example, Eurofound, *NEETs - Young people not in employment, education or training: Characteristics, costs and policy responses in Europe*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2012.

The analytical aspects discussed in this publication that relate to the identification of quality offer of employment for young people were initially included in a guidance note that was used to inform the policy dialogue with the representatives of the governments and the social partners. This dialogue was followed by the practical application of the quality dimensions in each of the above-mentioned three countries. A benchmarking matrix was developed to that gather the information stemming from the review of national policy and legislation.

The objective of this tool is to provide information and practical guidance to policymakers and employment practitioners about the minimum requirements that offers of employment should have to be considered of quality as set out in the Council's Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee.⁵ The quality dimensions of offers of employment should be identified and agreed upon through dialogue among the government, the representatives of the social partners and of the organizations that represent those affected by the employment measures as set out in Article 3 of the ILO's Employment Convention, 1964 (No 122).⁶

This tool is organized in three chapters. The first provides the overall methodology for measuring the quality of youth employment offers. This chapter is based on existing job quality frameworks and explores the quality dimensions, the indicators and the benchmarks that can be applied ex ante (i.e. when the youth employment offer is made). The second chapter proposes an ex-ante appraisal method for determining the quality of youth employment offers, while the final chapter provides insights on how the elements can be applied to assess the quality of youth employment offers and to monitor and assess performance during implementation. The elements for assessing the dimensions of quality youth employment offers can also be used as benchmarks for the ex-post evaluation. Annex 1 contains a user-friendly checklist that helps review the quality aspects of the offers that are being made, while Annex 2 lists a number of indicators that can be used to monitor the performance of quality offers of employment.

⁵ See Official Journal of the European Union, C120 of 26 April 2013, accessible through Eur-Lex at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/oj/direct-access.html>.

⁶ The text of the ILO's Employment Policy Convention is accessible through NORMLEX at http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312267:NO

1. Job quality analytical approaches: An overview

The adjustments that accompanied the emergence of the global economy in the 1980s and 1990s focused mostly on increasing the employment intensity of growth.⁷ It was only in the late 1990s that the twin policy objective of increasing both the quantity and the quality of jobs came to the forefront. In that period, labour statistics highlighted that quantitative increases of employment – measured through labour force participation and employment rates – were often not accompanied by improvements in working conditions, especially for some population groups (e.g. women, young workers).

At the global level, the need to pursue both quantitative and qualitative policy objectives for job creation was reinforced by the adoption of the ILO's *Decent Work Agenda* in 1999.⁸ This was also made explicit by the 'more and better jobs' policy priority of the Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs that was adopted by EU countries in 2000. This policy shift led to substantial research on the multiple dimensions of job quality and the methods for measuring it across countries and population groups. In the mid-2000s, for instance, empirical research on job quality in the countries of the EU evidenced that: (i) there were important differences in job quality across EU countries; (ii) higher levels of job quality were associated with better labour market and economic performance; and (iii) there was heterogeneity of job quality across social groups, especially in relation to gender, age, and educational

⁷ The economic and financial crises of the 1980s and 1990s (Latin America debt crisis, the Japanese asset price bubble, the early 1990s recession, the 1997 Asian financial crisis and the Argentinean economic crisis) transmitted to other parts of the world with strong effects on the labour market. At the global level, policy attention focused on the need to promote economic growth as a key tool to improve the level of employment. The European Employment Strategy of 1997, for example, centres on job creation, with very little emphasis on job quality issues. See Eurofound, *More and better jobs: Patterns of employment expansion in Europe. ERM Report 2008*, Dublin, 2008.

⁸ The International Labour Organization (ILO) has been pursuing the promotion of fair wages and condition of work since its establishment in 191, see the Preamble of the ILO Constitution (1919) and the Declaration of Philadelphia (1944) where the principles of fair working conditions (hours of work and living wage) and protection against unemployment are affirmed. Decent work for all has been the ILO's core guiding principle since the adoption of the *Decent Work Agenda* in 1999.

levels.⁹ In the same years, research conducted in the United States showed that only 40 per cent of the working age population was adequately employed. For workers aged 20 to 34 the quality of jobs had been on a declining trend since 1979, especially in terms of real wages.¹⁰ In Canada, the decade 1990-2000, only one every five workers had a quality job – measured through fifteen quality dimensions, while over 37 per cent of workers had jobs that did not comply with the quality dimensions.¹¹

In terms of policy implications, this research focused mainly on measures directly related to the job quality deficits with less attention to the interaction of different policy interventions. In the United States, for example, the largest job quality deficits were related to low pay. This required a re-assessment of wage policies and collective bargaining.¹² In Canada, conversely, pay was not considered as important as work environment and intrinsic job characteristics. This required focus on job security and occupational health and safety policies.¹³

The negative employment impact of the global economic crisis that erupted in 2008 left several scars in the labour markets of many countries. Youth labour markets were particularly affected. The crisis resulted in an overall reduction of the employment rate of young people and an overall deterioration of the quality of jobs that were available to them. While some economies were able to recover relatively swiftly – at least in terms of employment growth – many struggled with both low labour market performance and worsening of job quality well beyond the end of the crisis. This was especially the case of the countries of the EU, where the youth unemployment rate reached its peak in 2013 (at a rate of 23.7 per cent), with some countries recording youth unemployment rates higher than 50 per cent (i.e. Greece and Spain) or between 40 and 50 per cent (i.e. Croatia and Italy). The deterioration of the quality of jobs for young people is evidenced by the increase of non-standard forms of employment (e.g. temporary work and part-time), as well as by a widening gap between youth and adult wages. By 2013, over 42 per cent

⁹ Erhel C., Guergoat-Larivière M., *Job quality and labour market performance*, CEPS Working Document No. 330/June 2010

¹⁰ Howell, D., Diallo, M., *Charting US Economic Performance with Alternative Labour Market Indicators: The Importance of Accounting for Job Quality*, SCEPA Working Paper 2007/6.

¹¹ Lowe, G., *21st Century Job Quality: Achieving What Canadians Want*”, Canadian Policy Research Networks, Ottawa 2007.

¹² See also Schmitt J., Jones J., *Making Jobs Good*, CEPR 1/2013.

¹³ Lowe, G., *21st Century Job Quality: Achieving What Canadians Want*”, op.cit.

of young workers in EU countries were employed in temporary jobs and 32 per cent were working part-time (a third of them involuntarily), while wages of young workers had continued to decrease.¹⁴

It is against this backdrop that policymakers of many countries around the world have taken action to improve youth labour market prospects and avoid the scarring effects of youth unemployment or poor quality employment on future labour market outcomes. At the international level, the representatives of 185 governments, employer organizations and trade unions unanimously adopted at International Labour Conference in June 2012 the resolution “*The youth employment crisis: A call for action*”.¹⁵ This resolution contains guiding principles and a comprehensive set of practical and tested policy measures to shape national strategies with a view to improving both the quantity and the quality of youth employment. The policy measures proposed in the “Call for Action” are clustered in five main policy areas: (i) employment and economic policies; (ii) education and training; (iii) labour market policies; (iv) entrepreneurship and self-employment; and (v) labour rights.

The general deterioration of job quality, which affected young workers in particular, led to further research on job quality dimensions and indicators.¹⁶ While indicators play a critical role in measuring job quality, they do not help in identifying which policy interventions are more likely to improve it, nor do they clarify the complex processes associated with job quality improvement or deterioration.¹⁷ The indicators developed under the job quality frameworks are geared to measure outcomes (i.e. the extent of job quality that workers have at specific points in time) and to compare job quality across geographical areas and socio-economic groups. The analysis of job quality indicators over time is also likely to reflect the effect that public policies have on certain quality dimensions. The determination of causality between a specific policy intervention and changes in job quality, however, can be gauged by impact (counterfactual) evaluations. Alternatively, the likely impact of a policy intervention on job quality can be determined through

¹⁴ See Grimshaw, D., *At work but earning less: Trends in decent pay and minimum wages for young people*, Employment Working Paper no. 162, ILO, Geneva, 2014,

¹⁵ The text of the resolution “The youth employment crisis: A call for action” is accessible at http://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/101stSession/texts-adopted/WCMS_185950/lang-en/index.htm

¹⁶ The most comprehensive job quality frameworks (reviewed in the next paragraph) were developed between 2012 and 2015.

¹⁷ Frey D., F., “A Diagnostic Methodology for Regulating Decent Work”, in Lee S., McCann D., (eds.) *Regulating for Decent Work. New directions in labour market regulation*, ILO, Geneva, 2011.

ex-ante impact assessment methods. This approach can help policymakers to identify the advantages and disadvantages of different policy options. Among the social impacts to be appraised in the policymaking process, the *Impact Assessment Guidelines* of the European Commission include “standards and rights related to job quality”.¹⁸

The Youth Guarantee addresses issues such as quantity and quality of jobs; policy coherence and interaction; and labour market measures for quality jobs. The commitment to provide every young person under 25 years of age with a ‘good-quality’ offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education, addresses the need to simultaneously promote both the quantity and quality of employment for young people.¹⁹ The requirement to integrate different policies, measures and services and establish strong partnerships among institutions with mandate on employment, education, social protection is aimed at fostering policy coherence and coordination. Finally, the specification that young people be provided with a “quality offer” calls for the establishment of criteria to assess *ex ante* (i.e. when the offer is made) the quality of offers.

The European Commission’s documents on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Youth Guarantee provide some guidance on what constitutes a ‘quality’ offer. The task to define the quality criteria is however left to policymakers and other labour market actors. These documents use an outcome-based definition, whereby a ‘good quality’ offer is one that results in the sustainable labour market integration (i.e. the young beneficiary does not return to unemployment or inactivity).²⁰ This definition is complemented by the criteria established to assess the quality of employment that young people gain through the interventions supported by the EU funding instruments (i.e. the Youth Employment Initiative and European Social Fund). The job quality features to be taken into account are: (i) type and duration of the employment contract (part-time and full-time; fixed-term and open-

¹⁸ The key questions relate to impact on job quality; health, safety and dignity; protection at work; workers’ rights. See European Commission, *Impact Assessment Guidelines*, Brussels, 2009, page 35.

¹⁹ “Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee” (2013/C 120/1).

²⁰ See European Commission, *Frequently asked questions about the Youth Guarantee*, April 2015 and European Commission, *The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on*, Strasbourg, 2016.

ended contract; involuntary part-time); (ii) remuneration level; (iii) level and type of qualification required for the job; and (iv) availability of additional job-related training.²¹

Such an outcome-based approach to determine the quality of offers for young people would allow the use of most of the existing job quality frameworks, the only limitation being the range of data available. Put it otherwise, the trends in the quality of jobs offered to beneficiaries of youth employment interventions can be monitored over time by using the existing job quality dimensions and indicators. However, programme managers responsible to deliver youth employment programmes generally, and Youth Guarantee measures specifically, need to ensure the quality before the offers are made.

An approach that allows determining ex-ante the quality of youth employment offers can serve a number of purposes. First, it can ensure compliance with the decent work principles endorsed at the global level and with the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights. Second, it can increase the effectiveness of youth employment programmes, since a quality job provides employment stability and reduces the recurrence of unemployment and inactivity spells and hence avoids the “revolving door” effect for young people coming in and out of the Youth Guarantee support. Third, it can contribute to the improvement of labour market outcomes, productivity and economic growth.

The approach proposed in the following paragraphs aims to provide practical guidance in determining the elements that constitute a quality offer of employment at the time this offer is made. At national level, this approach can be used to guide the discussion among government institutions, employer and worker organizations and representatives of youth organizations, with a view to defining the key qualitative elements of employment offers. Once agreed, the quality framework can be translated into a checklist for practitioners for day-to-day application (an example of how to develop such a checklist is provided in Annex 1).

²¹ European Commission, *Guidance on evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative*, September 2015, pp 8-17.

This approach builds on the main job quality frameworks that already exist at global and regional levels (see paragraph 1.1). The key dimensions of these frameworks are analysed in this paper with the view of identifying the quality indicators that can be used to build an *ex-ante* measurement system (discussed in paragraph 1.2). This approach can be applied to any youth employment offer provided as part of measures of youth employment policy implementation.²²

1.1. Job quality frameworks

The job quality frameworks developed over the last two decades differ in terms of the number dimensions that are taken into account; the type of measurement indicators (e.g. objective indicators, self-reported measures and normative frameworks); the range and frequency of data requirements; and the geographical coverage (see Table 1).

²² These guidelines do not deal with quality offers of continued education, apprenticeship and traineeship as these are examined in other publications of the ILO and of the European Commission.

Table 1: Selected frameworks for measuring job quality

Framework	Dimensions		Scope
Decent work indicators (ILO, 2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment opportunities ▪ Unacceptable work ▪ Adequate earnings and productive work ▪ Decent hours ▪ Stability and security of work ▪ Combining work and family responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fair treatment in employment ▪ Safe work environment ▪ Social protection ▪ Social dialogue and workplace relations ▪ Economic and social context of decent work 	Global
Job quality index (Eurofound, 2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Earnings ▪ Prospects ▪ Intrinsic work quality ▪ Working time quality ▪ Work-life balance prospect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intrinsic quality of work ▪ Employment risks ▪ Workplace risks ▪ Working-time ▪ Employment risks 	EU and candidate countries
Job quality framework (EMCO, 2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Socio- economic security ▪ Education and training ▪ Working conditions ▪ Work-life and gender balance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adequate earnings ▪ Job and career security ▪ Skills development ▪ Employability ▪ Health and safety at work ▪ Work intensity ▪ Autonomy ▪ Collective interest representation ▪ Work-life balance ▪ Gender balance 	EU countries
Quality of Employment (UNECE, 2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safety and ethics ▪ Income and benefits ▪ Working hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment security and social protection ▪ Skills development and training ▪ Workplace conditions and motivation ▪ Balancing work and non-work life 	Europe and Central Asia
Job quality framework (OECD, 2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Earning quality ▪ Labour market security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quality of working environment 	OECD countries

Source: ILO, *Decent work indicators: Concepts and definitions*, ILO Manual, First edition, Geneva, 2012; European Commission, “The future of work in Europe: job quality and work organisation for a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth”, Chapter 3 in *Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2014*, Brussels 2015, UN Commission for Europe, *Handbook on measuring quality of employment: A statistical framework*, Geneva, 2015; Cazes, S., et al., “Measuring and assessing job quality: The OECD job quality framework”, *OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers*, No. 174, Paris; 2015; and Eurofound, *Trends in job quality in Europe*, Luxembourg, 2012.

1.1.1. International frameworks: Decent work indicators

Following the adoption of the ILO *Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization* in 2008, the ILO engaged in the definition of indicators to monitor and evaluate the progress made in the implementation of the Decent Work Agenda. In the same year, an international Tripartite Meeting of Experts and the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) - the most authoritative international body that sets international standards for labour statistics - discussed and adopted a *Framework on the Measurement of Decent Work*. Revisited in 2012, this framework covers ten substantive elements linked to the four strategic pillars of the Decent Work Agenda (international labour standards and fundamental principles and rights at work; employment creation; social protection; and social dialogue and tripartism), including economic and social contextual information, such as labour market performance, equal treatment or forms of work that should be abolished (see Box 1). The ILO framework comprises statistical indicators derived from national data sources, as well normative indicators that are based on legal texts or context indicators. For each indicator, the framework provides definition, measurement method, data sources and interpretation guidelines. There is no priority ranking across the decent work dimensions. The indicators are intended to be analyzed together with a view to identifying decent work deficits, assess the progress made in the implementation of the Decent Work Agenda and guide policymaking at national level.²³ Many of these indicators are used to measure progress in the achievement of the Goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The decent work indicators are clustered into five categories:

- (i) main indicators that are essential to measure decent work;
- (ii) additional indicators;
- (iii) indicators that are candidate for future inclusion;
- (iv) legal framework indicators; and
- (v) context indicators.

²³ The ILO produced a *Manual on Decent Work Indicators* to guide data users and producers in the collection and analysis of decent work indicators downloadable at http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---integration/documents/publication/wcms_229374.pdf

Countries can apply – through tripartite consultation – the main decent work indicators and identify other indicators that reflect their national circumstances.

Box 1: Decent work indicators

The list below describes the ten categories of decent work indicators:

- **Employment opportunities:** the indicators included in this substantive element provide information on the quantity of labour demand and supply (labour force participation, employment and unemployment) and the quality of employment (informal employment, status in employment, vulnerable employment, labour slack and the underutilization of labour);
- **Adequate earnings and productive work:** these indicators provide information about work-related earnings, working poverty and low pay work;
- **Decent working time:** this category covers indicators that are related to employment and working time (hours worked, excessive hours of work, time-related underemployment and paid annual leave);
- **Combining work, family and personal life:** this element covers a set of decent work indicators related to standards and fundamental principles and rights at work and social protection (unsocial/unusual hours of work, maternity protection, and maternal and parental leave);
- **Work that should be abolished:** this category element relates to measurement of work that should be abolished (child and forced labour) and aims to gauge its incidence, distribution and characteristics with a view to informing action and monitoring progress towards its elimination;
- **Stability and security of work:** this dimension includes indicators on precarious employment, job tenure, subsistence work and earnings of casual workers;
- **Equal opportunity and treatment in employment:** the main focus of this dimension is equal opportunity and treatment in employment as regards gender (occupational segregation, gender wage gap, women in management position and women in non-agricultural wage employment) and other population groups that may suffer discrimination on the basis of their race, ethnicity, disability;
- **Safe work environment:** The extent to which workers are protected from work-related hazards and risks is captured through statistical indicators on occupational injury frequency rate (fatal and non-fatal), time lost per occupational injury and labour inspection (inspectors per 10,000 employed persons).
- **Social security:** this element covers all measures that provide benefits to secure protection from lack of work-related income (caused by sickness, disability, maternity, employment injury, unemployment, old age); lack of or unaffordable access to health care; insufficient family support, particularly for children and adult dependants; and general poverty and social exclusion aspects;

Box 1: Decent work indicators (cont.)

- **Social dialogue, workers' and employers' representation:** The extent to which the rights to social dialogue are exercised effectively is reflected in, among others, four statistical indicators: trade union density rate, employers' organization density rate, collective bargaining coverage rate, days not worked due to strikes and lockouts;
- **Economic and social context:** The statistical indicators of this category provide a broad picture of the economic and social context for decent work (e.g. labour productivity, income inequality, children not in school, education of the adult population, real GDP per capita).

Source: ILO: *Decent Work Indicators: Concepts and Definitions*, ILO Manual, First edition, Geneva, 2012

1.1.2. EU level frameworks

At EU level, the first attempt to measure job quality was made at the Laeken European Council in 2001 to respond to the inclusion of employment quality as a key objective of the European Social Agenda. The so-called Laeken indicators defined job quality along ten dimensions relating to the characteristics of the job, of the worker and the broader socio-economic and labour market context.²⁴ The list of Laeken job quality indicators was expanded in 2008 to include aspects such as wages, work intensity and human capital formation.²⁵

Together with the work on the Laeken Indicators, the Employment Committee (EMCO) started to discuss in 2001 about benchmarks to measure job quality in EU countries. This work has continued up until 2013 and consisted of identifying the main dimensions of job quality, assessing the availability of data and detecting a set of statistically significant independent variables or indicators from the list of questions included in the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS), the Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC) and the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

²⁴ See European Commission, *Employment in Europe 2008*, Chapter 4, Brussels 2008.

²⁵ In 2008 the European Trade Union Institute developed a job quality index centred on workers' perspective along six dimensions (wages; non-standard forms of employment; working time; conditions of work and job security; career development; and collective interest representation). The indicators are drawn from individual level data sourced from a number of EU-specific surveys (EU Labour Force Survey, Statistics on Income and Living Conditions and the European Working Conditions Survey).

Based on this pilot work, EMCO identified four main dimensions and ten related sub-dimensions (listed in Table 2 below) and more than 50 indicators and factors to measure job quality.

Table 2: EMCO job quality indicators: Dimensions and sub-dimensions

Dimension	Sub-dimension
1. Socio- economic security	1.1 Adequate earnings
	1.2 Job and career security
2. Education and training	2.1 Skills development
	2.2 Employability
3. Working conditions	3.1 Health and safety at work
	3.2 Work intensity
	3.3 Autonomy
	3.4 Collective interest representation
4. Work-life and gender balance	4.1 Work-life balance
	4.2 Gender balance

Source: European Commission, “The future of work in Europe: job quality and work organisation for a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth”, Chapter 3 in *Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2014*, Brussels 2015, available at <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7736>

The *European Pillar of Social Rights* sets out a number of key principles and rights to support fair and well-functioning labour markets and welfare systems. These principles and rights cover the areas of employment, social protection, social inclusion, education and equal opportunities (see Box 2). The principles of the Pillar are based on the Revised European Social Charter, the European Code of Social Security, the ILO Conventions, Recommendations and related Protocols, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations and the EU social *acquis* of the last 30 years.

Box 2: European Pillar of Social Rights

The *European Pillar of Social Rights* covers 20 principles and rights in the areas of employment, social protection, social inclusion, education and equal opportunities that EU countries and the social partners need to implement at national level. Many of these principles and rights reflect the various dimensions of job quality.

- **Equal opportunities** in employment, education and social protection, irrespective of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. This principle also reiterates the right to equal pay for work of equal value and timely and tailored assistance to improve (self-)employment prospects;
- **Fair working conditions** include (i) job security (prevention of employment relationships that lead to precarious working condition, including the abuse of atypical contracts); (ii) fair wages (adequate minimum wages and wages that provide a decent standard of living); (iii) employment protection (notice period in case of dismissal and access to impartial dispute resolutions mechanism); (iv) social dialogue (consultation on matters affecting workers); (v) work-life balance (leave arrangements, flexible working arrangements and access to care services); and (vi) health and safety at work (including adaptation of the working environment and personal data protection);
- **Social protection and inclusion** such as (i) adequate social protection (irrespective of the type and duration of the employment relationship); (ii) unemployment benefit (of adequate level and reasonable duration); and (iii) inclusion of persons with disabilities (vocational rehabilitation services and work adaptation).

The European Pillar of Social Rights is accompanied by a ‘social scoreboard’ to monitor implementation across EU countries. All indicators are objective in nature and geared to measure progress at the aggregate (macro) level. Four indicators included in the scoreboard are relevant for monitoring progress in achieving job quality:

1. Gender employment and wage gap: the difference in employment rates and earnings between men and women;
2. NEET rates: the share of young people neither in employment nor in education or training;
3. Labour force structure: employment and unemployment by age-group (young people and adults) and educational attainment level;
4. Employment related income: compensation of employees per hour worked.

Source: European Commission: *Establishing a European Pillar of Social Rights*, Staff Working Document No 201, 2017, accessible at https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/staff-working-document-explanatory-fiches-each-principle_en; European Commission: *Social scoreboard: Key findings*, 2017 accessible at <https://composite-indicators.jrc.ec.europa.eu/social-scoreboard/>

1.1.3. Other frameworks

The framework developed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) centres on seven dimensions of job quality (see Box 3). This framework provides guidance to countries that wish to compile statistics on job quality.²⁶ It highlights the rationale for the selection of indicators, but leaves any value judgment to the users of statistics.²⁷

Box 3: Handbook on measuring the quality of employment (UNECE)

The *Handbook on measuring the quality of employment, A statistical framework* was prepared by the Expert Group on Measuring Quality of Employment, established by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES). The framework identifies seven *dimensions* and twelve *sub-dimensions* and a number of statistical indicators. The statistical framework defines quality of employment from the point of view of the employed person and it combines objective and subjective indicators.

Dimension	Sub-dimensions
1) Safety and ethics of employment	a. Safety at work b. Child labour and forced labour c. Fair treatment in employment
2) Income and benefits from employment	a. Income b. Non-wage pecuniary benefits
3) Working time and work-life balance	a. Working hours b. Working time arrangements c. Work life balance
4) Security of employment and social protection	a. Security of employment b. Social protection
5) Social dialogue	
6) Skills development and training	
7) Employment-related relationships and work motivation	a. Employment-related relationships b. Work motivation

Source: UN Commission for Europe, *Handbook on Measuring Quality of Employment A Statistical Framework*, New York and Geneva, 2015, at https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/publications/2015/ECE_CES_40.pdf

²⁶ UN Commission for Europe, *Handbook on Measuring Quality of Employment. A Statistical Framework*, New York and Geneva, 2015.

²⁷ Ibid. Page 6.

In 2015, the *Better life initiative* of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) identified three dimensions of job quality: (i) earnings, (ii) labour market security; and (iii) working environment (see Box 4). By bringing job quality to three core dimensions of well-being, the OECD framework aims to provide a more actionable approach for policy-making purposes.²⁸

Box 4: The OECD Job quality framework

The OECD Job Quality Framework was first presented in the 2014 *OECD Employment Outlook*. The framework focuses on objective features of job quality (attributes that can be observed by a third party) and on job quality outcomes as experienced by individual workers. It includes three job quality dimensions and five headline indicators. Each headline indicator combines two or more statistical measures.

Dimension	Headline indicators
Earnings	<p>Earning quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Average earnings ▪ Earning inequality
Labour market security	<p>Labour market security against unemployment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unemployment risk ▪ Unemployment insurance
	<p>Labour market security against extreme low pay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Probability of falling into extreme low-pay ▪ Probability of getting out of extreme low pay
Quality of the working environment	<p>Job strain</p> <p><i>Job demands</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Time pressure at work ▪ Physical health risk factors <p><i>Job resources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work autonomy and learning opportunities ▪ Workplace relationships <p><i>Supplementary indicator:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working very long hours

Source: Cazes, S., et al., "Measuring and Assessing Job Quality; The OECD Job Quality Framework", *OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers*, No. 174, at http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/measuring-and-assessing-job-quality_5jrp02kqw1mr-en

²⁸ Cazes, S., et al., "Measuring and Assessing Job Quality: The OECD Job Quality Framework", *OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers*, No. 174, Paris. 2015.

In 2012, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) developed an approach for measuring job quality in EU and candidate countries (see Box 5). This framework is substantiated in four dimensions - two related to extrinsic job features (earnings and prospects) and two focused on intrinsic job characteristics (work and its environment and working time quality). Eurofound prioritized the indicators to be considered for each dimension, based on the impact on workers' well-being. Each of the four dimensions has a corresponding index.²⁹

Box 5: Job quality in Europe (Eurofound)

The job quality framework proposed by Eurofound in the research "Job quality in Europe" uses the information that derives from the Survey on Working Conditions, implemented every five years. The indicators of each dimension are prioritized and combined into indices.

Dimension	Content
Earnings	Hourly earnings
Prospects	Job security, career progression, contract quality
Intrinsic job quality	<p>Skills and discretion (0.25)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills and autonomy <p>Good social environment (0.25)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social support, absence of abuse <p>Good physical environment (0.25)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low level of physical and posture-related hazards <p>Work intensity (0.25)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pace of work, work pressure, emotional/value conflict demand
Working time quality	Duration, scheduling, discretion, and short term flexibility over working time

Source: Eurofound, *Trends in Job Quality in Europe*, Luxembourg, 2012, at https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef1228en_0.pdf

The above-mentioned frameworks seek to provide an approach to measure and monitor the multi-dimensional aspects of job quality. The

²⁹ Eurofound, *Trends in Job Quality in Europe*, Luxembourg, 2012

main limitations relate to the number and type of indicators that are required to fully capture the multiple dimensions of job quality and to data availability.³⁰ All frameworks are outcome-based, i.e. they refer to the situation, experience and perceptions of workers, as well as the situation of the labour market (see Table 3 for a comparison of the different elements of each of the frameworks that have been analysed in this publication). As such, the analysis of the quality indicators over time can also show the impact that public policies have on the quality of employment.

Table 3: A comparison of individual-level job quality dimensions

Dimensions	Indicators	ILO	UNECE	EMCO	Eurofound	OECD
Earnings	Average earnings, share of low paid workers, rate of in-work poverty	X	X	X	X	X
Hours of work and working time	Average actual or usual hours worked per week or year, share of involuntary part-time employment, share of workers with excessive or unsocial hours of work, share of workers with short-term flexibility over working time	X	X		X	X
Job security	Share of temporary workers, share of workers with short job tenure, share of self-employed workers	X	X	X	X	X
Lifelong learning	Share of working age population or employed persons participating in education and training, share of employed persons who have more/less education than is normally required in their occupation	X	X	X	X	X
Work organization/content	Subjective indicators of autonomy at work, work intensity, workers' self-assessment of the extent to which they do a useful work, satisfaction with type of work in present job		X	X	X	

³⁰ In some instances, the data required for certain indicators are collected with low frequency and/or only in certain geographical areas.

Table 3: A comparison of individual-level job quality dimensions (cont.)

Dimensions	Indicators	ILO	UNECE	EMCO	Eurofound	OECD
Safety and health at work	Occupational injury rate, occupational disease contraction rate, stress at work, share of workers with high exposure to physical health risk factors	X	X	X	X	X
Work organization/content	Subjective indicators of autonomy at work, work intensity, workers' self-assessment of the extent to which they do a useful work, satisfaction with type of work in present job		X	X	X	
Workplace relationships	Subjective indicators of relationships with colleagues and supervisors, discrimination, harassment		X	X	X	
Social security	Unemployment insurance coverage, replacement rate, beneficiaries of cash income support	X	X			
	Entitlements to maternity/parental leave, annual leave, childcare facilities, employment situation of mothers of young children	X	X			X
	Pension coverage	X	X			
	Health insurance coverage, employees with supplemental medical insurance plan, share of employees entitled to sick leave	X	X			

Although all the above-mentioned frameworks are suitable to measure the quality of jobs that young people obtain through a youth employment offer (the only caveat being the availability of comparable data over time), none can be readily and entirely applied to appraise the quality of a youth employment offer at the time this is made (i.e. ex ante).

The development of an ex-ante approach requires a change of perspective that moves from an outcome- to a benchmark-based approach without losing the fundamental principles and key dimensions of job quality.

1.2. Framework to assess the quality of youth employment offers

The development of a practical approach to appraise *ex ante* the quality of the offers of employment made to young people needs to respond to a number of requirements.

The first requirement revolves around ***capturing the multiple quality dimensions*** that define decent work for young people without, however, becoming overly complex or difficult to apply.³¹ Economic and social research points to the following three dimensions that are part of all the above-mentioned job quality frameworks:

- i. employment security;
- ii. earnings; and
- iii. conditions of work/work environment.³²

The lack of employment security has a number of detrimental effects on workers' well-being (e.g. low job satisfaction, low work performance and low trust), physical and mental health (higher prevalence of hypertension, greater risk of heart disease, higher incidence of depression and anxiety, overall fatigue and other stress-related symptoms), as well as consumption patterns (lower individual's and households' spending) .³³ Findings from research also point to an

³¹ This requirement excludes the possibility to develop a job quality index, as this would render the framework difficult to use.

³² The dimension condition of work/work environment also encompasses safety and health in the workplace and skills development/career advancement opportunities.

³³ See for example, Green, F., "Subjective Employment Insecurity around the World", *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 2009; Green, F., Health effects of job insecurity, IZA World of Labor 2015; Benito, A. *Does job insecurity affect household consumption?* Bank of England, Working Paper N.220, London 2004. Erlinghagen M., *Self-Perceived Job Insecurity and Social Context: A Multi-Level Analysis of 17 European Countries*, *European Sociological Review* 24, 2008.

adverse effect of job insecurity on enterprises due to lower workers' motivation, willingness to innovate and lower productivity.³⁴

Earnings are prominent in all job quality frameworks as the level of employment-related income contributes directly to the material well-being of individuals. Together with hours of work, earnings have long been used as the main indicator for assessing the quality of employment across geographical areas and socio-demographic groups.³⁵

The other features that determine the quality of jobs relate to conditions of work and work environment. These include hours of work, job intensity, workplace relationships, health and safety, career prospects and skills training. Not all these dimensions, however, can be easily measured *ex ante*.

The second requirement of an *ex-ante* approach is that the indicators used to measure quality dimension **focus on objective elements** that can be observed at the level of the individual and do not depend on personal perceptions, preferences or experiences. Although some important aspects of quality, such as workplace relationships or usefulness of training, can only be measured through individuals' self-assessment, the inclusion of this type of indicators would entail a degree of subjectivity that may be challenged on the grounds of transparency and uniformity of application. In addition, self-reported indicators may undermine the comparability of quality indicators across individuals, geographical areas and time.

The third requirement is that a **reference measure or benchmark** for each indicator can be constructed on the basis of information that is regularly collected. The source of this information can be statistical data or normative texts, such as labour legislation and collective agreements. These benchmarks represent the minimum threshold that any given youth employment offers need to comply with in order to pass the quality test.

³⁴ De Witte, H., Naswall, K., "Objective' vs. 'Subjective' job insecurity: Consequences of temporary work for job satisfaction and organizational commitment in four European countries", *Economic and Industrial Democracy* N. 24, 2003.

³⁵ There is an extensive body of economic and social literature on the importance of adequate earnings for workers' well-being. For a review see Bustillo Muñoz de, R. et al, *Indicators of job quality in the European Union*, Directorate General for Internal Policies, Brussels, 2009 and more recently Clark, A. E., What makes a good job? Job quality and job satisfaction, IZA World of Labour, 2015:215.

The final requirement revolves around the *clarity of the selected indicators*. These indicators should be clearly understandable and have face validity (i.e. capture the content of what is intended to be measured). They should also be organizable in a practical and easy to use tool for the day-to-day work of practitioners responsible for the implementation and monitoring of youth employment offers. A sample of checklist that contains the dimensions discussed in this publication is provided in Annex 1.

The list of dimensions and indicators is not intended to be exhaustive. Countries can add other indicators or construct different ones for each dimension, provided that the dimensions/indicators respond to the criteria outlined above and that their measurement is consistent over time and across different groups of young people. The job quality frameworks that were examined to develop the core elements of quality offers (see Table 1.1) can be used as a starting point. The same list of indicators can also be used for monitoring and evaluation exercises. An example of how this can be done is provided in Annex 2.

As youth employment programmes, broadly, and the Youth Guarantee schemes, specifically, target young people aged 15-24 years old (or 29 if so decided at national level), particular attention needs to be paid to the offers that involve the performance of job tasks by young people in the age group 15-17. Typically, national labour legislation sets the minimum age for admission to employment and the specific requirements that need to be applied to younger workers.³⁶ These provisions constitute the basic principles to be respected when offering employment to young people aged 15 to 17 in order not to expose them to hazardous work or other forms of child labour.³⁷

³⁶ National legislation on minimum working age is usually based on the principles enshrined in ILO's Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138). The text of this Convention is accessible at http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312283:NO

³⁷ Hazardous labour for 15-17 years old is: (a) work which exposes them to physical, psychological or sexual abuse; (b) work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces; (c) work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or work that involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads; (d) work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose them to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health; (e) work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the youth is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.

2. Quality offers of youth employment

There are five dimensions of employment quality that are common to all the job quality frameworks examined in the previous chapter. These are:

- (i) employment security;
- (ii) earnings;
- (iii) work environment/conditions of work;
- (iv) safety and health in the workplace; and
- (v) skills development/career advancement opportunities.

The following paragraphs explore these dimensions and the key elements that can be objectively identified and measured at the individual level at the time the offer is made, have face validity (i.e. they capture the content of what is intended to be measured), and can be compared against a benchmark to be constructed with available information and data.

2.1. *Security of employment*

In most countries, the loss of work is the main source of people's insecurity. This is usually gauged through the risk of job loss, the expected duration of unemployment and its consequences in terms of loss of income. Labour market insecurity has detrimental effects on workers' well-being, health (physical and mental illnesses caused by stress-related uncertainty), family life and future earnings. The implications of job insecurity may also extend to the firm, in terms of reduction of workers' retention rates and loss of productivity, and to society at large as it affects consumer confidence, household consumption and saving behaviour.³⁸

³⁸ Ashford, S. J., Lee, C., Bobko P., "Content, causes, and consequences of job insecurity: A theory-based measure and substantive test", *The Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 32, 1989; Erlinghagen M., "Self-perceived job Insecurity and social context: A multi-level analysis of 17 European countries", *European Sociological Review*, 24/2008; Green, F., "Unpacking the misery multiplier: How employability modifies the

The indicators used by existing job quality frameworks to measure employment security include labour market measures at the aggregate level (i.e. macro indicators) and some subjective indicators. Aggregate measures include the rate of precarious employment; the share of workers on fixed-term contract; unemployment risk and unemployment insurance.³⁹ Subjective indicators include self-reported perceptions about job security, career prospects and contract quality.⁴⁰

Although these indicators (either aggregate or subjective) are not suitable to measure *ex ante* the quality of an employment offer, they can be used as a proxy to gauge employment security. For instance, fixed-term, occasional or seasonal work provides workers with less job security compared to a permanent job. This does not mean that all short-tenure jobs are of low quality, but simply that they are more likely to expose workers to the loss of income due to unemployment, particularly when contract duration does not reach the minimum period required to access the unemployment benefit.⁴¹

The indicators proposed to appraise the quality of offers in terms of employment security, therefore, comprise the:

- (i) duration of the employment contract offered; and
- (ii) access to social protection entitlements.

These indicators are benchmarked against social protection rules applicable in the country.

impacts of unemployment and job insecurity on life satisfaction and mental health”, *Journal of Health Economics*, Vol.30, 2011; Campbell D. M., Carruth A., Dickerson A. P. , Green F., “ Job insecurity and wages”, *Economic Journal*, Vol. 117, 2007; Hijzen, A. Menyherth B., “Measuring labour market security and assessing its implications for individual well-being”, *OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers*, No. 175, OECD, Paris, 2016

³⁹ The dimension labour market security of the OECD job quality framework takes into consideration: (1) the probability of becoming unemployed, (2) the expected duration of unemployment, and (3) the degree to which unemployment benefits compensate for lost earnings during unemployment. See Hijzen, A., Menyherth B., *Measuring labour market security and assessing its implications for individual well-being*, op. cit.

⁴⁰ Subjective indicators of job security are included in the ETUI job quality index as well as in the Eurofound and UNECE frameworks. See Leschke, J. et al., *Job quality in the crisis: an update of the Job quality index (JQI)*, European Trade Union Institute, Working Paper 07, 2012; Eurofound, *Trends in job quality in Europe*, Luxembourg, 2012; and UN Commission for Europe, *Handbook on measuring quality of employment: A statistical framework*, op. cit.

⁴¹The OECD framework, for instance, questions the association between the incidence of temporary work and job security, as the risk of unemployment rose considerably in the period 2007-2013, while the incidences of short-tenured and temporary employment tended to decrease. See Hijzen, A., Menyherth B., *Measuring labour market security and assessing its implications for individual well-being*, op. cit.

If the duration of the contract is shorter than the minimum requirement to access unemployment benefits, the criterion “employment security” would not be satisfied. Similarly, an employment contract that does not give access to social protection entitlements established by national labour law is not a quality employment offer. Table 4 below summarizes the elements that may be considered for assessing the employment security dimension of an offer of employment.

Table 4: Employment security: elements, benchmark and source of information

Quality domain	Employment security
Element or indicator	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Duration of employment contract; 2. Access to social protection entitlements (paid and sick leave, unemployment, health and accident insurance);
Benchmark(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Minimum job tenure required to access unemployment benefit/insurance; 2. Minimum social protection entitlement set by national labour legislation;
Sources of information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unemployment insurance legislation; 2. Social protection legislation.
Calculation method	<p>The offer satisfies quality criteria on employment security if the following two elements are satisfied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The duration of the job contract offered is equal to or above the minimum job tenure required by national legislation to access the unemployment benefit/insurance; <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The job contract gives the incumbent access to the minimum social protection entitlements set by national labour legislation.

These benchmarks can also be used for *ex-post* evaluation of employment security.⁴² *Ex-post* evaluation should be complemented by

⁴² The evaluation criteria set to appraise the outcomes of the Youth Employment Initiative include type of contract (fixed-term/permanent) that can be used to judge job security. See European Commission, *Guidance on evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative*, September 2015, op.cit.

other measures of job security, such as job tenure, formal/informal work, and perceived job security.

An additional secondary indicator to measure overall labour market security can also be used to assess the employment offer over time (see Box 6).

Box 6: Measuring labour market security

The OCED job quality framework proposes two indicators to measure labour market security: (i) overall unemployment risk (measured in terms of monthly unemployment inflow probability and expected duration of unemployment); and (ii) effective unemployment insurance (coverage of net replacement rates). The formula to calculate this risk is:

- (1) Unemployment inflow probability (X_t) =
$$\frac{\text{Number of newly unemployed persons at } t_{+1}}{\text{Total number of persons employed, } t}$$
- (2) Duration of unemployment (D_t) =
$$1 - \frac{(\text{Total unemployment at } t_{+1}) - (\text{Inflow into unemployment at } t_{+1})}{\text{Total unemployment at } t}$$
- (3) Unemployment risk = $X_t * D_t$

$$\text{Labour market insecurity} = \text{Unemployment risk} * (1 - \text{Unemployment insurance})$$

In Spain, the above-mentioned indicator shows that the unemployment risk (probability of becoming unemployed and remaining unemployed for the following period) increased from 24.9 per cent in 2010 to 28.4 per cent in 2015. This affected the overall labour market insecurity in the country (which increased from 16.9 per cent to 19.3 per cent). A similar situation was experienced by Portugal, where the unemployment risk increased from 12.6 per cent in 2010 to 14.6 per cent in 2015, with overall labour market insecurity increasing from 8.2 per cent to 9.5 per cent. In Latvia, labour market insecurity declined from 11.4 per cent in 2010 to 5.2 per cent in 2015 and the unemployment risk declined from 24.4 per cent to 11.1 per cent in the same period. These declines are due to increasing numbers of people employed and lower inflows into unemployment.

Source: Hijzen, A., Menyhert B., *Measuring labour market security and assessing its implications for individual well-being*, op.cit.

2.2. Earnings

The employment-related income that workers receive is an important element of job quality as it contributes directly to their material well-being and that of their households. Existing evidence suggests that life satisfaction increases with the level of earnings (and this holds true across countries and individuals) and that – for a given level of average earnings – life satisfaction tends to be higher the more equal is its distribution.⁴³

The indicators used by the existing job quality frameworks often include both individual (micro) and labour market (macro) measures. Individual-level indicators relate to mean (or average) wages and income from self-employment activities (measured hourly, monthly, in nominal or real terms), while aggregate measures look at the share of workers' earning below the poverty line (i.e. working poverty); the share of low-paid workers (i.e. workers whose earnings are less than two-thirds of the median hourly earnings); income inequality (gap between income deciles); and gender pay gap (difference in gross hourly earnings between men and women workers).

The measure that can help gauge the quality of offers at individual level is the expected mean hourly earnings of an employment offer (see Table 5). This measure is expressed in terms of gross earnings and on an hourly basis to account for differences in working time.⁴⁴ The data needed to construct the benchmarks can be easily collected from the following sources:

- **Collective agreements:** if the job offer relates to an occupation (or economic sector) that is part of a collective agreement, the earnings offered to the young person cannot be lower than what has been agreed through collective bargaining. This method is suitable for benchmarking paid employment offers, but not for other types of work.
- **Statistical data:** data on mean hourly earnings are regularly collected by national statistical offices (by age and occupation).⁴⁵

⁴³ See Cazes, S., et al., "Measuring and Assessing Job Quality: The OECD Job Quality Framework", *OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers*, No. 174, Paris. 2015.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Data are collected at EU level every four years by the *Structure of Earnings Survey*. The latest available dataset refers to 2014. See EUROSTAT online code (earn_ses14_14).

They combine earnings stemming from paid employment and self-employment activities. A reasonable benchmark would be the mean hourly earnings for workers aged less than 25 (or 30 in some countries) in the occupation of interest. In 2014, for example, the mean hourly wage for young individuals engaged as clerical support workers in Spain was €7.95. A job offer paying less than two-thirds of the mean hourly earnings (i.e. €5.30 in the example above) would constitute low-paid work and, therefore, not be considered a quality offer. This method is suitable for both paid and self-employment offers. For self-employment, the “quality earnings” should be referred to the expected income the young person will generate through his/her self-employment activity (typically included in the business plan). In order to ensure that the use of this statistical benchmark fully reflects employment quality, it needs to be appraised together with the “skills and job match” element (see paragraph 2.3). It may happen, in fact, that an offer of employment complies with the earnings dimension but the occupation is in line with the qualification held by the young person.

The use of minimum wage as a benchmark for measuring the quality of employment offers may have the effect of levelling downward the earnings of employment offers provided to young people. If, however, a decision is taken at national level to use the minimum wage as a quality benchmark, its level needs to be above the threshold of low paid work and of the poverty line established nationally.

Table 5: Quality of earnings: elements, benchmark and source of information

Quality domain	Earnings
Element/ indicator	Mean hourly earnings (gross, in Euro or national currency)
Benchmarks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hourly earnings set by collective agreements (national, occupation, economic sector); 2. Mean hourly earnings by age and occupational groups, including low-pay level; 3. Minimum wage
Sources of information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collective agreement (national or sectoral); 2. National Statistical Office, earnings data; Structure of Earnings Survey, 2014; EUROSTAT online code: (earn_ses14_14); 3. (Minimum Wage legislation and annual adjustments)
Calculation method	<p>The offer satisfies the earning quality criterion if the mean hourly earnings offered are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equal to or above the mean hourly earnings set by collective agreements; <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equal to or above the mean hourly earnings of workers less than 30 years old in the occupation subject-matter of the offer, AND above 2/3 of the mean hourly earnings ▪ (Equal to or above the mean hourly level of the minimum wage AND above 2/3 of the mean hourly earnings)

Table 5 summarizes the elements that may be considered for appraising the quality of the earnings proposed by an employment offer. For practical purposes the benchmarks are listed in order of importance. If an employment offer is for an occupation (or economic sector) for which there is a collective agreement in force, the wage level set therein prevails. If there is no collective agreement for the employment offer in question, the benchmark to be applied is the mean hourly earnings of young workers in the relevant occupation. In any case the earnings resulting from the job that is being offered cannot be lower than the threshold of low-paid work. These benchmarks can also be used ex post to evaluate whether a young person – after participating to a youth employment programme – is employed in a quality job (see Annex 2 for an example).

2.3. Conditions of work

Having a quality job does not just mean receiving a fair salary and having a secure job, but also having good career prospects, autonomy at work and the possibility to combine work with family life. In this dimension, job quality frameworks typically comprise an array of aggregate indicators (e.g. average hours usually worked, prevalence of flexible work schedules, share of workers using child care facilities) and some subjective indicators (quality of working time, work autonomy, prospect for career advancement and consultation in the organization of work), but no objective, individual-level indicators.

Similar to what occurs for employment security, none of the indicators specified by the various job quality frameworks is fully suitable for measuring ex ante the quality of an employment offer (since they are either aggregate or subjective measures), but they point to the elements that are important for ensuring decent conditions of work.

The measures proposed to appraise the quality of offers in terms of working conditions comprise three different elements, namely: (i) skills and job match; (ii) average weekly hours of work, including excessive hours and involuntary part-time; and (iii) work schedule (shift work and work during unsocial hours) and work intensity.

Skills and job match

Available research suggests that the mismatch between skills and jobs (under- and over-qualification) has a number of negative effects for both individuals and the economy. At the individual level, skills mismatches can lead to long-lasting scarring effects on work-related earnings.⁴⁶ In addition, the job-search behaviour of high-skilled jobseekers may crowd out that of low-skilled ones.⁴⁷ Skills mismatch is

⁴⁶ This negative earnings effect has been estimated at around nine per cent, declining over ten years. See Oreopoulos P., von Wachter T., Heisz A., "The short- and long-term career effects of graduating in a recession", *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 4(1), 2012.

⁴⁷ Arseneau D. M., Epstein B., "The welfare costs of skill-mismatch employment", Finance and Economics Discussion Series, Federal Reserve Board, Washington, D.C., 042/2014.

also associated with lower aggregate labour productivity resulting from inefficient human capital allocation.⁴⁸

The indicator on skills and job match serves to assess that the employment offer is in line with the qualifications possessed by the young beneficiary of a youth employment offer (i.e. the level of education of the beneficiary matches job requirements and the employment offer does not lead to over- or under-qualification). Horizontal matching (i.e. the type or field of education or skills is appropriate for the job tasks) would be the most accurate indicator of quality.

The measurement of vertical skills matching can be done through a matrix that plots the level of educational attainment – in terms of International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011) levels – and the one-digit occupational groups that are included in the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO 2008) – applied to the job offer (see Table 6). The shaded areas in the table show where over-qualification (dark grey) and under-qualification (light grey) occurs. The occupational group of the employment offer and the educational attainment of the young beneficiary are plotted in the matrix to check whether they fall in or out of the shaded areas.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Since enterprises draw from a fixed pool of skilled labour, trapping resources in relatively low productivity firms makes it more difficult for more productive firms to attract skilled labour and gain market shares. McGowan M. A., Andrews A., *Skills mismatch and public policy in OECD countries*, OECD Economic Department Working Paper No.1210, 2015.

⁴⁹ Skills matching is one of the quality indicators to be used for the evaluation of jobs supported by the Youth Employment Initiative. See European Commission, *Guidance on evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative*, September 2015, op.cit.

Table 6. Education and occupation mismatch as a function of ISCO and ISCED

ISCO-08 Major Groups		ISCED-97 Educational attainment						
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Managers	Under-qualification						Over-qualification
2	Professionals							
3	Technicians and associate professionals							
4	Clerical support workers							
5	Service and sales workers							
6	Skilled agricultural, forestry, fishery workers							
7	Craft and related trades workers							
8	Plant and machine operators and assemblers							
9	Elementary occupations							

Average weekly hours of work

Hours of work, work schedule and work intensity are the key determinants of workers’ well-being and are also used as a proxy of work-life balance and quality of life. Working long hours has been associated with fatigue, stress, increased physical and mental health risks, higher work-related accidents, lower performance and poor work-life balance.⁵⁰ It may also happen that individuals work less hours than they are actually able and willing to do (involuntary part-time), with negative effects on earnings and job security.⁵¹

The difficulty of ex ante appraisal of the average hours of work is related to the potential difference between the hours indicated in an employment offer and the number of effective hours of work. For this

⁵⁰ See ILO, *Decent working time: Balancing workers’ needs with business requirements*, ILO, Geneva 2007. For a review of research on working time see Golden, L., *The effects of working time on productivity and firm performance: a research synthesis paper*, ILO, Conditions of Work and Employment Branch, Geneva, 2012 and Berniell M.I., *The effects of working hours on health status and health behaviors*, Paper presented at the 15th IZA European Summer School in Labor Economics, 2012. Available evidence on the relationship between hours of work and health is also reviewed in White J., Beswick J., *Working long hours*, Health and Safety Laboratory, 2003.

⁵¹ See Borowczyk-Martins D., Lalé E., *How bad is involuntary part-time work?*, IZA Discussion Paper No. 9775, 2016.

reason, this element needs to be appraised against three different benchmarks, two for full-time work (both of which need to be satisfied) and one for part-time work.

The first benchmark is based on the hours of work specified in the labour legislation or collective agreements, whichever is most favourable for the young worker. The second benchmark relates to the average number of usual weekly hours (for part-time and full time employment) and the incidence of excessive hours of work in the occupation related to the employment offer. This statistical measure – to be drawn from the data of the Labour Force Survey – can provide insights about the realities of the offer of employment. The third benchmark, applicable to part-time employment offers, relates to the fact that the young person is voluntarily undertaking part-time work.

Work schedule and work intensity

Certain work arrangements (shift and night work) and work intensity (working at high speed and to tight deadlines) may have a negative impact on workers' well-being, job satisfaction, physical and mental health (e.g. stress, depression and fatigue, higher exposure to work-related accidents) and family life.⁵² The organization of hours of work (shifts and work during unsocial hours) can be benchmarked with the provisions of labour legislation or collective agreements, whichever is more favourable to the young worker. It can also be done by checking the prevalence of shift work and work during unsocial hours in the statistics relating to the occupation that is being offered.⁵³ Box 7 provides some examples of the benchmarks on hours or work for EU countries.

⁵²Gospel H.: *Quality of working life: A review on changes in work organization, conditions of employment and work-life arrangements* (ILO Conditions of Work and Employment Series No. 1, Geneva, 2003).

⁵³ These figures may be derived by the micro-data of the national Labour Force Survey, but they are not published by EUROSTAT.

Box 7: Benchmarking hours of work through EU labour force statistics

The statistical benchmark to appraise the quality of the hours of work proposed by a youth employment offer uses two indicators, one related to the average hours usually worked in the occupation of the offer and the other related to excessive hours of work (i.e. 48 hours or more of work per week). This method helps check the usual hours of work.

In many EU countries, for example, managers and agricultural, forestry and fishery workers have longer working hours compared to other workers (around 46 hours per week), with men working longer hours compared to women. In Austria, Greece, Italy and Portugal managers usually work more than 48 hours a week. Agricultural workers are engaged in excessive hours of work in over 40 per cent of EU countries.

In Austria, Greece, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom, plant and machine operators work on average 5-6 hours more than the statutory 40 hours a week. Service and sales workers work around 42-45 hours a week in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain. Conversely, technician and other professionals have shorter weekly hours of work in Denmark, France, Ireland and the Netherlands (around 39 hours).

With respect to work during unsocial hours, service and sales workers are the most penalized, as about 50 per cent of these workers are engaged during weekends in many countries.

Source: EUROSTAT, *Labour Force Survey, annual data 2015*, online codes (lfsa_ewhuis) and (lfsa_qoe_3b3).

Work intensity is a composite index of the *European Working Conditions Survey*, which describes workers' experience of high demands on the job (working at high speed, tight deadlines, time required to get tasks done).⁵⁴ Despite reflecting subjective indicators, the average share of workers exposed to high demands by occupational group can be a useful, additional indicator for the overall appraisal of the likely conditions of work.

⁵⁴ The *European Working Conditions Survey* is carried out every five years by Eurofound. Accessible at the following website <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/european-working-conditions-surveys>.

Table 7: Conditions of work: elements, benchmark and source of information

Quality domain	Conditions of work
Element or indicator	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Matching between job qualifications and job; 2. Average number of weekly hours of work (including excessive hours and involuntary part-time); 3. Shift work and work during unsocial hours. <p>A1 Work intensity</p>
Benchmark(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vertical education and occupational match; 2. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Average number of hours usually worked; b) Excessive hours of work; c) Involuntary part-time. 3. Prevalence of shift work and work during unsocial hours (nights, Saturdays and Sundays). <p>A1 Prevalence of work intensity</p>
Sources of information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National Statistical Office, Labour Force Survey (LFS) data, education and occupation matrix. 2. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Labour legislation and collective agreement (national or sectoral), whichever is more favourable for the young worker; b) National Statistical Office, LFS data: EUROSTAT (Ifsa_ewhuis) c) Young beneficiary preference for hours of work (part- or full-time). 3. Labour legislation and collective agreement (national or sectoral); National Statistical Office, LFS data: work in shifts, on Saturdays and Sundays by occupational category <p>A1 European Working Conditions Survey, work intensity by occupational group (2015)</p>
Calculation method	<p>The employment offer satisfies quality criteria under the conditions of work dimension if:</p> <p>1. Vertical matching</p> <p>The employment offer is aligned to the qualifications the young person has.</p> <p>2. Hours of work</p> <p>The average weekly hours of work are equal to the average weekly hours of work set by the labour legislation and/or collective agreements;</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>The average weekly hours of work are equal to or less the average hours usually worked in the occupation subject-matter of the offer;</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p>

Table 7: Conditions of work: elements, benchmark and source of information (cont.)

Quality domain	Conditions of work
<p>Calculation method</p>	<p>There is a low incidence of excessive hours of work in the occupation subject-matter of the offer.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For part-time work</p> <p>Part-time is undertaken voluntarily.</p> <p>3. Shift work and work during unsocial hours</p> <p>Shift work and work during unsocial hours is in line with the provision of labour legislation and/or collective agreement;</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Expected shift work and work during unsocial hours is equal or less the average incidence of shift work and work during unsocial hours in the occupation of choice.</p> <p>A1. Work intensity</p> <p>The expected intensity of work is equal to or less the average intensity of work for the occupation of choice.</p>

Table 7 summarizes the elements that can be applied to appraise the quality of the conditions of work of a youth employment offer. Similar to other quality dimensions, the same benchmarks can also be applied during ex-post evaluation exercises.⁵⁵

2.4. Occupational health and safety

Health and safety at work are core elements of the quality of the working environment and have a number of implications for the well-being of workers and their families (in terms of the human and financial costs of work-related injury or disease, including on career progression and future work-related income), for enterprises (e.g. interrupted production, damaged to equipment, lower product quality due to loss of morale of co-workers) and for society at large (e.g. loss of output, costs of treatment and rehabilitation, and the cost of administering the various programmes to prevent, compensate, or remedy occupational injury and

⁵⁵ The evaluation criteria set to appraise the outcomes of the Youth Employment Initiative do not include indicators to measure conditions of work (aside job/qualification matching). See European Commission, *Guidance on evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative*, September 2015, op.cit.

disease).⁵⁶ Several models have investigated the various attributes of a job that affect workers' safety and their physical and mental health (defined as "job demands").

All job quality frameworks include elements geared to assess health and safety in the workplace. They include objective indicators compiled at the aggregate level (e.g. fatal and non-fatal occupational injury rate, for example) and subjective ones (e.g. exposure to physical and mental health risk factors). Like other employment quality dimensions, occupational safety and health indicators are primarily measurable ex post, when the individual actually performs a job and s/he starts to be exposed to occupational safety and health risks. The only measure that can be constructed for ex-ante appraisal of an employment offer is the likelihood of exposure to risk factors associated with the specific occupation and/or economic sector of the job offer.

The information that can be used to shape this indicator is based on normative rules, i.e. the national list of hazardous occupations - typically included in the national occupational health and safety legislation - that can be benchmarked with statistical indicators (e.g. share of workers reporting exposure to risks factors adversely affecting physical health and mental well-being by occupation and/or economic sector).⁵⁷ In Spain for example, young workers in the construction sector are 1.5 times more exposed to physical health risks compared to their peers working in professional and support service activities.

The percentage of young persons reporting an accident at work by broad occupational group can also help understand whether the employment offer is likely to expose a young worker to occupational health and safety risks. In Portugal, for instance, the share of young workers that in 2013 reported an accident in skilled agricultural occupations and crafts was nearly twice the national average, while the occupational groups less exposed to accidents were those of managers, professionals and technicians.

⁵⁶ Aside the human costs of ill health at work, workers and their families shoulder also a large share of its financial costs, see Dorman, *The economics of safety, health, and well-being at work: An overview*, ILO Geneva, 2000.

⁵⁷ The ILO International Hazard Datasheets on Occupations (available at http://www.ilo.org/safework/info/publications/WCMS_113135/lang-en/index.htm) offers information about the hazards that workers are exposed to in a number of occupations.

Table 8 summarizes the elements that may be considered for assessing the occupational safety and health risks of an employment offer. The same benchmarks can also be used to evaluate whether young beneficiaries to youth employment programmes are engaged in jobs that expose them to safety hazards, or physical and mental health risks.

Table 8: Occupational safety and health risks: elements, benchmark and source of information

Quality domain	Health and safety risk
Element or indicator	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hazardous occupation 2. Exposure to physical or mental health risks
Benchmark(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National list of occupations deemed hazardous 2. Exposure to physical or mental health risk factors by economic sector (occupation)
Sources of information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Occupational health and safety legislation; collective agreements 2. National Statistical Office: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Exposure to risk factors that can adversely affect mental well-being by sex, age and NACE Rev. 2 (EUROSTAT online code: hsw_exp5b); b) Exposure to risk factors that can adversely affect physical health by sex, age and NACE Rev. 2 (EUROSTAT online code: hsw_exp6b); c) Prevalence of young workers (15-34) reporting an accident at work by broad occupational group (EUROSTAT online code hsw_ac7).
Calculation method	<p>The employment offer satisfies quality criteria in the health and safety domain if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The job in an occupation not listed as hazardous OR ▪ The exposure to psychical and mental health risk – for an occupation listed as hazardous – is equal to or below the average exposure at national level AND ▪ The expected risk of accidents at work is equal to or below the average of reported accidents at national level.

2.5. Skills development and training

The opportunity to further develop one's skills while at work plays an important role for the quality of employment for all workers. There is a long-term trend of rising average levels of workers' skills but also of skills polarisation. Workers with a lower skill level have increasing problems in finding employment and at the same time have to make concessions regarding their salary, employment security and working conditions.⁵⁸

Job-related training brings a number of benefits to workers in terms higher wage growth (both in the short- and long-term), higher career mobility within the firm, increased job security (e.g. longer tenure and higher likelihood to move from temporary to permanent employment) and better skills matching.⁵⁹ There is also evidence that training has positive external labour market effects in terms of higher labour participation rates, lower unemployment, and shorter unemployment periods.⁶⁰

The skills development and training dimension in existing job quality frameworks is mostly based on subjective aspects (e.g. the job involves improving one's skill, job-related education and training has helped improving the way individuals work) and on the statistical indicator "share of workers receiving job-related education and training" that is measured at aggregate level.

Since there are no individual-level, objective elements to construct an ex ante indicator, the only reference relates to the provision of collective agreements that can be benchmarked with the national rate of employer-sponsored non-formal education and training by occupation. The assessment of the quality of the employment offer in this domain has to rely on the normative rules established by collective agreements or on the practice that prevails at national level in the various occupational groups (measured through the participation rate in employer-sponsored non-formal education and training by occupation).

⁵⁸ UN Commission for Europe, *Handbook on measuring quality of employment: A statistical framework*, op. cit.

⁵⁹ Hansson, B., *Job-related training and benefits for individuals: A review of evidence and explanations*, OECD Education Working Papers, No. 19, OECD, Paris, 2008; Eurofound, *Impact of training on people's employability*, Dublin 2007.

⁶⁰ Hansson, B., *ibid.*

Box 8 provides some examples of the statistical benchmarking of the skills development and training quality domain in EU countries.

Box 8: Benchmarking skills development and training in EU countries

The data of the Adult Education Survey (2011) show that in all EU countries, workers employed in elementary occupation are twice less likely to receive employer-sponsored non-formal education and training compared to the national average. Bulgaria, Denmark and Hungary are the only three countries where the share of workers employed in elementary occupations who receive job related training is around the national average.

For quality benchmarking purposes, the statistical data on employer-sponsored non-formal education and training need to be contextualized to the occupation of the employment offer (i.e. the average by one digit occupational code is screened to assess whether the young person is likely to received job-related training). For example, in Denmark, Finland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Sweden around half of clerical and service workers receive job-related training. This means that a job offer in these occupations gives the young person a 50 per cent opportunity to receive job-related training). In Austria, Bulgaria, France, Germany and Slovakia, three out of ten skilled manual workers receive job-related training. But only in Bulgaria this share is in line with the national average (35.7 per cent and 34.6 per cent, respectively). In the other countries this share is below the average share of workers receiving job-related training at national level (by around 6 to 10 percentage points). This indicates that an employment offer as skilled manual workers in Austria, France, Germany and Slovakia is unlikely to provide the same skills development opportunities of other occupational groups.

Source: EUROSTAT, *Adult training statistics 2011* (online code trng_aes_124)

Table 9 summarizes the elements that may be considered for assessing the opportunities for skills development and training of an employment offer. The ex post evaluation – besides using the indicators highlighted above – can also build on a number of aggregate and subjective indicators, such as participation in continuing vocational training and perceived relevance of job-related training for the improvement of work performance.⁶¹

⁶¹ It has to be recalled that the evaluation criteria set to appraise the outcomes of measures funded by the Youth Employment Initiative (including Youth Guarantee schemes) encompass “availability of additional job-related training”, which can be measure through the rate of participation in continuous vocational training. See European Commission, *Guidance on evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative*, op. cit.

Table 9: Skills development and training: elements, benchmark and information sources

Quality domain	Skills development and training
Element or indicator	Continuous vocational training
Benchmark(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuous vocational training opportunities set in collective agreement 2. Prevalence of employer-sponsored non-formal education and training by occupation
Sources of information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collective agreement 2. National Statistical Office, Adult Education Survey, 2011: Participation rate in employer-sponsored non-formal education and training by occupation [trng_aes_124]
Calculation method	<p>The offer satisfies the quality criterion in the skills development and training domain if the training opportunities the job offers are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equal to or higher than the continuous vocational training provisions set by collective agreements, <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equal to or higher than the national average of employer-sponsored non-formal education and training in the occupation of the employment offer.

3. Application of the quality framework

The previous chapter has highlighted the key dimensions that may be taken into consideration to define what constitutes a quality youth employment offer. As already mentioned, the list proposed is non-exhaustive and additional dimensions and indicators may be included at national level. The final set of quality dimensions should be agreed upon by public institutions responsible for policy design and implementation, the social partners and organizations that represent the interests of young people.

In terms of practical application, the quality dimensions outlined in the previous chapter have three main uses. First, it provides a practical approach to appraise the quality of employment offers that are made to young people. Second, it can be used as a tool to guide on-the-spot monitoring, including through labour inspection activities, to ensure the regular implementation of employment measures and their compliance with employment and labour legislation. Finally, the dimensions and benchmarks proposed can serve to develop quality indicators to monitor the labour market outcomes of beneficiaries of youth employment programmes.

3.1. *Ex-ante appraisal*

The quality dimensions outlined in Chapter 2 can be used to develop a checklist (see the example provided in Annex 1) to appraise whether the benchmarks identified for each quality dimension are achieved by the youth employment offer. The information can be collected once a year for statistical indicators and legislation and/or provisions of collective agreements. This information can be included in the checklist.

The checklist to appraise the quality of youth employment offers can be un-weighted (i.e. each dimension has the same importance within the framework) or have a set of weights that assign different importance to the various dimensions. The decision whether to use a

weighted or un-weighted checklist and the minimum score that an offer has to achieve to be considered of quality has to be taken in a participatory manner with the involvement of the social partners and representatives of those affected by the employment measures as set out in ILO’s Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122).⁶²

An example of un-weighted checklist for an employment offer is provided in Table 10 below. In this example, the offer does not comply with the benchmarks set for job tenure, skills match and work during unsocial hours (indicated by the value “0”), while all other benchmarks are satisfied (indicated with “1”).

Table 10: Checklist for quality of youth employment offer

Dimension	Benchmark	Achieved Yes = 1; No = 0
Job security	1. Job tenure	0
	2. Social protection	1
Earnings	3. Mean earnings	1
Working conditions	4. Skills match	0
	5. Hours of work	1
	6. Excessive hours	1
	7. Involuntary part-time	1
	8. Unsocial hours/shift work	0
	9. Work intensity	1
OHS	10. Work-related health risk	1
	11. Accidents at work	1
Training	12. Job training	1

⁶² In a weighted checklist, each dimension is assigned a numerical value that represents the importance of the quality dimension (the sum of the values of the different dimensions should be equal to 100).

3.2. On-the-spot monitoring

As discussed in Chapter 2, one of the main challenges of an ex ante approach is that it applies to the face value of the youth employment offer. The experience of a young beneficiary once s/he starts working may differ substantially from what was envisaged at the time the offer was made.

In order to ensure compliance with the terms set in the offer, the institutions responsible for the implementation of youth employment policy normally carry out on-the-spot monitoring visits, including through the labour inspectorate service that has the responsibility to ensure labour legislation compliance.

The checklists appended in Annex 1 can serve as a tool for the staff of institutions responsible for the monitoring of youth employment offers, including labour inspectors that check compliance with labour legislation.

3.3. Quality indicators for performance monitoring and evaluation

All the job quality frameworks examined in the previous chapters are suitable to measure the quality of jobs young beneficiaries get as employment offer.

There is a trade-off between the number of indicators that can be included in a performance monitoring system and the costs and time required to gather the data for their measurement. In many countries, performance monitoring of youth employment measures is carried out through administrative data collected by various public institutions in relation to their mandate (e.g. social security institutions, tax authorities, education and training institutions). Primary data collection (i.e. the administration of follow-up questionnaires on a sample of participants), allows the collection of subjective indicators and is done from time to time. Longitudinal analyses, which collected information over time for the same individual, are less common. These analyses help determine

causality between the youth employment measure and the outcome of interest (usually employment and earnings).⁶³

The dimensions and indicators of the quality frameworks proposed in chapter 2 can be included in performance monitoring systems, but not all indicators can be measured through the pooling of administrative data. In many instances, the indicators can be measured only by collecting primary data through individual questionnaires administered to a representative sample of young beneficiaries (see Annex 2). If performance monitoring is to be done through primary data collection, a variety of additional information can be collected (e.g. work and life balance, degree of job satisfaction, work autonomy, relationship with co-workers and employers).⁶⁴

⁶³ In an impact evaluation it is possible to specify as outcome of interest also the quality of employment that participants get compared to a control group. Since, however, the quality dimensions to be accounted for are many, these are either “pooled” into an instrumental variable that accounts for all the quality dimensions specified (e.g. social protection entitlement, match between qualifications and jobs) or only few dimensions are selected as representative of quality (for example earnings or skills match). See for instance Ibararán, P., Rosas S. D., *Evaluating the impact of job training programmes in Latin America: evidence from IDB funded operations*, *Journal of Development Effectiveness*, 1(2), 2009, where quality was measured in terms of getting a formal job, having a contract and/or receiving health insurance as a benefit.

⁶⁴ The questions to be included in the data collection instrument can be modelled on the ILO decent work indicators or the UNECE statistical framework.

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Annexes

Annex 1 – Checklist to assess the quality of a youth employment offer

Domain		Quality criterion	Yes =1 No
SECURITY	1	The duration of the contract offered is equal to or longer than the minimum job tenure required to access the unemployment benefit/insurance	
	2	The job contract gives the incumbent full access to the minimum social protection entitlements set by national labour legislation	
EARNINGS	3	The mean hourly earnings (gross in Euro or local currency) of the employment offer are equal to or above the earnings set by collective agreements OR	
		The mean hourly earnings (gross in Euro or local currency) of the offer are equal to or above the earnings received by young workers (less than 30) in the same occupation AND are above 2/3 of the mean hourly earnings	
		<i>Residual benchmark: The mean hourly earnings (gross in Euro or local currency) of the offer are equal to or above the earnings set by the minimum wage legislation AND above 2/3 of the mean hourly earnings)</i>	
CONDITIONS OF WORK	4	The employment offer is aligned to the qualifications the young person has (education/occupation matrix)	
	5	Average weekly hours of work are equal to the average weekly hours of work set by the labour legislation and/or collective agreements OR	
		Average weekly hours of work are equal to or less the average hours actually worked in the occupation subject-matter of the offer	
	6	There is a low incidence of excessive hours of work in the occupation subject-matter of the offer	
	7	Part-time work is taken up voluntarily	
8	Shift work and work during unsocial hours is in line with the provision of labour legislation and/or collective agreement OR		

Annex 1 – Checklist to assess the quality of a youth employment offer (cont.)

Domain		Quality criterion	Yes =1 No
CONDITIONS OF WORK (cont.)	8	Expected shift work and work during unsocial hours are equal to or less the average incidence of shift work and work during unsocial hours in the occupation of choice	
	9	The expected intensity of work is equal to or less the average intensity of work for the occupation of choice	
HEALTH AND SAFETY	10	The employment offer is not for an occupation listed as hazardous OR	
		The offer is for an occupation listed as hazardous, but the expected exposure to psychical and mental health risk is equal or less the national average exposure	
11	The expected risk of accidents at work is equal or lower the national average of reported accidents		
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	12	The job offer provides training that are equal or higher the continuous vocational training provisions set by collective agreements OR	
		The expected training provision is equal to or higher the national average of employer-sponsored non-formal education and training in the occupation of choice	

Annex 2 – Job quality indicators for performance monitoring

Indicator		Benchmark	Sources of data
JOB SECURITY	Duration of employment contract (*)	The duration of the job contract is equal to or above the minimum job tenure required by national legislation to access the unemployment benefit/insurance	Social Security Institute data Individual questionnaire
	Social protection entitlements (*)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The job contract gives the incumbent access to the minimum social protection entitlements set by national labour legislation ▪ For own-account workers, payment of social security contributions 	Social Security Institute data Individual questionnaire
EARNINGS	Mean hourly earnings (gross, in Euro or local currency) (*)	<p>Mean hourly earnings are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equal to or above the mean hourly earnings set by collective agreements; <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equal to or above the mean hourly earnings of workers less than 30 in the occupation subject-matter of the offer, AND above 2/3 of the mean hourly earnings 	Social Security Institute or Tax authority data Individual questionnaire
CONDITIONS OF WORK	Job/qualification matching (*)	The occupation the young person carries out is aligned to the qualifications of the young person has	National Statistical Office, Labour Force Survey (LFS) Education and occupation matrix.

Annex 2 – Job quality indicators for performance monitoring (cont.)

	Indicator	Benchmark	Sources of data
CONDITIONS OF WORK	Average number of weekly hours of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The average weekly hours of work are equal to the average weekly hours of work set by the labour legislation and/or collective agreements; <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The average weekly hours of work are equal to or less the average hours usually worked in the same occupation <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <p>Incidence of excessive hours of work</p>	Individual questionnaire
	Part-time work	Part-time is undertaken voluntarily	Individual questionnaire
	Shift work and work during unsocial hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shift work and work during unsocial hours is in line with the provision of labour legislation and/or collective agreement; <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shift work and work during unsocial hours is equal or less the average incidence of shift work and work during unsocial hours in the occupation of choice 	Individual questionnaire
	Work intensity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-perceived workload, time pressure, coping with conflicting demands, or performing physically demanding tasks. 	Individual questionnaire
OHS	Hazardous occupation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The job in an occupation not listed as hazardous; <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (For an occupation listed as hazardous) Self-perceived exposure to psychical and mental health risk 	Occupational health and safety legislation; Collective agreements Individual questionnaire

Annex 2 – Job quality indicators for performance monitoring (cont.)

Indicator		Benchmark	Sources of data
OHS	Accidents at work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fatal and non-fatal accidents at work in the recruiting enterprise in the last 12 months 	Individual questionnaire
TRAINING	Continuous vocational training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The worker has received job-related employer-sponsored education and training in the last 12 months Job-related non-formal education and training has helped improve the way the young person works (usefulness of training) 	Individual questionnaire

(*) These indicators can be measured through administrative data.

