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Abstract:

This paper shows that welfare states have become less redistributive since the 1990s and proceeds to discuss alternative explanations of why this is so. We argue that neither the policy preferences of middle-class citizens nor income biases in political representation alone provide an adequate explanation, and that the implications of the growth of non-standard forms of employment deserve more attention than they have received in the literature on redistributive politics.

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Focusing on the distribution of income among working-age households, this paper starts with the observation that tax-transfer systems in most OECD countries have become less redistributive since the mid-1990s and proceeds to discuss potential reasons for this development. Recent debates among political scientists suggest two alternative explanations of the pervasive retreat from redistribution (cf. Lupu and Pontusson 2023). While some scholars posit that the preferences of middle-class voters determine government policy, others emphasize that political parties, politicians and policymakers are more responsive to the preferences of the affluent than to the preferences of middle-income citizens, let alone low-income citizens. From the former perspective, the retreat from redistribution would seem to imply that the middle class has turned against redistribution or, in other words, that the policy preferences of middle- and low-income citizens have become less closely aligned that they were in the 1970s and 1980s. From the latter perspective, the implication would seem to be that income bias (or class bias) in political representation has increased over time.

We argue that there is some truth to both arguments and that neither alone provides a compelling explanation of the retreat from redistribution. We argue further that it is important to distinguish between redistribution via income taxation and redistribution via income transfers, and that changes in redistribution are the result of trends in labour-market dynamics and changes in “pre-fisc” income inequality as well as political choices. Some of the retreat from redistribution via income transfers in the period since the crisis of 2008-09 is simply the result of declining rates of unemployment. Finally, we seek to contribute to the literatures on welfare-state reforms and

redistributive politics by arguing that more attention ought to be paid to the expansion of non-standard employment forms (and, by extension, the politics of employment regulation). The declining share of the precarious labour force with access to social insurance benefits also explains the retreat from redistribution via income transfers.¹

The retreat from redistribution

Whether or not public pensions are included, income transfers account for the lion's share of the redistributive impact of taxes and transfers in most OECD countries. This is particularly true of West European countries with large welfare states. Indeed, it is a commonplace that Social Democrats and other welfare-states proponents in these countries opted for broad-based (less progressive) forms of taxation to finance generous social protection (cf. Steinmo 1993, Korpi and Palme 1998).

Contemporary welfare states entail essentially three types of income transfers to working-age households: first, benefits that are provided to all households irrespective of employment and earnings (in the first instance, child allowances); secondly, social assistance and housing benefits that specifically target poor households (based on some kind of means-testing); and, thirdly, social insurance that provides benefits proportional to the earnings of beneficiaries (unemployment, sick pay and occupational injury insurance). While child allowances only redistribute income to the extent that low-income households have more children, social assistance is, by definition, highly redistributive. Social insurance represents an intermediary case. Social insurance programs typically specify maximum as well as minimum benefits, bounding the proportionality principle, but the most important redistributive effect of these programs derives from the uneven distribution of the risks against which they insure. Even if benefits are strictly proportional to past earnings and financed by a strictly proportional tax, public unemployment insurance is redistributive to the extent that low-wage workers are more likely to become unemployed than high-

wage workers (and have access to insurance benefits). Table 1 tracks changes in the redistribution of income among working-age households in 13 “advanced” OECD countries from the mid-1990s to 2019.² The first panel in this table pertains to the combined effects of cash transfers and income taxes, the second to the effects of transfers alone and the third to the effects of taxes. Following conventional practice, “total redistribution” is measured as the difference between the Gini coefficient for market income (income before transfers and taxes) and the Gini coefficient for disposable income (income after transfers and taxes) expressed as a percentage of the Gini coefficient for market income. Constructed in the same manner, “redistribution via transfers” pertains to the difference between market income and gross income (i.e., total income before taxes) while “redistribution via taxes” pertains to the difference between gross and disposable income.

[Table 1]

Table 1 distinguishes between the period leading up to the global financial crisis of 2007/08 and the period thereafter. Over the pre-crisis period, total redistribution declined quite significantly in all but two countries (Austria and Norway). The period from 2007 to 2019 represents a more mixed picture, with continued decreases in total redistribution in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden, a continued increase in Austria, partial or complete reversals of previous trends in Belgium, France, Norway, Switzerland and the UK, and little or no change in Canada, Finland and the US. Averaging across the 13 countries, total redistribution still declined in the second period, but less so than in the first. More importantly, Table 1 suggests that the correction of previous trends during the crisis and its aftermath pertains primarily to income taxation. Retreats from redistribution via transfers that had begun in the pre-crisis period continued through the 2010s in eight countries. Switzerland, France and Austria are the only cases in which redistribution via transfers was higher in 2019 than in the mid-1990s (only marginally so in Austria).³

Treating the changes as a direct expression of contemporary policy choices made by governments is potentially problematic. “Automatic equalizers” built into tax-transfer systems must also be taken into account. Assuming that income taxation is at least somewhat progressive (that high income-earners pay a higher rate than low income-earners) and that this feature does not change, an increase in the top 5% or top 10% income share automatically translates into an increase in redistribution via taxes. And assuming that unemployment is concentrated in the bottom half of the income distribution, an increase in the rate of unemployment will lead to more redistribution via transfers as well as taxes in the absence of policy change. By the same token, reductions in “pre-fisc inequality” translate into reductions in redistribution so long as policies do not change.

The story of income taxation in the pre-crisis period would seem to be unambiguously political. As top income shares increased sharply across the countries included in Table 1, the logic of automatic equalization implies that we should have observed an increase in redistribution via taxes in this period. Documented by Hope and Limberg (2022), regressive tax reforms more than offset this effect. Indeed, top-income tax cuts, starting in the 1980s, may well have stimulated rising top-end inequality before transfers and taxes (cf. Piketty 2020: 448-449). By contrast, the period from 2007 to 2019 is characterized by relatively stable redistribution via taxes as well as relatively stable pre-fisc inequality. More importantly for present purposes, the unemployment rate declined from the mid-1990s to 2007 in ten of the thirteen countries included in Table 1 and declined again, in twelve countries, from 2010 to 2019. As reported in Table 2, Austria and Switzerland stand out as the only countries in which the rate of unemployment in 2019 was equal to or higher than the rate of unemployment in 1995.

[Table 2]

Considering that unemployment benefits alone account for large share of redistribution via income transfers to working-age households,⁴ the decline in unemployment from the mid-1990s to the late 2010s helps explain the broad and continued retreat from redistribution via income transfers.

However, Pontusson and Weisstanner's (2018) analysis of annual data for eleven countries over the period from 1990 to 2013 shows that redistribution via transfers responded strongly to increases in unemployment in 1990-1995, but much less so, if at all, in 2008-13. In other words, unemployment has declined, but welfare-state responsiveness to unemployment has also diminished.

Alongside regressive tax reforms, most European countries considered here adopted reforms of unemployment insurance between the recession of the early 1990s and the financial crisis of 2007/08. In some cases, these reforms involved cuts in the income replacement provided to workers qualifying for insurance benefits, but they also, more commonly and more dramatically, involved decreases in the duration of benefits as well increases in the "work history" required to qualify for benefits and new stipulations about receipt of benefits being conditional on job-seeking or enrolment in retraining schemes.⁵

Middle-class preferences

How can we explain the retreat from redistribution? It is a commonplace among political scientists to posit that middle-class voters are pivotal to election outcomes and that parties aspiring to be in government cater to the preferences of the median voter or, more broadly, to the preferences of middle-class voters, with "middle-class voters" typically conceived as "middle-income voters" in studies of redistributive politics.⁶ Against this background, the evidence presented in Table 1 invites the question whether middle-income voters have turned against redistribution.

Many comparative studies of preferences for redistribution rely on a question fielded by the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) since the mid-1980s and by the European Survey Social (ESS) since 2002, asking respondents whether they agree that "the government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels." Based on ISSP data for eight OECD countries, Kenworthy and McCall (2008) report that public support for redistribution

hardly changed at all over the 1980s and 1990s. The stability of public support for redistribution also emerges as the main finding in more recent studies, encompassing more countries. Based on ESS data, Gonthier (2017) shows that the financial crisis of 2007-08 and the ensuing recession only boosted overall support for redistribution in a few countries and that it had no effect on preference polarization by relative income. In countries where average support for redistribution increased from 2006 to 2012, it increased among high-income as well as low-income earners and in countries where it remained constant it remained constant across the income distribution.⁷

Contributions to the literature on preferences for redistribution commonly frame the stability of public opinion as a puzzle. Common sense as well as the “canonical” Meltzer-Richard model (Meltzer and Richard 1981) would lead us to expect middle-income earners to become more supportive of redistribution as top-end inequality increases, but this clearly did not happen as top income shares rose sharply in the 10-15 years preceding the financial crisis. The different arguments that have been proposed as solutions to this puzzle cannot, and need not, be reviewed here. For our purposes, the important point is that answers to the standard ISSP/ESS redistribution do not provide any support for the proposition that middle-income earners have turned against redistribution.

As noted by many public opinion researchers (see Dallinger 2022), the standard question leaves a great deal to be desired. Perhaps most importantly, the question does not specify what kinds of measures governments should take to reduce income differences. Many respondents undoubtedly interpret it as a question about income redistribution via taxes and transfers, but “market liberals” committed to the promotion of equal opportunity might also (indeed, ought to) answer the question in the affirmative. Perhaps middle-class support for policies with direct redistributive implications has diminished? In particular, the long-term decline of unemployment might lead us to expect that middle-income support for generous unemployment benefits has diminished over time, whereas slow income growth since 2007 has led middle-income earners to prioritize tax cuts over insurance against unemployment. And we would expect this dynamic to be reinforced if it is the case, as suggested by contributions to Emmenegger *et al* (2012), that the risk of unemployment has become increasingly concentrated among labour-market “outsiders” — in the first instance, immigrants and low-skilled workers, also perhaps older workers and recent labour-market entrants.

Rosset, Poltier and Pontusson (forthcoming) present results based on an original 2019 survey that replicated several policy-specific questions asked in the 2008 ESS module on welfare attitudes. One question asks respondents to choose between three principles for taxing the income of someone earning twice as much as another person: (1) proportional (both paying the same rate); (2) progressive (the high-income earner paying a higher rate); and (3) regressive (both paying the same amount). In a similar vein, the other question asks respondents about their preferred design of unemployment benefits: (1) benefits proportional to earnings; (2) same benefits regardless of earnings; and (3) higher benefits for low-wage workers. In brief summary, our analysis indicates that support for progressive taxation and generous unemployment compensation with a redistributive design increased from 2008 to 2019 in all but one of the twelve Western European countries included in our survey (Ireland being the exceptional case). Low-, middle- and high-income respondents alike moved in favour of progressive taxation, but only low- and middle-income respondents moved in favour of generous and redistributive unemployment compensation.⁸

Middle-income preferences would lead us to expect a reversal of previous policy shifts in the 2010s. As suggested by Table 1, income taxation seems to have taken a redistributive turn in the wake of the financial crisis of 2007-08, but the retreat from redistribution via transfers continued through the 2010s in most countries. Regressive income tax reforms in the pre-crisis period and the continued retreat from redistribution via transfers in the post-crisis period both represent significant challenges for the theory that middle-income preferences drive policy change.

We hasten to add that most of the literature on preferences for redistribution (including our own work) fails to take issue salience into account. Middle-income support for redistribution has not declined noticeably over the last two decades, but it may well be that inequality has become less salient for middle-income voters—relative to other concerns such as immigration, cultural diversity, climate change or geopolitics—and, by extension, that preferences on distributive policy issues have become less important as a determinant of vote choice. While this conjecture seems consistent with many recent studies of voting behaviour, emphasizing the growing salience of “cultural issues” for vote choice (e.g., Norris and Inglehart

2019), it is far from obvious what it means for our understanding of the politics behind retreats from progressive taxation and generous income support for unemployed workers. If policy has indeed changed, somebody must surely care?

Unequal representation

Responding to the challenges that developments over the last two or three decades seem to pose for the median voter theorem, a growing literature brings attention to income and class biases in political representation. From the perspective of this literature, the retreat from redistribution reflects the fact that affluent citizens are much better represented in politics than low- and middle-income citizens.

The literature on unequal representation encompasses two types of studies: congruence and responsiveness studies. The former show that party platforms and the policy preferences of elected representatives are more closely aligned with the preferences of affluent citizens than middle-income citizens, let alone low-income citizens and that this holds across a great many, possibly all, democracies (see, e.g., Burgoon and Schakel 2022 or Lupu and Warner 2022). Responsiveness studies in turn sort survey respondents by relative income, education or social class and estimate the probability of policy change based on support for policy change among different categories of respondents. For the US, Gilens (2012) shows that the preferences of high-income citizens predict policy change, but the preferences of low-income and even middle-income citizens have no influence on policy outcomes when they diverge from the preferences of high-income citizens. More recent studies replicate this finding for Germany (Elsässer and Schäfer 2021), the Netherlands (Schakel 2021), Norway (Mathisen 2023) and Sweden (Persson 2023), as well as for a pooled sample of thirty countries (Persson and Sundell 2023).

Unequal representation might explain why governments failed to compensate low- and middle-income citizens for rising top-end inequality in the 1990s and 2000s, but the results of applying the Gilens'

approach to European cases are puzzling from a cross-national perspective. As shown in Table 1, the combined redistributive effect of taxes and transfers was twice as large in Sweden as in the US in the mid-1990s. If the pro-affluent bias in policy responsiveness is indeed as big in these countries as it is in the US, how could this situation possibly have arisen? Spanning a wide variety of policy issues, unequal responsiveness studies in the Gilens tradition arguably capture persistent features that all capitalist democracies have in common, however they fail to capture temporal as well as cross-national variation in distributive politics or, in other words, the politics of class compromise.

For our purposes, the obvious question is whether redistributive policy responsiveness in Western Europe has become more biased in favour of affluent citizens over the last two or three decades. If “Social Europe” increasingly resembles that in “Liberal America” in this respect, what might account for this convergence? Mathisen *et al* (2023) begin to tackle this thorny question by pooling data for Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden from the 1960s to the 2010s, distinguishing between economic/social issues and “other issues,” and taking government partisanship into account. The results suggest that government policy has always been biased in favour of affluent citizens on “other issues” and that this holds for left-leaning as well as right-leaning governments. In distributive politics, however, left governments were equally responsive to the poor and the affluent in the pre-1998 period, but left and right governments alike were more responsive to affluent citizens (relative to middle-income as well as poor citizens) thereafter. To the extent that the political influence of low- and middle-income citizens has declined in Northwestern Europe, this development would seem to be closely linked to the strategic reorientation of mainstream left parties and attendant changes in their links to trade unions (see various contributions to Menz 2023) as well as attendant changes in the social background of their candidates for public office (e.g., Elsässer 2024).

Consistent with unequal representation, the fact that high-income citizens became more favourable to tax progressivity but less favourable to redistributive unemployment compensation provides

a plausible explanation for the divergent policy trajectories in these two policy domains since the crisis of 2007-09. As Rosset, Poltier and Pontusson (forthcoming) point out, however, preference shifts among low- and middle-income citizens are a better predictor of policy shifts in the unemployment domain than preference change among affluent citizens. Middle-income opinion seems to have been a constraint on retreats from redistribution via transfers. By the same token, governing parties surely did not seek to curry favour with affluent citizens by increasing top marginal tax rates, but support for the principle of progressive taxation among affluent citizens arguably made such shifts a relatively safe way to achieve fiscal consolidation, alongside spending cuts. In both policy domains, business interests and macroeconomic considerations have been the main “drivers” of redistributive policy choices, with governing parties competing for electoral support based primarily on economic performance rather than policy promises to specific voter constituencies (cf. Garrett 1998).

Non-standard employment

Focusing on unemployment compensation, the retreat from redistribution via income transfers can be explained in part by declining rates of unemployment and in part by reforms that have rendered unemployment benefits less generous and, more importantly, less readily accessible. In closing, we want to suggest that a third factor must also be taken into account, *viz.* changes in contractual status and work histories of the unemployed. Premised on a “male bread-winner model,” postwar unemployment and pension schemes were designed to insure people working full-time over long tenure. The prevalence of the normal career has greatly diminished since the 1970s (cf. Kalleberg 2009). Part-time employment has increased across OECD countries, in the first instance as result of increased female labour force participation. In more “advanced” welfare states, public provision of subsidized childcare has rendered child-rearing more compatible with full-time employment by single parents as well as couples. In these

countries, part-time employment has stabilized, even declined, but it remains higher than it was in the 1970s. Conventionally defined as working less than 15 hours per week, “marginal part-time work” has increased in many countries since the 1990s. As commonly noted in the literature on “dualization” or (with a more positive spin) “flexibilization” of labour markets, the growth of temporary (fixed-term) employment constitutes the other big development since the 1990s. Still relatively limited in terms of their share of total employment, “agency work,” “platform work,” “solo self-employment” and “zero-hour contracts” have recently received a great deal of attention as other, new forms of non-standard employment, typically overlapping with part-time employment.

For the purposes of this chapter, there are two things about non-standard forms of employment that matter. The first is that non-standard employment is heavily concentrated among low-income households. To illustrate this point, Table 3 presents estimates of temporary employment as a share of total employment by relative household income for the eleven European countries included in Table 1. Among employed adults in the bottom quintile of the household income distribution, the average rate of fixed-term employment was 14.2% in 2003 and had risen to 17.0% by 2019. By contrast, the average rate of fixed-term employment in the top quintile was 4.2% in 2003 and had fallen to 3.8% by 2019.

[Table 3]

The second point concerns access to unemployment compensation. The self-employed can opt into separate unemployment schemes in some countries, but they are not covered by public unemployment insurance in many other countries. While people working part-time and people on temporary contracts typically have a statutory right to unemployment insurance, they frequently fail to satisfy the minimum amount of prior work required to qualify for benefits and, if they do qualify, they tend to be disadvantaged by the definition of “reference earnings” used to calculate the replacement rate that determines their benefit.⁹

According to Lindellee and Berglund (2022), the share of unemployed Swedes who receive unemployment insurance benefits dropped from about 75% in the early 2000s to less than 30% in the mid-2010s. (Individuals who do not qualify for insurance benefits receive a flat-rate unemployment assistance benefit corresponding to 21% of the average wage). Sweden is an extreme case, on account union-administered unemployment insurance being voluntary as well as the sharp increase in the rate of temporary employment since the early 2000s, but the problem illustrated by the Swedish case is a more general one. In a recent paper (Poltier and Pontusson 2024), we pool EU-SILC data from 31 countries over the period 2003-2021 to explore how non-standard employment conditions the effects of changes in the unemployment rate on income redistribution via unemployment-related income transfers. In short, we find that the increase in redistribution associated with a given increase in the unemployment rate is significantly smaller when shares of temporary employment and solo self-employment among low-income households are high.

The growth of non-standard employment forms can partly be attributed to technological innovations that make platform work and remote solo self-employment possible and partly to the growing importance of private services as a source of employment across OECD countries. In at least some countries, privatization of public enterprises (notably utilities) and sub-contracting of public services to private entities has contributed to the latter development. And there is another political story lurking in the background as well: As documented in Table 4, most countries with significant restrictions on temporary employment engaged in extensive deregulatory measures in the 1990s and early 2000s.¹⁰ Our analysis suggests that these reforms had important implications for the distribution of disposable as well as market income, yet they feature hardly at all in the literature on the politics of inequality and redistribution. Further attention to the politics of employment regulation would benefit this literature by bringing to the fore employers as political actors (Emmenegger 2015).

[Table 4]

The growth of non-standard employment may also have had indirect consequences for the politics of redistribution via its effects on unionization. As reported in Table 5, part-time and fixed-term employees are less likely to join unions than full-time and permanent employees in every country for which we have data on union members by employment type. De-unionization does not seem to have resulted in any significant decline in public support for redistribution, but there are good reasons to believe that inequality is a more salient concern for union members and that union members who support redistribution are more likely to vote for parties that prioritize redistribution than non-members who support redistribution (cf. Rennwald and Mosimann 2023). In addition, de-unionization has clearly diminished the capacity of unions to serve as counterweights to employer associations and large firms in reforms of unemployment insurance as well as employment regulation.

[Table 5]

Final remarks

Unemployment and other social insurance schemes built up in the postwar era were premised on permanent full-time employment as the standard form of employment. As fixed-term, part-time and other forms of non-standard employment have expanded, governments have failed to undertake reforms that would have been necessary to maintain the redistributive function of these programs. Quite the contrary, many governments have undertaken cost-saving measures that have rendered unemployment benefits and sick pay less accessible to non-standard workers. In so doing, they have sought to deliver tax relief for middle-income voters as well as a more favorable macroeconomic environment for export-oriented business.

It is tempting to suppose that the retreat from redistribution via income transfers is also, in part, a result of unemployment and other labour-market risks becoming more concentrated among labour-

market outsiders. This may well have been the case in the 1990s, but it is less obvious that it holds for the more recent period. As reported in Table 6, rates of unemployment among the foreign-born and low-educated remain much higher than among “natives” and the high-educated, but in most countries they actually fell more among the former than among the latter categories over the period from 2000 to 2019. Inadequately protected by social insurance programs and other welfare-state provisions, more precarious segments of the working class have arguably been pushed into more precarious employment. In relative terms, unemployment has become a less important problem while low pay and under-employment have become more important concerns for less skilled workers and their families. The challenge that the expansion of non-standard employment poses for contemporary welfare states goes beyond access to unemployment insurance.

[Table 6]

ENDNOTES

¹ This line of argument draws on earlier literature on dualization of labour markets and welfare provisions, notably Rueda (2007), King and Rueda (2008) and Palier and Thelen (2010).

² We have opted for 2019 as the end year to avoid this exercise being confounded by temporary policy measures in response to the covid pandemic. The thirteen countries included in Table 1 are the only countries for which we have comparable data going back to the mid-1990s. They also represent the three “welfare regimes” identified by Esping-Andersen (1990).

³ Switzerland stands out as the European country with the lowest level of redistribution via transfers in the mid-1990s as well as the country with the biggest increase in redistribution via transfers from the mid-1990s (and from 2007) to 2019. Note that the figures reported in Table 1 pertain to absolute changes (percentage points), hence do not take initial levels into account.

⁴ For the eleven European countries included in Table 1, the average was 16.4% in 2007 and 15.6% in 2019 (own calculations based on EU-SILC micro-data).

⁵ See Clasen and Clegg (2011) for detailed case studies. Only in a few cases (Sweden, Denmark and Germany) do reforms introduced between 1995 and 2007 register as cuts in overall unemployment insurance generosity as measured by Comparative Welfare Entitlements Dataset (<http://cwed2.org/>).

⁶ See Elkjaer and Iversen (2020) for an application of this perspective to the comparative politics of redistribution in OECD countries.

⁷ Note that Gonthier (2017), like virtually all contributors to this literature, finds that low-income respondents are more likely to support redistribution than high-income respondents. His point is that the gap did not increase over the time period covered by his analysis. Among the West European countries included in Rosset, Poltier and Pontusson’s (forthcoming) summary of ESS data for 2002-18, Denmark stands out as the country with the lowest overall support for redistribution. Across the other eleven countries, the share of 2018 survey respondents who agree or strongly with statement that “the government should take measures to reduce income differences” ranges between 63% in the Netherlands and 91% in Portugal.

⁸ As Rosset, Poltier and Pontusson (forthcoming) document, responses to ISSP questions fielded in 2006-16 and 2009-19 do not show as much of a shift in favor of tax progressivity, but higher levels of initial support. Depending on question wording, the story for tax progressivity is either a story of rising public support or a story of persistently high public support (in the latter case, similar to the story for redistribution in general).

⁹ These problems also pertain to sick pay insurance, but sickness is arguably less concentrated among low-income households than unemployment. It goes without saying that the growth of non-standard employment also has long-term implications for income inequality among retired households. See Girardi, Ilsøe and Larsen (2024) for a review of literature and comparative evidence on access to social for non-standard employees.

¹⁰ France stands out as the one country with a 1990 score higher than 1.31 on the OECD index of restrictions on temporary employment that did not reduce such restrictions over from 1990 to 2019. Averaging across the seven countries with initial scores above 1.31, restrictions were nearly halved these three decades (1.66 in 2019 as compared to 3.14 in 1990).

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Table 1: Changes in redistributive effects of income transfers and taxes, with redistribution measured as the percentage reduction of the Gini coefficient for working-age households.

	total redistribution			redistribution via cash transfers			redistribution via income taxes		
	mid-90s level	change to 2007	2007-19 change	mid-90s level	change to 2007	2007-19 change	mid-90s level	change to 2007	2007-19 change
Austria	32.4	1.4	1.6	23.9	0.1	0.4	11.2	0.7	1.7
Belgium	43.3	-8.3	3.1	28.5	-2.4	-1.8	20.7	-8.6	6.1
Canada	29.3	-3.4	-0.3	19.7	-2.3	-0.1	11.9	-1.6	-0.3
Denmark	42.3	-4.6	-5.6	32.9	-5.1	-6.1	14.1	-0.4	-0.5
Finland	48.8	-13.2	-0.1	37.1	-10.9	-1.7	18.5	-5.8	1.8
France	32.4	-1.1	3.1	24.0	1.2	0.7	10.9	-2.7	3.3
Germany	36.6	-4.6	-4.1	23.0	-0.9	-5.8	17.7	-5.0	1.1
Netherlands	38.7	-4.2	-6.6	30.1	-5.7	-7.1	12.3	1.1	-0.7
Norway	33.2	1.8	-2.6	23.8	0.7	-1.8	12.3	1.7	-1.4
Sweden	43.7	-10.1	-5.7	35.4	-10.8	-4.9	12.9	-1.0	-1.7
Switzerland	16.5	-2.5	5.2	13.3	1.8	4.2	3.8	-5.0	1.0
UK	29.5	-1.7	1.8	23.2	-3.1	1.0	8.1	1.5	1.2
US	20.2	-1.4	0.4	11.1	-0.1	-0.4	10.3	-1.5	0.8
<i>average</i>	34.4	-4.0	-0.8	25.1	-2.9	-1.8	12.7	-2.0	1.0
<i>aver w/out CH</i>			-1.3			-2.3			
<i>aver w/out BE</i>							-1.5	0.5	

Note: Own calculations based on LIS and EU-SILC micro data. Survey household weights have been multiplied by the number household members aged 18-65, so that households with no members within this range are attributed a weight of zero. In addition, household income has been equalized by dividing it by the square root of all household members. Mid-90s averages are averages for any and all observations between 1992 and 1997.

Table 2: National unemployment rates (per ILO definition), 1995-2019.

	1995	2007	2010	2019	95-19 change
Austria	4.4	4.9	4.9	4.6	0.2
Belgium	9.3	7.5	8.3	5.4	-3.9
Canada	9.5	6.2	8.2	5.7	-3.8
Denmark	7.0	3.8	7.8	5.0	-2.0
Finland	17.0	8.7	8.4	6.7	-10.3
France	11.8	8.0	9.3	8.4	-3.4
Germany	8.2	8.7	7.0	3.1	-5.1
Netherlands	7.2	4.2	5.0	3.4	-3.8
Norway	6.3	2.5	3.5	3.7	-2.6
Sweden	8.9	6.2	8.6	6.8	-1.1
Switzerland	3.1	3.6	4.8	4.4	1.3
UK	8.7	5.3	7.8	3.7	-5.0
US	5.7	4.6	9.6	3.7	-2.0
<i>average</i>	8.3	5.6	7.2	5.0	-3.3
<i>aver w/out FI</i>					-2.6

Source: World Bank, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS>

Table 3: Temporary employment in % of total employment by household income quintile, 2003 and 2019.

	2003			2019			change		
	Q1	Q3	Q5	Q1	Q3	Q5	Q1	Q3	Q5
Austria	6.2	4.0	3.0	10.7	6.2	3.3	4.5	2.2	0.3
Belgium	16.2	5.8	5.1	18.9	5.6	4.4	2.7	-0.2	-0.7
Denmark				15.1	6.0	3.0			
Finland	21.0	6.5	3.7	24.7	8.4	4.6	3.7	1.9	0.9
France	17.0	8.9	3.9	18.6	8.1	4.2	1.6	-0.8	0.3
Germany	15.3	6.6	5.7	16.4	6.1	3.8	1.1	-0.5	-1.9
Netherlands	17.4	7.9	6.0	21.7	8.5	6.6	4.3	0.6	0.6
Norway	18.1	7.1	4.3	16.2	7.8	2.0	-1.9	0.7	-2.3
Sweden	17.4	7.1	3.2	31.6	7.2	3.7	14.2	0.1	0.5
Switzerland	8.2	3.8	3.6	8.0	4.1	4.0	-0.2	0.3	0.4
UK	4.8	2.6	3.7	5.2	3.5	2.0	0.5	0.9	-1.7
<i>average</i>	14.2	6.0	4.2	17.0	6.5	3.8	2.8	0.5	-0.4
<i>ratios:</i>									
<i>Q1/Q5</i>			3.38			4.47			
<i>Q1/Q3</i>		2.37			2.62				

Note: Own calculations based on EU-SILC microdata. 2004 is first year for NL, 2005 the first year for UK; 2018 is last year for UK.

Table 4: OECD index of temporary employment regulation, 1990-2019.

	1990	2000	2007	2019	change since 2019
Austria	1.31	1.31	1.31	1.31	0.00
Belgium	4.50	2.25	2.25	2.06	-2.44
Canada	.25	.25	.25	.25	0.00
Denmark	3.13	1.38	1.38	1.63	-2.50
Finland	1.25	1.56	1.56	1.56	0.31
France	2.56	3.13	3.13	3.00	0.44
Germany	3.25	2.00	1.00	1.38	-1.87
Netherlands	1.38	.94	.94	1.19	-0.19
Norway	3.13	3.00	3.00	2.63	-0.50
Sweden	4.08	1.44	1.44	.81	-3.27
Switzerland	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	0.00
UK	.25	.25	.38	.25	0.00
US	.25	.25	.25	.25	0.00
<i>aver w/out BE</i>	<i>2.05</i>	<i>1.46</i>	<i>1.40</i>	<i>1.35</i>	<i>-0.70</i>

Source: OECD Employment and Labour Market Statistics, <https://doi.org/10.1787/data-00318-en>.

-1.48, 3.14

Table 5: Survey-based estimates of union density by full-time/part-time employment and by permanent/temporary (most recent data available).

	year	full-time	part-time	permanent	temporary
Canada	2019	26.2	9.3	28.5	27.0
Finland	2019	58.8	37.2	58.2	40.0
France	2016	11.6	6.2	12.4	2.5
Netherlands	2011	22.5	16.8	21.2	8.6
Norway	2017	55.0	37.3	53.0	27.0
Sweden	2019	69.4	38.1	70.9	36.8
UK	2019	24.6	19.8	24.0	15.1
US	2019	10.7	4.8		

Source: ICTWSS Database, <https://www.oecd.org/employment/ictwss-database.htm>.

Table 6: Unemployment rates by education level and country of birth, 2000 and 2019.

	2000						2019						ratio change	
	education			birth country			education			birth country			educ	birth
	low	high	ratio	foreign	native	ratio	low	high	ratio	foreign	native	ratio		
Austria				8.0	4.3	1.86	10.0	3.5	2.86	8.3	3.5	2.37		0.51
Belgium	9.8	2.7	3.63	15.8	5.6	2.82	10.4	4.3	2.42	10.3	4.3	2.40	-1.21	-0.43
Canada	10.2	4.0	2.55				8.6	5.5	1.56	6.3	5.5	1.15	-0.99	
Denmark	6.2	2.6	2.38	8.6	4.3	2.00	6.2	4.7	1.32	8.4	4.7	1.79	-1.06	-0.21
Finland	11.9	4.9	2.43	31.7	11.1	2.86	10.7	6.5	1.65	11.9	6.5	1.83	-0.78	-1.03
France	13.8	5.1	2.43	16.7	9.4	1.78	13.5	7.8	1.73	13.1	7.8	1.68	-0.70	-0.10
Germany	13.7	4.0	2.71	10.6	7.4	1.43	7.7	2.6	2.96	5.6	2.6	2.15	0.25	0.72
Netherlands	3.9	1.9	2.05	6.2	2.3	2.70	4.8	3.0	1.60	6.0	3.0	2.00	-0.45	-0.70
Norway				6.1	3.3	1.85	6.0	2.9	2.07	7.4	2.9	2.55		0.70
Sweden	8.0	3.0	2.67	12.4	4.7	2.64	14.1	4.5	3.13	15.5	4.5	3.44	0.46	0.81
Switzerland	4.8	1.4	3.43				8.1	3.2	2.53	7.3	3.2	2.28	-0.90	
UK	6.6	2.1	3.14	8.9	5.4	1.65	4.9	3.7	1.32	4.3	3.7	1.16	-1.82	-0.49
US	4.3	1.8	2.39	4.3	4.1	1.05	6.5	3.9	1.67	3.1	3.9	0.79	-0.72	-0.25
<i>average</i>	<i>8.5</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>2.80</i>	<i>11.8</i>	<i>5.6</i>	<i>2.06</i>	<i>8.5</i>	<i>4.3</i>	<i>2.06</i>	<i>8.3</i>	<i>4.3</i>	<i>1.97</i>	<i>-0.74</i>	<i>-0.09</i>

Education level: low=less than upper secondary, high=tertiary.

Source: OECD Statistics, https://stats.oecd.org/viewhtml.aspx?datasetcode=MIG_NUP_RATES_GENDER&lang=en and https://stats.oecd.org/viewhtml.aspx?datasetcode=EAG_NEAC&lang=en.