young aduıllt Scotland

WP7 Regional/local Case Studies

National Report Scotland

January 2018

Queralt Capsada-Munsech, University of Glasgow

University of Glasgow

Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change

Contents

Acronyms

ACAR – Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Region

CPE – Cultural Political Economy

DYW – Developing the Young Workforce

GCR – Glasgow City Region

GOV – Governance perspective

LCR – Life Course Research

LLL – Lifelong Learning

MA – Modern Apprenticeship

RSA – Regional Skills Assessment

SCQF – Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework

SDS – Skills Development Scotland

SFC – Scottish Funding Council

SG – Scottish Government

SQA – Scottish Qualification Authority

YA – YOUNG_ADULLLT research project

0. Executive summary

Objective and structure of the report

- This report focuses on the aims, meaning, implementation and specificities of the national policy *Developing the Young Workforce* (DYW) in two Scottish regions: the Glasgow City Region (GCR) and the Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Region (ACAR).

- The intention of the report is to tell the story of this policy in the two regions, analysing the correspondence of meanings attributed to the policy by national policymakers, regional managers, practitioners and young adults' beneficiaries of the DYW policy, as well as identifying governance issues and (un)intended consequences on young peoples' lives.

- The report starts with an introduction to the DYW providing an overview of its aims, objectives and planning, followed by a brief historical overview of policy-making in education and training in Scotland. The governance of the policy and the selection of the regional cases close the introductory section. Afterwards, the analysis for each region constitutes the main body of the report. Finally, the results for both regions are compared, pointing at the principal similarities and differences detected.

Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) policy

- Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) is currently the main education, training and employment national policy in Scotland. As its title indicates, the principal objective is to better prepare young people in Scotland (16-24 years old) for the labour market. It is steered by the Scottish Government (SG) and provides a clear 7-year programme plan (2014 to 2021) with specific objectives for different institutions (schools, colleges, employers) with concrete targets to be achieved.

- DYW aims at ensuring that all young people who leave school continue to be engaged in any kind of learning activity. Its strategy is to be as inclusive as possible, providing flexible educational pathways that facilitate a long-term educational strategy for every young person. The method of making educational pathways more flexible is by strengthening the vocational and training education system and improving the work experience of young people starting from their school years.

- There are two key points in the recent history of policy-making in Scotland that have influenced the priorities and guidelines of DYW: the focus on skills for the labour market and the direct link of youth education and training policies with the labour market ones.

- In the DYW policy document all objectives, milestones and measures are set at the national level. However, the production and setting of strategies translate into a local/regional implementation. Therefore, it is necessary to allow for some degree of flexibility to adapt these targets and processes set by the national policy to varying local/regional needs.

- The fact of having to implement the national strategy at a regional level makes it an interesting framework for comparison across Scottish regions. We have selected two regions with a relevant share of the population of Scotland, but that differ in their main economic activities, socioeconomic structure and composition of young people with regards to their qualifications and socioeconomic background. Moreover, both regions were early starters in the implementation of DYW at the regional level.

DYW in Glasgow City Region

- The implementation of DYW in GCR is steered by the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, as they were invited by the SG to apply for the funding to lead the implementation of DYW in GCR. Having an organisation with established links to regional employers and organised activities facilitated the commencement of DYW in the region with regards to employers' engagement.

- The main way to promote these flexible pathways focuses on providing information to young people in schools and trying to influence their educational decisions. DYW and managers in GCR think that

4

familiarising students with other educational environments is a way to promote and facilitate these transitions, especially among young adults who lack other kinds of support and information from family or friends.

- The intention is not to normalise the educational pathways and ways to get into the labour market, but standardise the outputs of the process: education and employment, which in the Scottish policy sphere are labelled as "positive destinations".

- The architecture of the system is designed to link the different stages, allowing these stages to be completed at different speeds. According to their reasoning, the system encourages students to stay in the education system after compulsory education, providing different options, such as Foundation Apprenticeships that can later link to the Modern Apprenticeship.

- The work of DYW managers and practitioners is to think in a pathway perspective and try to get as many regional employers engaged as possible to increase the opportunities for young adults.

- None of the four young adults interviewed mentioned the school as a place where they were influenced towards an apprenticeship, nor put in contact with an employer. They had all heard of DYW and the possibility of engaging in an apprenticeship scheme later on, when they had already left school.

- Some interviewees think that the current system does not support all young adults throughout their learning journeys. There is a clear educational pathway for those that want to follow the academic path, another one for those that do not fit into the academic route but "behave properly and are proactive", but there is no clear alternative to support those that identify with neither group. Moreover, some young adults have the feeling that the apprenticeship system is for those that do not want to continue to study.

- Although the "ideal" DYW pathway is that young people will never abandon the learning component on their lives and that they will transition from school to an apprenticeship, to college or university, reality is certainly not like this for a non-negligible share of young adults in GCR.

- The young adults interviewed come from a deprived area in GCR and none of them had a standard educational pathway and insertion into the labour market as expected in the DYW policy document. They have all been alternating between education and work. However, the reasons for having these non-standard trajectories vary.

- According to practitioners in the region, working in a case work basis is more effective for disadvantaged youths. The weekly contact with a person that builds on young adults' confidence and preferences seems to influence to a larger extent these young adults than the general talks and activities they might have received at school. Support to these young people should come at an earlier stage and with higher intensity than that suggested in the DYW national policy document.

- The implementation of DYW in the GCR is strengthening the coordination and partnership model beyond the pre-existing relationship and partnership working culture. Each institution has a different role and they need each other in order to attain their objectives and DYW goals. One good example of this formal and systematic coordination is the Modern Apprenticeship (MA) scheme.

- One of the main peculiarities of GCR is that most of the people in charge or related to DYW management and implementation already knew each other. The fact that their organisations were previously in touch and collaborating for other reasons has probably helped facilitate parts of the coordination and implementation process.

- Another one of the main specificities of GCR is the above average number of young people coming from socioeconomically disadvantaged families and/or living in deprived areas. This is the main reason why the equality measures in the DYW national policy take special relevance in the region.

- One of the features shared by all institutions taking part in DYW in GCR is that they all have a good knowledge of the socioeconomic characteristics of the region and the problems that families and young adults in deprived areas are facing. This facilitates the adaptation of DYW to local needs to the largest extent possible, even if that might sometimes clash with the expected national targets.

DYW in Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Region

- The Scottish Government invited the Grampian Chamber of Commerce to bid for leadership of DYW in the region, creating a regional group to govern the recommendations proposed by DYW policy.

- The underlying assumption of DYW policy is that potential influencers of young people's educational and career decisions have to have access to all the information available in order to support young adults to make the best decision for them. This perspective is shared by managers and practitioners in ACAR.

- DYW managers in ACAR stressed the relevance of parents as key influencers in the educational and career decisions of their offspring. Since they accept that they do not exactly know at what stage children really make decisions on their educational pathways and future careers (in primary and/or secondary school), ACAR managers have decided that influencing parents is a good strategy to indirectly influence young people.

- The testimonies of the young adults interviewed fit into the overall structure and planning of DYW, as the three young adults interviewed have had linear trajectories. After school they either moved to college and/or engaged in an apprenticeship that eased their transitions into the labour market.

- Although the young adults interviewed mainly argued that they made their own choices on their educational pathways and later careers, once the conversations developed they pointed out some key influencers. Some of them are part of the DYW policy in the region. The discussions with the career advisors at school or college seem to have made young people reason and elaborate on their educational choices.

- The influence of the parents was also mentioned by two of the young adults. However, their influence seemed to have more to do with supporting and encouraging their decisions (get an internship placement or advice on how to prepare an interview) rather than in taking the actual choices. It is also worth pointing out at this stage that young adults interviewed in ACAR did not talk about other life spheres beyond the educational and vocational ones.

- The bridging between schools and employers and the promotion of the vocational pathway described by the national document can be easily identified in the explanations of regional managers.

- DYW managers and practitioners recognise that the balance between promoting careers and educational pathways that have available vacancies in the area is in tension with the type of jobs and careers that might interest young people. However, they still accept that their main role is to promote the different routes for young people to make sure that they continue into some form of learning after leaving school.

- There is some discussion ongoing about the main task of a career advisor, which is to support young people to make decisions, instead of making decisions for them. All young adults interviewed acknowledged the support of the career advisor.

- The different organisation of the schools has challenged the identification of the right contact person and the subsequent systematisation and link-creation with employers in ACAR.

- A lot of initiatives and programmes supporting young people in their educational pathways and transition to the labour market were already in place in ACAR. DYW has served as a way to organise them and try to coordinate efforts in the region. It has also served as a way to recognise already existing practices and to identify duplications.

- One way to recognise these duplications is to coordinate people under the regional DYW umbrella: working on partnerships with educational institutions to make sure that there is a single voice promoting engagement between them and the regional employers. So far, schools, colleges and universities have been contacting employers separately, making it a bit chaotic and difficult for employers.

- While the implementation in the region seems to be following the national directives, there are some tensions in reorganising and making clear each individual role and place in the big picture of supporting young people in their educational and labour market transitions.

- In the past the oil and gas industry and the economic activity related to it used to show a dynamic picture and the market was self-coordinating to some extent. With the introduction of DYW the institutional coordination has been promoted and there has been a period of establishing links and meeting people in the different institutions. This has facilitated the process of systematisation of the existing programs and initiatives to make them more efficient.

- The idiosyncrasies of the area influence the careers that youths have in mind: more related to engineering and technical fields than in other Scottish areas. Even the only female young adult interviewed chose a mechanical engineering career.

Comparison of the two Scottish regions

- In both cases the DYW regional teams have prioritised the task of connecting schools with regional employers. In both regions this has served as a way to systematise and strengthen already existent connections between schools and the world of work while initiating new ones.

- In both regions there is a rational approach to educational and labour market transitions from DYW managers. Even if in the case of GCR it is acknowledged that some disadvantaged young adults might have more difficulties in building their learning journeys, it is assumed that the main education and career routes are not affected by other life domains. The fact of focusing on the 16-19 age group strengthens this assumption further, leaving aside the rest of the targeted group by DYW policy (20-24).

- Policy managers and practitioners have to deal with quite different realities. While in GCR the involvement is mainly with disadvantaged youths with multiple barriers, coming from socioeconomically vulnerable families and deprived areas, in ACAR the youths interviewed come from working class or immigrant backgrounds, but they do not show a number of social and health barriers that impede their educational and labour market transitions.

- Youths in GCR mentioned a number of personal situations (e.g. health problems, pregnancy, childbearing, elder care, financial constrains) that deviated them from the standard and smooth educational and labour market transitions considered in the DYW policy document. This was not the case in ACAR, where the youths interviewed could easily fit into the definitions considered in the national policy.

- While in GCR the discourses of managers and practitioners are very much focused on equality issues and in working on the barriers that prevent these young adults from getting back into education or into the labour market, in ACAR the focus is on identifying the key influencers of young adults and how to further support them to make their own educational and career decisions. In GCR the key influencers mentioned by youths are all family members or close friends, whereas in ACAR they mainly mentioned careers advisors or activities related to DYW.

- Employer engagement with the school -- and providing information about existent choices -- might work for non-disadvantaged young people, but not for disadvantaged ones. In GCR, DYW managers and practitioners have developed mechanisms to engage with these disadvantaged young adults who left school, if they get in touch with any local authority institution.

- Although DYW allows enough flexibility for regions to identify the local/regional needs and better adapt the policy to them, there is no further support on how to do it and the regional and local actors are left themselves to deal with these needs, regardless of how challenging they are.

- While in GCR the DYW team seem very proactive in looking for employers, regional employers seem to have a more passive role. Conversely, in the case of ACAR a more active role from the side of employers has been noted in engaging with schools and other educational institutions.

- DYW national policy seems to fit to a fuller extent in ACAR. DYW actions and ambitions might work to strengthen vocational education and training in Scotland among young people who are not highly disadvantaged in socioeconomic terms and that do not have difficulties in other life domains beyond education and training. Therefore, more efforts and resources should be directed to rethink the policy for the most disadvantaged young adults, who might need early intervention before they reach the last year of their compulsory secondary education.

1. Introducing Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)

Overview

Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) is currently the main education, training and employment national policy in Scotland. As its title indicates, the principal objective of this national strategy is to better prepare young people in Scotland (16-24 years old) to participate in the labour market. This national policy steered by the Scottish Government (SG) provides a clear 7-year programme plan -- from 2014 to 2021 -- with specific objectives for different institutions (schools, colleges, employers) in Scotland and with concrete targets to be achieved. Since the policy is still being implemented and developed at the moment of writing this report, it is obvious that the analyses and results will only take into account part of the processes that are being undertaken.

Overall, from a SG perspective the policy aims at strengthening and raising the standards and value of vocational education and training in Scotland, so that this option is regarded as an equally interesting and useful form of learning as an academically-oriented education. The objectives of the national policy are built with the educational and working trajectories of young people in Scotland in mind. The main idea is to facilitate the construction of individual "learning journeys", which are educational and learning pathways flexible enough to be meaningful and useful for each young adult. However, it is expected that these individual learning journeys will lead to one of the situations considered a "positive destination" by the SG. These positive destinations basically include any type of learning, employment and/or volunteering activity. Implicitly, those youths whose main activities do not include any of these situations are to be considered as not being in a positive destination; being fully dedicated to maternity/paternity, caring for a dependent person, or on sick leave are possible examples of these non-positive destinations, although not explicitly mentioned by the DYW policy document.

The main tool that the SG is putting in place to raise the amount and quality of standards of apprenticeships for young people -- especially focusing on 16-19 year olds -- is the Modern Apprenticeship (MA) scheme. The reasoning for focusing on an apprenticeship scheme for this age group is to ensure that young people who are not going to college or preparing for university have a route to take once they leave school that still involves a learning experience. MA is a work-based learning scheme that aims at engaging with young people (mainly 16-19) who are not in education and training and who are looking for a first labour market experience.

Given the difficulties of finding a chance in the labour market for youths without work experience, and the difficulties for employers to find suitably skilled workers, the MA scheme is understood as a win-win situation for both the young adult and the employer: the learning component is funded by the SG -- via the government's skills agency Skills Development Scotland (SDS) -- while the employer gets the chance to train someone while working at the cost of a minimum wage. The compromise set by the formal scheme facilitates engagement from both parts (youth and employer) making it easier to continue into the job after the apprenticeship period, if possible and agreed by both parts.

The SG understands the involvement of employers in linking with schools, colleges and in recruiting young people as a key issue. The national policy understands that employers are the ones that can give young people a chance of gaining work experience and learning at the workplace. This is why a large part of the strategy is focused on how to promote the creation and establishment of links between educational institutions and local and regional employers. While employers "give young people a chance in the labour market" the SG ensures that young people continue into any form of education beyond compulsory education (16+). This is understood as a way of promoting equality among young people in Scotland. The underlying assumption is that the continuation in learning activities will improve young peoples' chances of better employment, especially for those subgroups of youths who are more likely to be unemployed or in non-standard employment trajectories (e.g. ethnic minorities, people with disabilities).

Policy background

In order to understand DYW it is important to have a historical look at the recent Scottish policies in education and training, labour and youth. It is worth pointing out two key points in the evolution of policy-making in Scotland at the national level that have certainly influenced the priorities and guidelines of DYW: the focus on skills for the labour market and the direct link of education and training policies with the labour market ones. The following paragraphs outline the recent policy history in education and training in Scotland.

For the past decade the SG has been quite active in the formulation of policies related to education and training for young adults. Following the devolution of powers on education, the Scottish Office saw Lifelong Learning (LLL) as a way to train the workforce and tackle social exclusion. It was an elegant solution to the main political Scottish concerns of the moment: social justice and international competitiveness (Cook, 2006). Therefore, LLL was part of a wider agenda, tackling social exclusion by helping people to get back to work and extending their learning opportunities.

While this agenda was initiated after devolution by the Labour party, after the May 2007 Scottish Parliament elections the new Scottish Nationalist Party (SNP) minority government replaced the previous LLL agenda with a new skills agenda (Mark, 2013). In 2007 the SNP Scottish Government published the policy document *"Skills for Scotland: A Lifelong Skills Strategy"* (The Scottish Government, 2007). It shared a number of messages and objectives with the previous Labour-led LLL strategy: understanding the importance of an educated and skilled workforce for enhancing productivity and economic growth, while at the same time supporting employability and social inclusion by providing learning opportunities to individuals to improve their lives (Payne, 2009). The skills strategy introduced a renewed concern to develop a demand-led skills delivery system more responsive to both individuals' and employers' needs. It also introduced a lifespan perspective including early ages in the strategy. However, the main difference between the LLL strategy and the skills strategy is the focus on skills utilisation (Field, 2009; Payne, 2009). This shift became even clearer after the economic crisis, with the refreshment of the Scottish Skills Strategy *"Skills for Scotland: Accelerating the recovery and increasing sustainable economic growth"* (The Scottish Government, 2010b) adapting it to the context of the post-2008 economic recession.

During the same period, educational strategies promoting learning options for youths after 16 years of age like *"16+ Learning Choices. Policy and Practice Framework. Supporting all young people into positive and sustained destinations"* (The Scottish Government, 2010a) or *"Putting Learners at the Centre: Delivering our Ambitions for Post-16 Education"* (The Scottish Government, 2011) were setting the grounds for DYW policy. In 2012, the publication of *"Action for Jobs - Supporting Young Scots into Work. Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy"* (The Scottish Government, 2012a) by the Ministry for Youth Employment introduced the work and employment approach. The same year, this employment policy was linked with the education and training perspective via *"Opportunities for all: Supporting all young people to participate in post-16 learning, training or work"* policy (The Scottish Government, 2012b).

Given the new economic and social situation, the priority for the SG was still to improve young people's education and training opportunities and outcomes, while at the same time promoting their use in the labour market, even in a post-recession scenario. Following this reasoning, in January 2013 the SG set the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce. This commission, led by Sir Ian Wood[1] (The Wood Foundation), had the task to make recommendations to the SG in order to produce better qualified,

---

[1] Sir Ian Wood is the founder of The Wood Foundation, a philanthropic organisation which has as one of its core objectives the support of the development of the youth workforce in Scotland. More information at https://www.thewoodfoundation.org.uk/

work ready and motivated young people with relevant skills to the labour market. The recommendations of the commission would work as a basis to face the challenges of youth unemployment, scarce numbers of youths with vocational education and training and the limited opportunities for youths to gain work experience in Scotland.

In April 2014 the Scottish Ministry for Children and Young People published the policy document *"Our ambitions for improving the life chances of young people in Scotland. National Youth Work Strategy 2014-2019"* (The Scottish Government, 2014c). However, in June 2014 the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce published its final report entitled *"Education Working for All!"* (The Scottish Government, 2014b). The report included 39 specific recommendations for the SG concerning education and training (school, colleges, apprenticeships, partnerships, quality, etc.), the involvement of employers (in schools and colleges and in recruiting young people) and the advancement of equality issues (gender, ethnic groups, disabled people, etc.).

In December 2014 the SG published the policy document that drives this report: *"Developing the Young Workforce. Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy"* (The Scottish Government, 2014a), which is basically a strategy to implement the recommendations from the commission. The recommendations are organised in five main sections: Schools, Colleges, Apprenticeships, Employers and Equality. Each of the sections starts by briefly stating the current situation, before outlining how to involve people in the actions to be taken; following this, a yearly plan is set up with specific goals, which are further developed in yearly milestones to be achieved. Finally, a set of measures are presented in the form of key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor the progress of the work undertaken.

Although it is quite clear that the DYW policy document is a result of the recommendations of Sir Ian Wood's commission, all previous policy documents set the grounds for the DYW strategy, which is expected to be the main policy for education, training and youth employment in Scotland from 2014 and is planned to take place until 2021.

Governance

As Education was one of the powers devolved to the Scottish Parliament in the late 1990s, it is not surprising to observe a high degree of activity in policy-making concerning education and training, linking it to other areas of governance with more limited powers. In the DYW policy document all objectives, milestones and measures are set at the national level. However, the production and setting of strategies at the national level usually translates into a local/regional implementation. Therefore, it is necessary to allow for some degree of flexibility to adapt the targets and processes set by the national policy to the local/regional needs.

The "Scottish model" of policy-making has been described as a "more negotiated, decentralised and network form of governance, with more attention to processes of consultation and accountability" (Cairney, Russell, & Denny, 2015; Grek, 2011) in comparison to the English one. DYW, as other Scottish policies produced during the past years, very much insists in the partnership model as a way to facilitate the implementation of national policies at the regional level. Nevertheless, the debate remains open regarding to what extent the incentives and promotion of partnership work can be easily undertaken at the regional level. The existent local/regional actors, institutions, their policy orientations and distribution of powers might easily vary across Scottish regions, facilitating to a lesser or larger extent the regional partnership work.

The reality of having to implement a national strategy at a regional level makes DYW an interesting framework for comparison across Scottish regions. This is why in this national report for "WP7 local/regional case studies" we compare how the two functional regions under study (i.e. Glasgow City Region and Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Region) are adapting and managing the implementation of DYW in the regional context, and what are the implications for the young adults in each region.

Case selection and comparison

The comparison of DYW in Glasgow City Region (GCR) and Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Region (ACAR) is interesting for a number of reasons. Both of them were early starters of DYW in Scotland. The fact of having strong regional and local partners and the willingness of the regional Chambers of Commerce to lead the implementation of the policy at the regional level make them interesting cases to monitor for other regions. Both of them include a large percentage of the Scottish population. However, the composition of young people and the local labour market characteristics differ. While GCR has a polarised youth population in terms of qualifications who work in a wide range of service sector economic activities, ACAR has traditionally been attractive to highly skilled young people to work in the oil and gas industry. Moreover, the 2008 economic downturn affected to a larger extent GCR than ACAR, although ACAR was hardly hit by the 2014 oil and gas price crisis. These are all suitable and interesting reasons to compare the development of DYW, and the intended and indented consequences on young people in these two particular Scottish regions.
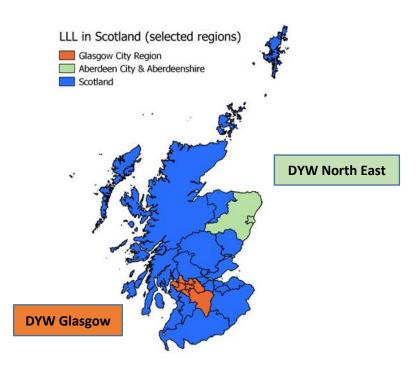
Figure 1: Selected Functional Regions in Scotland

Source: authors' own elaboration.

2. DYW in the Glasgow City Region

In this section we present the case of DYW in Glasgow City Region (GCR). We first introduce the policy in the regional context before then telling the story of DYW in the GCR based on the empirical material gathered in the region, paying attention to the different meanings attributed to the policy, its implementation and the originality and specificities of the case. Finally, we analyse the whole story framed in the theoretical perspectives used in the project, paying special attention to the objectives of the policy (CPE), its governance at the regional level (GOV) and the implications for young adults' lives (LCR).

The material analysed in this section comes from different WPs from the YA research project. The policy document and the identification of the main messages was initiated in WP3 Policy mapping, review and analysis. The quantitative data comes from WP4 Quantitative indicators and WP6. The interviews with young adults (n=4), managers and practitioners (n=3) come from WP5 Qualitative analysis, while the interviews with regional policy makers and managers (n=4) come from WP6 on the regional governance of skills supply and demand. The material has been reanalysed in order to further explore and understand the story of the implementation of DYW in the region and its implications for young adults.

2.1. Introduction to DYW in the GCR

According to one of the interviewees (GCR1), Glasgow was the first regional group in Scotland to start undertaking the DYW work. One of the recommendations of the Wood's commission report (The Scottish Government, 2014b) was to set regional employer-led groups to adapt the DYW to meet regional needs. However, Glasgow's implementation pre-dated the Wood commission recommendation, as there was already an existing employer-led group in the region known as the "Glasgow Employer Board". This is a closed employer group created by the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce for other purposes, but when DYW came into the picture they decided to discuss DYW policy matters in the framework of this board, although they also discuss other topics.

The implementation of DYW in GCR is steered by the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, as they were invited by the SG to apply for the funding to lead the implementation of DYW in GCR. Having an organisation with established links with regional employers and organised activities facilitated the swift commencement of DYW in GCR with regards to employers' engagement. The willingness and focus on engaging employers in DYW is quite clear in the DYW Glasgow website (http://www.dywglasgow.com/), as the welcome message is mainly directed to employers:

> *"Developing the Young Workforce Glasgow engages employers with a range of partner led youth employment and development initiatives to help develop skilled, talented and work ready young people to grow our city.*
>
> *As a Glasgow employer, you can help build an industry ready workforce and expand the skillset within your team. DYW Glasgow will help you find the right opportunity to develop the workforce of tomorrow, future proof your business today and grow a legacy for the future."*

However, there is no representative from educational institutions in the steering group. Hence, one of the areas on which they have been working from the beginning of DYW Glasgow is establishing links with schools and colleges in the region.

Glasgow City Region (GCR) is one of the largest city regions in the United Kingdom and it is Scotland's largest populated region, with 1,804,400 people living in the region, representing 34% of Scotland's population (UK Statistics Authority, 2015). In terms of youth population, Glasgow City presents a fairly

youthful population, with 24.4% of the population aged 16-24 years old, way above the Scottish average of 18.5% (Scotland's Census, 2011)[2]. Although Scotland is not a very diverse country in terms of ethnic backgrounds (84% white Scottish), Glasgow City – jointly with Aberdeen and Edinburgh City – is one of the regions with the largest variation in terms of ethnicity (78.6% white Scottish).

One of the differential characteristics of Glasgow City is the larger share of socially disadvantaged people. The share of economically inactive people (aged 16-74) who are considered as long-term sick or disabled is 23.7%, way above the 16.6% Scottish average. This figure widely varies across GCR areas and it is mainly concentrated in the most deprived areas in GCR.

In the educational sphere, Glasgow City presents a more polarised picture. The percentage of 16-17 year olds in education is below the national average (74.4%, below the 79.8% Scottish average), which is considered one of the key transitions in the Scottish educational model (i.e. positive destinations). The share of the population with no qualification is also quite high (32%, compared to the 26.8% Scottish average), but the share of people with higher educational qualifications is 25.9%, similar to the Scottish average of 26.1%.

According to Skills Development Scotland (SDS)[3], in 2015/2016 the number of Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) in the region was around 3,370, representing 13% of the total MAs in Scotland. Construction-related MAs were the most popular group, which represented 22% of the total MAs in the region and were heavily gendered (98% male). From April to September 2017 there were 6,368 registrations in My World of Work[4], 1,298 MAs started, most of them among 16-19 year olds (644), while the rest were taken by youths aged 20-24 (307) and older than 25 years of age (347). The total number of MAs in training in September 2017 was 3,841, which already represented 75% of the total target to be achieved. The enrolment in colleges in the region represented 23% of Scotland's total. Therefore, the Glasgow area concentrates an important proportion of vocational education and training.

Finally, in terms of employment and economic activity the most relevant economic sectors are quite similar across the whole GCR, the service and retail sector being the most important, followed by human health and social work activities and education (Skills Development Scotland, 2014). According to Scottish Census data (2011), the share of economically active people in Glasgow City is around 65%, below the Scottish average (69%). The unemployment rate in Glasgow City is 6.5%, also above the Scottish average (4.8%), although the youth unemployment rate (16-24) in the City is 27.8%, below the Scottish average (30.2%). However, these figures vary across the region and the percentages of economically active and unemployed people concentrate in different regions.

---

[2] Scotland's Census http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/

[3] http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/43999/making-skills-work-briefings-winter-glasgow-city.pdf

[4] My World of Work is registration website to enroll in an MA, get career guidance or other DYW related services https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/

2.2. Telling the story of DYW in the GCR

Following the WP7 proposal structure we have organised the story of DYW in GCR in three subsections corresponding to the analysis in terms of correspondence, implementation and originalities. In all cases the story is addressed from a top-down perspective, starting with the national policy aims and objectives and scrolling down to the regional implementation by managers and practitioners, the interaction with young adults and the impact on their lives.

Reasoning on the correspondences of DYW meaning in the GCR

The first analytical perspective focuses on the correspondence and coherence of the meanings of the policy across the different actors involved at the regional level. As argued in the introductory section, DYW aims at ensuring that all young people who leave school continue to be engaged in any kind of learning activity. Its strategy is to be as inclusive as possible, providing flexible educational pathways that facilitate a long-term educational strategy for every young person. The way to make educational pathways more flexible is by strengthening the vocational and education system and improving the work experience of young people starting from school.

The target group is young people aged 16 to 24, and the policy is supposed to support all of them in their educational pathways and later transitions into the labour market. However, the main focus is on promoting the vocational route via the apprenticeship model. Policymakers at the national level certainly understand the policy as a way to support young people who would not consider university or college as their next step after leaving school. Instead of letting them go to the labour market with no further education or training, DYW wants to promote the vocational route among this subgroup of young people. However, no emphasis is made on young people who are planning to go to college or university, as the policy understands that they already have an existing route and that there is no need (or resources) to support their connection with the world of work when leaving school.

Following the directives of the national policy, at the moment in GCR the main way to promote these flexible pathways mainly focuses on providing information to young people in schools and trying to influence their educational decisions. As argued by one of the managers of DYW in the region:

> *"Ideally what you are trying to do in terms of DYW in schools is the right opportunity at the right time. You are trying to encourage young people to realise what the opportunities are so that when they are being given choices, whether it is about subject choices or post group destinations, they have got the right information to make the right choice at the right time for them. That didn't exist 6 or 7 years ago." (GCR1 manager)*

As stated by the same interviewee (GCR1) *"it is a really interesting time to be a young person in school because your blended learning opportunities are probably greater than they have ever been"*. For instance, in the last year of school young people can take part of their studies in colleges (e.g. an afternoon a week) or they can combine college with an apprenticeship. This additional flexibility aims at smoothing the transition from school to other educational opportunities. DYW and managers in GCR think that familiarising students with other educational environments is a way to promote and facilitate these transitions, especially among young adults who lack other kinds of support and information from family or friends.

Hence, the intention is not to normalise the educational pathways and ways to get into the labour market, but standardise the outputs of the process: education and employment, which in the Scottish policy sphere are labelled as "positive destinations". In actuality, the architecture of the system is designed to link the different stages allowing them to be completed at different speeds. According to their reasoning, it is beneficial that students stay in the education system after compulsory education, providing different

options, such as foundation apprenticeships that can later link to the Modern Apprenticeship (MA) scheme and so on:

> *"So, the Foundation Apprenticeships will have been designed with component parts of Modern Apprenticeships. So, a young person who completes a Foundation Apprenticeship is completing modular parts of a Modern Apprenticeship. They are just doing it in school. They are going on afternoon release to college to be able to do that. Then they are doing the second part of their learning as work based learning with an employer. The same as you would with a Modern Apprenticeship, they are getting their applicational learning." (GCR1 manager)*

At the moment the implementation of Graduate Apprenticeships is also taking place, which would be the next step in the apprenticeship scheme, combining educational courses at college and/or university and applying it at the workplace. According to another of the DYW managers (GCR2), the apprenticeship is understood as the main route to employment. The work of DYW managers and practitioners is to think in a pathway perspective and try to get as many regional employers engaged as possible to increase the opportunities for young adults. This is the second way to promote the vocational education and training pathway: by engaging employers with schools.

As part of the action of linking schools with regional employers each one of the 36 secondary schools in Glasgow City have been partnered up with an employer in the region (e.g. BBC Scotland, Scottish Power…) and there is a person from that firm going to the school and delivering information sessions on how it is like to work in this company and which kind of jobs are available; they even organise visits to the workplace for students in their final year. In theory, this is aimed to familiarise students with labour market opportunities in the region and to facilitate the contact between the employers, the educational institutions and the young adults. However, the interviewees stated that most of the connections are based on matching schools and employers needs to the largest possible extent. The construction and strengthening of links between schools, colleges and regional employers are planned for the next year (The Scottish Government, 2014a).

These actions linking employers with schools are not considered a crucial activity by young adults interviewed. None of the four young adults mentioned the school as a place where they were influenced or set in the direction of an apprenticeship or put in contact with an employer. They had all heard of DYW and the possibility of engaging in an apprenticeship scheme later on, when they had already left school and because of different circumstances. However, it can certainly be the case that since these actions have started to be undertaken in 2014 some of the young adults interviewed were not in school anymore and the ones who were still there might have been at school only when initial steps to connect secondary schools with employers were taking place.

Regardless of the flexible pathways approach, some interviewees (GCR3) think that the current system does not support all young adults throughout their learning journeys. There is a clear educational pathway for those that want to follow the academic path, another one for those that do not fit into the academic route but *"behave properly and are proactive"*, but there is no clear alternative to support those that do not fit these categories:

> *"If they do well at school, well enough then continue with education and that is the big expectation of the day, if they're good at school but not academic but behave properly and are proactive then the education system will try pushing them towards apprenticeship but if they are neither of those I'm afraid they're sort of just left." (GCR3 DYW practitioner)*

Moreover, in addition to the academic bias and the behavioural one, it seems that some of the young adults interviewed also interpreted the information they got at school from the vocational route (apprenticeships) as a pathway for people who want to leave school, and that they lead to subjects mainly dominated by men:

> *"I haven't heard about DYW until [name of the firm], but I think that was I would say I was more into subjects that into looking to leave school because I feel they were going our school was great but for apprenticeship it was more targeted towards the kids that were leaving in fourth year going into more plumbing, electrical jobs and I do feel that was because the kinda area we were in, it was very working class area so you want to give them something before they leave, even if they've not left with qualifications, so I feel that the apprenticeship really focused on that and if you were studying higher then you were to worry about that at a later date because you'll probably go for further education." (GCR4 young adult)*

Actually, the young adults interviewed come from a deprived area in GCR and none of them had a standard educational pathway or insertion into the labour market as expected in the DYW policy document. They had all been alternating between education and work. However, the reasons for having these non-standard trajectories vary. One of the young adults had to quit a course in a college because of financial problems (GCR4), as this person did not have enough money to pay back the student loan. Another left education because of mental health problems (GCR5) and another because of caring responsibilities for an elder relative, and becoming pregnant (GCR6). The fourth young adult changed the sector in which she would like to work several times, which also led to a back-and-forth transition in terms of education and training (GCR7).

Probably these young adults and comparable disadvantaged ones would need further individual support than most young adults in this stage of their life to prevent them from leaving education at early stages. Certainly, employer engagement with the school, and providing information about the existent choices, might work for non-disadvantaged young people, but not for disadvantaged ones. DYW has mechanisms to reengage with these disadvantaged young adults who left school and who are probably not working if they get in touch with any local authority institution. As one of the DYW practitioners in this deprived stated:

> *"You got to me because I work -- we work -- on a case work basis, you probably live in [name of region in Glasgow] and I would have been allocated to you I would have phoned you we would have met here in the [...] complex and we would spend I would try and meet you once a week or once every two weeks outside, one to one for up to two hours at a time depending on whether you're group one, multiple barriers, or group two no barriers, em that would dictate how often we met, if you're group one you've got multiple barriers, you've got no qualifications, and you've never worked, em I would be meeting you once per week hopefully, you've also got a lack of confidence and some social anxiety em I would be spending months one two and three working through these issues with you putting you on other maybe local programmes other [name of the organisation] programmes to reduce those barriers, and once you've got if that worked months four five and six would be spent putting CV together em applying for jobs, applying for Modern Apprenticeships, maybe applying for college if it's the right time of year and perhaps applying for [name of organisation] programmes." (GCR3 DYW practitioner)*

It seems that this type of case work basis is more effective for disadvantaged youth. The weekly contact with a person that builds on young adults' confidence and preferences seems to influence to a larger extent these young adults than the general talks and activities they might have received at school. All young adults interviewed agreed that the DYW practitioner was a key influencer in their educational and work decisions. Beyond this person, for all the young adults interviewed the key influencers in their educational decisions, such as the subject of study (GCR4), the sector of work (GCR6) or getting back to study (GCR5) were very much influenced by family members, partners or friends. None of them mentioned teachers or career advisors as key influencers in their educational decisions, although some of them agreed that they got interested in specific subject areas in school or college.

Reasoning on the implementation of DYW in the GCR

The second analytical perspective concerns the implementation of the policy, which considers the interactions between the actors in the different phases of the policy cycle. Given the nature of the DYW and the focus on implementation, we are taking as a starting point the policy document directions in implementation and tracking to what extent this national planning is conducted in GCR and how it is adapted and articulated.

The national DYW policy document (The Scottish Government, 2014a) is quite impressive for a document of its nature, in terms of the degree of specification on its recommended implementation and direction. As argued in the introductory chapter, each one of the sections includes targets for institutions (Schools, Colleges, and Employers) and subjects (Apprenticeships, Equality), a yearly activity plan for the 7-year programme, milestone activities, and how to measure the progress to attain the targets. The whole policy relies on establishing further links between existent policy frameworks and actors in the education and work spheres.

However, this articulation has to come at the regional level, as already previewed in the policy document. The aim of the SG is that the local authorities will work in partnership with the employers' representatives and unions to build this regional system. Part of the strategy for success is also expected to utilise the commitment and efforts of partnerships between local authorities and national institutions (i.e. Education Scotland, Skills Development Scotland (SDS), Scottish Funding Council (SFC), Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)).

With regards to the relationship between the public and private sectors, the DYW document already states that there is a *"strong sense of cohesion of partnership"* at the moment between public institutions and businesses in Scotland, stating that what has to be done next is to strengthen it. Actually, the DYW policy aims for a cultural shift, in which employers do not see themselves as simple customers of the education system, but as co-investors and co-designers. These few sentences in the policy document exemplify it:

> *"Employers play a central part in these efforts. Through their understanding of the skills they require, and of future labour market demand, employers can help to shape the workforce of the future by helping to develop and deliver young people's experiences of the world of work while at school, for example, in offering high quality work experience and in inputting to careers guidance."* (The Scottish Government, 2014a)

In the case of GCR it is true that the partnership way of working is already existent, but not in a systematic and organised way. Specific partnerships were already existent in the region between concrete institutions (e.g. regional colleges and local businesses). People interviewed from different institutions stated that they have been in touch with each other and shared information for a long time. Actually, the geographical location of some of these institutions, in Glasgow's George Square (Glasgow City Council, Skills Development Scotland, Glasgow Chamber of Commerce) facilitates easy coordination of activities and information.

However, these are more the results of personal leadership and social networking than a planned strategy to strengthen the coordination between the world of education and work. The implementation of DYW in the GCR is strengthening this coordination and partnership model beyond the pre-existing relationship and partnership working culture, as each institution has a different role and they need each other in order to attain their objectives and DYW goals. One good example of this formal and systematic coordination is the Modern Apprenticeship (MA) scheme, one of the flagship actions of DYW. In order to put it in place, each institution has to play its own role and coordinate tasks with the rest (e.g. funding, communication, monitoring). Below follow a couple of examples of coordination among institutions to place a young person into the MA scheme:

> *"So through SDS, if an employer comes to us [Glasgow Chamber of Commerce] and says we would like to take on a young person, we are thinking about an MA, we would refer them to SDS as employer engagement team and they would talk through the practicalities, what is it you are looking for? That would fit into this framework. Then through their network of training providers, post those vacancies and then the training providers say "I take that. I'll speak to that employer and I will deliver that MA." They will find the young person. That is a referral. We raise awareness with employers. We present them with an idea of an MA but when it gets down into who is going to deliver an MA, we would pass that to SDS because that is their area of expertise." (GCR1 manager)*

> *"We put them [employers] in touch with the appropriate stream to source about Modern Apprenticeships. It would come through if a business contacted us and "I have a young person who I have interviewed and who I want to employ and I would like to put them through a Modern Apprenticeship. Then we would signpost them to Skills Development Scotland for our working partner who would then contact them and take it to the next level." (GCR2 manager)*

Glasgow Chamber of Commerce is leading the implementation of DYW in GCR based on the direction of the Employers Board. However, no representatives from the education system are present in this board. They have a good working relationship with SDS because of the coordination of the MA scheme and because of a matter of economic incentives: employers look for young people to take into an apprenticeship, but the training component is not paid by the employers but by the SG through SDS (i.e. public funding). For Glasgow Chamber of Commerce *"an apprenticeship is a job"* (GCR1), but for SDS and public authorities it is certainly a learning scheme that also leads to employment. However, it seems that this scheme works and is useful for both employers and young adults who want to stay in the job:

> *"...the subsidy only covers the training element of it and they are paying a wage anyway, whether they get the training or not. They are still paying that person either minimum wage or Glasgow living wage and subsidy is a bonus for the training element of it. So the training element stops when the training is completed. They still usually want to sustain the young person in employment." (GCR2 manager)*

Another example of coordination comes from one of the practitioners working in a foundation that is involved in DYW supporting young people's educational and labour market pathways. Therefore, it seems that the different institutions in the region are coordinated to link young adults with employers:

> *"...we work in partnership, the project I'm on just now works in partnership with Glasgow Guarantee, which is a Glasgow City Council initiative back on the*

Commonwealth Games, so they refer young people to our project as well." (GCR3 practitioner)

Although DYW is facilitating the implementation and communication among policymakers, managers and practitioners at the regional level to put in place the MA scheme, the way young people get in touch with any of the related activities of DYW varies. Although the "ideal" DYW pathway is that young people will never abandon the learning component of their lives and that they will transition from school to an apprenticeship, to college or to university, reality is not always like this for a non-negligible share of young adults in GCR.

Among the four young adults interviewed in GCR none of them had a standard transition from school to an MA. Only one of them was referred by an institution (GCR5) which was the job centre. This young person was running out of unemployment benefits and the job centre referred this person to a foundation that could provide support to engage into an MA scheme. However, this young adult had already been to college and engaging in an MA was more attractive in terms of getting back into the labour market rather than as a learning experience. The other three young adults were self-referred based on the suggestion of a partner who was also in the MA scheme (GCR4), of a friend who posted the announcement of a job fair in a Facebook post (GCR6), and through an advertisement seen "somewhere" before searching for the website to find out more about it (GCR7). They had all been out of school: either working, at college, or both. Although these three were self-referrals, there are two different channels: via the website (we understand SDS's "My World of Work" website, https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/), and via a job fair. Here again it is important to raise the relevance of key influencers on young adults' decisions and the availability of information.

Even if Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, SDS, Glasgow City Council, foundations/charities and secondary schools in Glasgow work in partnership and are working on strengthening this relationship following DYW guidelines, there is a less robust relationship with the regional colleges. DYW guidelines promote partnerships with regional colleges, but none of the interviewees of the Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board (GCR8) and regional colleges (GCR9) in GCR mentioned any established form of partnership with SDS and Glasgow Chamber of Commerce in relation to the MA scheme. However, it is worth pointing out that in the DYW policy document the partnership work among colleges and schools to deliver vocational pathways is planned by the fourth year (2017-2018), which means that at the time the interviews analysed in this document took place, the actions to link colleges with the rest of the system had not yet started.

Although the regionalisation of colleges and the information provided by SDS in the Regional Skills Assessments (RSA) is at the regional level, at the moment there are not any specific mechanisms in place to lead college students to MA apprenticeships or any similar scheme. GCR colleges have links with regional employers, but the interviewees did not mention any formal or established partnership or form of coordination between them.

Reasoning on the originalities of DYW in the GCR

The third analytical perspective is to identify the special features of the case study with regard to the integration of the specific measure into its context and in terms of its originality. One of the main peculiarities of GCR is that most of the people in charge or related to DYW management and implementation already knew each other. The fact that their organisations were previously in touch and collaborating for other reasons has probably facilitated parts of the coordination and implementation process. As mentioned above, some of these institutions have their main offices in Glasgow's central square. This geographical proximity facilitates frequent face-to-face meetings and further collaboration. This point is very much related to the previous section on implementation correspondences, although it is worth pointing out that it is quite specific of this case and it is not the common norm in other Scottish regions.

Another one of the main specificities of GCR is the above average number of young people coming from socioeconomically disadvantaged families and/or living in deprived areas. This is the main reason why the equality measures in the DYW national policy take special relevance in the region. Crucially, one of the intentions of DYW is to improve opportunities for young people who come from a more disadvantaged background, whether that be gender, ethnic origin, disabilities, or young care leavers that rank among the targeted groups identified in the policy document. These groups were identified by the Wood's commission as having more difficulties or being somehow disadvantaged in their educational pathways and transitions to the labour market.

Although the Commission concluded that these are the main target groups to focus on, working to reduce the barriers they face, the policy document is not specific on actions or plans to raise employment among them. The goal is to reduce the unemployment rate of these groups, increase their participation in education and employment, but the method to achieve it is supposed to be the same as for the rest of young adults. The underlying assumption of DYW policy is that in order to be successful and contribute to society it is fundamental to be employed.

Although promoting employment among young people might be beneficial in general terms, the way the promotion of employment is done might be more or less successful in including different profiles of young people given their socioeconomic circumstances. Managers and practitioners in GCR are well aware of it. One of the features shared by all institutions taking part in DYW in GCR is that they all have a good knowledge of the socioeconomic characteristics of the region and the problems that families and young adults in deprived areas are facing. This facilitates the adaptation of DYW to local needs to the largest extent possible, even if that might sometimes clash with the expected national targets.

The main interviewee (GCR1) dealing with DYW in Glasgow stated and provided examples of ways in which equality is addressed as a cross-cut issue. Some of the programmes and links between schools and employers take into consideration some of these groups (i.e. disabled people). Some of the colleges in Glasgow receive an important share of students who come from a socially disadvantaged background (e.g. long-term unemployed parents, low income households, low educational attainment households, etc.). According to one of the persons interviewed in the college (GCR9), part of their work relates to linking with local employers and persuading them to take disadvantaged young adults into internships to give them a chance. However, they also commented on the challenge of promoting it among young adults, who may not see the benefits of engaging in an unpaid internship. Although these unpaid internships are beyond the DYW MA scheme, they are still in line with DYW policy in terms of linking educational institutions with local employers.

According to another of the practitioners related to DYW, the range of people supported under the policy might vary, but most of them have low qualifications and null or limited work experience (GCR3). The same person also states that most of these young adults get in touch with DYW policy or are referred to the scheme because of their socioeconomic background. In fact, all the young adults interviewed can be considered as disadvantaged and can fit into one of the targeted groups identified in the policy document. However, in some cases the main reason for having more difficulties in educational pathways and transitions to the labour market are not directly linked to one of the main targets of DYW. The young adults interviewed come from a deprived area in GCR and have a working class family background. One of them also stated that they have had a disability since birth (GCR7). However, the main reasons for leaving school or college without a qualification are related to mental health problems (i.e. depression, bullying at school) (GCR5), having to care for an elder relative and later on becoming pregnant and having a baby (GCR6), or funding complications (GCR4). Obviously, these reasons might all be related to or strengthened by the individuals' belonging to the disadvantaged groups identified by the DYW.

Although DYW leaves enough flexibility to the regions to identify the local/regional needs to better adapt the policy to them, there is no further support on how to do it, leaving the regional and local actors to themselves to deal with these needs, regardless of how challenging they are.

2.3. Analysis of DYW in the GCR from the theoretical perspectives

After telling the story of DYW in GCR and analysing the main correspondences in meaning, reasoning the implementation and the originality of DYW in GCR, we analysed the results using the three theoretical perspectives that constitute the theoretical framework of the YA research project: Cultural Political Economy (CPE) (Jessop, 2010; Sum & Jessop, 2013), the Life Course Research (LCR) (Elder, 1998; Heinz, 2009) and the Governance perspective (GOV) (Altrichter, 2010; Ball & Junemann, 2012).

DYW in the GCR from the CPE

The way the DYW policy document, national policy makers and DYW managers in GCR think about young people's educational pathways and trajectories into the labour market has a very rational choice approach. They assume that if they provide the right information and expose young people at the schools to the possibilities, chances and options they have in terms of education and labour market careers, they will make the right choice for themselves. However, the opinion of practitioners dealing face-to-face with disadvantaged young adults is quite different. They are more aware of the "real" lives of young adults and the difficulties and problems they have that are not specifically taken into account in the policy thinking. Obviously, the policy document cannot take into account all possible situations and challenges young adults in each region might face. However, a less rationalistic approach that includes other life domains beyond the education and labour market ones might help young people to "fit" into the policy more snugly.

The previous point is very much related to the target group. DYW basically targets all young people aged 16 to 24 in Scotland. The aim is to make sure that they continue to experience an educational element in their lives beyond compulsory education. The introduction of the apprenticeship scheme aims at facilitating this aim for youths not oriented to the academic path. As DYW is a large national policy planned for 7 years, at the moment the first steps have been taken focusing on the 16-19 year olds leaving school. The current restriction to this age group -- and to this early transition from school to the next stage -- is leaving a part of the target group out of the main policy focus.

Even if the measures show that most of the youth are in a positive destination (i.e. education, employment, volunteering) the educational pathways and ways of transitioning to the labour market are not always happening as dictated by the policy document. None of the young adults interviewed in GCR had a standard transition. This is well-known among the regional DYW managers and practitioners. However, even if they have in mind the most disadvantaged young adults, they also have to work on activities and build links for the young adults at school who are not necessarily disadvantaged. Although the national policy allows for flexibility to adapt to the regional needs, there is no flexibility on the targets to achieve and measures to provide. This interaction between the relationship of the meaning of the problem and the solution, and the way it is to be measured, might be affecting the prioritisation of resources and activities in the region.

DYW in the GCR from the GOV

One of the main peculiarities of GCR is that most of the people in charge or related to DYW management and implementation already knew each other. The fact that their organisations were already in touch and collaborating for other reasons has probably facilitated parts of the coordination and implementation process. As mentioned above, some of these institutions have the main offices in Glasgow's central square. This geographical proximity facilitates frequent face-to-face meetings.

So far, regional colleges seem to be less engaged in the core DYW implementation, as their main period of involvement is expected for the forthcoming year. The regionalisation of colleges a few years ago already structured them in regions, aiming to facilitate the linkage between colleges' regional employment needs. Although they are in touch with Glasgow Chamber of Commerce and SDS, their

engagement with DYW seems to be lower compared to schools, based on what different interviewees said and omitted.

As stated in the introduction of GCR, this is one of the most populated regions in Scotland, but it also has large concentrations of deprived areas and socially disadvantaged people. Having the ability to adapt the policy to regional needs allows those involved to address specific measures to further target this group. However, tension remains as to who makes this prioritisation. The Chamber of Commerce is in charge of DYW in the region and should work to achieve the national targets. Practitioners and other institutions working directly with the most disadvantaged youths claim that they do not receive enough support and that these young adults should have been more strongly supported while still at school. This tension certainly affects the opportunities of young people in the region.

DYW in the GCR from the LCR

One of the features shared by all institutions taking part in DYW in the GCR is that they all have a good knowledge of the socioeconomic characteristics of the region and the problems that families and young adults in deprived areas are facing. This facilitates the adaptation of DYW to local needs to the largest extent possible, even if that might sometimes clash with the expected national targets.

However, it is worth mentioning that the educational expectations of these disadvantaged young adults are lower than other young adults with a different background. Therefore, it might be claimed that beyond the improvement of their educational and employment possibilities and conditions, some efforts should be directed to improve their confidence and raise their expectations before they leave school.

DYW policy focuses very much on the education and employment spheres of young people's lives. In the foreword of the DYW policy document is signed by the Cabinet Secretary for Fair Work, Skills & Training and that obviously places the focus on skills to support employment. Hence, the references to education and training are always connected to promote and ensure better employment possibilities for young people and do not explicitly consider other life domains.

Although it is certainly true that there is an equality perspective that aims at crosscutting the policy strategy and measures, the equality barriers identified refers to employment too. The focus on gender, ethnic minorities, disability and care leavers are considered because these groups present lower employment rates or poorer working conditions than the rest of the youth. However, there is a lack of consideration of other life spheres, such as the family, personal and leisure spheres.

Obviously, one way to address this is by providing education and career guidance. Nevertheless, if this is not individualised and single case based it is problematic, as more general careers guidance mechanisms work engage disadvantaged young adults that are likely to have more important and immediate personal problems beyond their educational and career choices. As argued by the same DYW practitioner quoted below:

> *"I think there is careers guidance in secondary schools but [...] I think it's under-resourced I think it's patchy, I think sometimes the quality is not great, I think it's more one size fits all – my world of works that kind of stuff, which is fine for someone who's on a pathway to NATS and beyond, not so fine for someone who's not engaging particularly well at the main education system." (GCR3 DYW practitioner)*

Actually, one of the young adults interviewed agrees that the type of career guidance at school was very much oriented into which was the next educational step and was too broad:

> *"[…] there was careers advice but it was more not careers advice, but call it career advice what stone are you jumping onto next are you going to college or University? That*

was the kinda thing, there were talks that would come in and things like that, there were talks and things like and there was open days in the school and you would go over, you would go like a hall, [name of the school] would open up and all the Universities would come in and give you out books and everything, I did go round and I collected them, but they done it in such like your break you could go over like for 15 minutes so it was such like if your gonna put so much pressure on my future, give us least more that 15 minutes to read about it please". (GCR4 young adult)

The policy's attitude towards career guidance, in getting youths onto an apprenticeship or in continuing to further education studies, just figures as a way to save them when their circumstances have already gone into the "non-positive destination". Sometimes they do not fit into the policy framework because something unexpected happened to them. Therefore, given the strong presence of deprived areas in the GCR, it seems that support to these young people should come to an earlier stage and with higher intensity than the one suggested in DYW national policy document.

Actually, after interviewing the four young adults in GCR it can be claimed that their education and labour market decisions are more related to their personal situation and environment than to the influence of DYW. The policy tries to normalize (even if in a flexible way) and keep on a good track (or take back) young adults with regards to their educational and labour market spheres, but they do not always take into account a lot of the personal situations that might make it difficult, such as health and mental health problems, pregnancy and childbearing, or caring for elders. It is clear that the key influencers of these disadvantaged young adults are close relatives, partners and friends, rather than professionals from education and labour market institutions.

3. DYW in the Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Region

In this section we present the case of DYW in Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Region (ACAR). We first introduce the policy in the regional context, we then tell the story of DYW in ACAR based on the empirical material gathered in the region paying attention to the different meanings attributed to the policy, its implementation and the originality and specificities of the case. Finally, we analyse the whole story framed in the theoretical perspectives used in the project, paying special attention to the objectives of the policy (CPE), its governance at the regional level (GOV) and the implications for young adults' lives (LCR).

The material analysed in this section comes from different WPs from the YA research project. The policy document and the identification of the main messages was initiated in WP3 Policy mapping, review and analysis. The quantitative data comes from WP4 Quantitative indicators and WP6. The interviews with young adults (n=3), and managers and practitioners (n=3), come from WP5 Qualitative analysis, while the interviews with regional policy makers and managers (n=4) come from WP6 Comparative Analysis of Skills Supply and Demand. The material has been reanalysed in order to further explore and understand the story of the implementation of DYW in the region and its implications for young adults.

3.1. Introduction to DYW in the ACAR

According to one of the interviewees (ACAR1) based at the Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce (AGCC), previous to the publication of the Wood´s commission report (The Scottish Government, 2014b) there were already some concerns about the difficulties faced by young people in their transitions from education to the labour market in ACAR. This is why an audit on this topic was commissioned previous to the Wood's report:

> *"The starting point was for some time before DYW existed actually, we've been interested in seeing how we could better prepare our young people for work and how we could better align what the industry needed and what the region needed with what was being taught in school. We were always aware that there were lots of things going on in school but it was very poorly co-ordinated. So we did an audit of the level of activity between schools and employers in about 2014. So it was just in advance of the Wood review taking place. When the Wood review was being undertaken and reported we were then well placed and were very interested in the findings." (ACAR1 manager)*

Similarly to the case of GCR, the Scottish Government (SG) also invited the regional chamber of commerce to candidate for leadership of DYW in the region, creating a regional group to govern the regional recommendations proposed by DYW policy (The Scottish Government, 2014a). In this case the region is denominated as DYW North East and includes the regions under the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire councils.

In contrast to GCR, from their regional website (http://www.dyw.org.uk/) it looks evident that ACAR's main goal is linking schools with employers. The main messages in the website are *"Our mission is to be the vital link between businesses and schools in the North East of Scotland"* or *"DYW help build meaningful partnerships between employers and education to benefit young people"*.

Aberdeen City is the third largest city in Scotland and is well known for its oil and gas industry. Traditionally, the region was dependent on agriculture, fishing, and forestry and related processing industries, but over the past 40 years the development of the oil and gas industry and associated service sector has broadened Aberdeenshire's economic base, and contributed to a rapid population growth of 50% since 1975. However, since the dramatic decrease in the price of a barrel of crude oil in 2014, the region is facing economic and social challenges that are affecting the structure of the region.

For the past years the oil and gas industry has impacted ACAR in several ways. It has rapidly increased its population, mainly attracting young people with high educational qualifications from Scotland, the UK and abroad. According to Scotland's Census[5], in 2011 the share of people aged 16-29 in Aberdeen City was 25.6%, well above the Aberdeenshire 15.2%, with the Scottish average at 18.5%. In line with the previous statistics, in Aberdeen City 75.3% of the population consider themselves white Scottish, well below the 82.2% in Aberdeenshire and the Scottish average of 84%.

Regarding education, the region is in a better position than the Scottish average. Although the proportion of 16-17 year olds in education is lower in Aberdeen City (76.6%) than in Aberdeenshire (80.6%) and lower than the national average (79.8%), the proportion of the population with no qualifications is lower in Aberdeen City (20.2%) compared to Aberdeenshire (23.6%) and the Scottish average (26.8%). The opposite applies to the share of people with high level qualifications: the share of people with high qualifications is larger in Aberdeen City (33.2%) than in Aberdeenshire (27%) and Scotland (26.1%), highlighting the relevance of qualifications in the city.

According to Skills Development Scotland (SDS)[6], from April to September 2017 there were 2,371 registrations in My World of Work[7], 481 MAs started, most of them among 16-19 year olds (318), while the rest were taken by youths aged 20-24 (106) and older than 25 years of age (57). The total number of MAs in training in September 2017 was 1,941, which already represented 85% of the total target to be achieved. Therefore, the further education sector is quite active in the region.

Finally, in terms of the labour market and economic activity, ACAR is an active region in the Scottish context. The share of the population that are economically active in Aberdeen City (73.3%) and Aberdeenshire (74.9%) is above the Scottish average (69%) and the unemployment rate is slightly lower in Aberdeen City (3.1%) and Aberdeenshire (2.5%) than the national average (4.8%). However, the unemployment rate among 16-24 year olds is quite similar to the Scottish average (30.2%) in Aberdeen City (29%) and in Aberdeenshire (31.7%). Having an overrepresentation of young population in ACAR might partly explain these figures. As mentioned above, the gas and oil industry, as well as mining and related activities, are the most important economic activities in the region both in terms of employment in professional scientific and technical activities, but also in terms of revenues. Other relevant economic sectors are the service sector and human health and social care activities.

---

[5] Scotland's Census http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/

[6] http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/43985/making-skills-work-briefings-winter-aberdeenshire.pdf

[7] My World of Work is registration website to enroll in an MA, get career guidance or other DYW related services https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/

3.2. Telling the story of DYW in the ACAR

Following the WP7 proposal structure we have organised the story of DYW in ACAR in three subsections corresponding to the analysis in terms of correspondence, implementation and originalities. In all cases the story is addressed from a top-down perspective, starting with the national policy aims and objectives and scrolling down to the regional implementation by managers and practitioners, the interaction with young adults and the impact in their lives.

Reasoning on correspondences of DYW meaning in the ACAR

The first analytical perspective focuses on the correspondence and coherence of the meanings of the policy across the different actors involved at the regional level. As stated in GCR section, DYW aims at ensuring that all young people who leave school continue to be engaged in some kind of learning activity. Although a non-negligible proportion of the Scottish youth continue their learning journey to college or university, there are less youth that engage in the vocational education system or in workplace learning. One of the goals of DYW is strengthening the vocational and education system and improving the working experience of young people.

DYW policy recognises that young people are likely to be influenced by a number of people around them when making educational and career decisions. The intention is to engage these young people's influencers in the process too:

> *"Key to success is the dialogue with those who influence young people, including parents, carers, careers advisors, teachers and practitioners, as well as young people themselves. A focussed and sustained approach to engagement and communication which involves people in the development and delivery of these changes will feature throughout our planned activity.*
>
> *[…] through a national campaign, we will support parents and carers as they help young people to make choices at key points in their lives about the future. Similarly, we will develop guidance to help teachers and practitioners work with young people as they explore the advanced provision on offer to them."* (The Scottish Government, 2014a)

The underlying assumption of DYW policy is that potential influencers of young people's educational and career decisions have to have access to all the available information in order to support young adults in making the best decision for them:

> *"Key partners such as schools, colleges, local authorities and Skills Development Scotland all have a responsibility to engage with young people, and those who influence them, to ensure they have the right information to make informed choices."* (The Scottish Government, 2014a)

This perspective is shared by DYW managers in ACAR, as they agree that their main aim is to make young people aware of the educational and labour market opportunities out there. Beyond school teachers and employers coming into schools to talk about the world of work and their particular firms, DYW managers in ACAR stressed the relevance of parents as key influencers in the educational and career decisions of their offspring. Since they accept that they do not exactly know at what stage children really make decisions on their future careers and educational pathways (in primary and/or secondary school), ACAR managers have decided that influencing parents is a good strategy to indirectly influence young people:

> *"A lot of what we do when speaking with schools and discussing the activity that they have and what young people get involved in, we do actively encourage them to include parents as much as they can so when it comes to careers advice parents are going to be the main influencers. So, I guess the parents – not all parents know everything that's going on, but if you encourage parents to get involved in the activity that the school provide or get the parents involved with the business partnerships that you're setting up with employers and organisations, then the parents are party to that information as well. So it gives them more information and more experience in order to support their children as to what they want to do when it comes to careers or what they're basically going to do when they leave school. So, certainly parents would have an active part of the whole DYW setup." (ACAR2 manager)*

They are also quite critical with the "positive destination" approach of the SG. Going into college or into an apprenticeship cannot simply be considered as an absolute positive destination, as the field of study and type of career that they choose is very much influenced by the opportunities in their area and the type of employers coming into the schools to talk to them about their economic sector:

> *"At the moment, I feel that the measure of positive destination is not entirely the right approach to take because people end up going to college. They might end up being in college in the wrong course because they have never had [name of the interviewer] coming in and speaking to them about research. What they did hear was an oil and gas person coming in and speaking about engineering. So they have missed something. So, what we need to do is make sure that each of these young people get touched by all kinds of those key sectors across their school life. At least then they can make an informed choice rather than a choice based on the sector that has got the most money or the most people." (ACAR1 manager)*

Therefore, they recognize that the balance between promoting available careers and educational pathways that have available vacancies in the area is in tension with the type of jobs and careers that might interest young people. However, they still accept that their main role is to promote different routes among young people to make sure that they continue into some form of learning after leaving school, as suggested by the DYW policy document:

> *"We would go into schools, and we would promote apprenticeships as being a good route into the workplace, because we're all about making sure that young people are aware that there are different ways into the workplace. So whether that's further education to university; or directly into the workplace in a trainee-type role; or whether it might be an apprenticeship, which gives you structured training; and the workplace practical training as well. So, again, we don't set apprenticeships up, we're not involved in running the apprenticeships, but all we do is we would certainly promote them." (ACAR2 manager)*

These statements are clearly in line with the vocational pathway promoted by DYW, which is constructed by the apprenticeship model that starts with the Foundation Apprenticeship, followed by the Modern Apprenticeship (MA), and ending with the Graduate Apprenticeship. As stated in the GCR section, this apprenticeship structure is not rigid, as there are multiple ways to undertake the different stages at different paces. Beyond the Grampian Chamber of Commerce, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) is the main promoter and manager of the apprenticeship system related to DYW in ACAR. As argued by one of the regional managers (ACAR3), the apprenticeship is a useful experience in gauging whether young people like a particular sector or not.

Nevertheless, the role of career advisors remains a point of contention in discussion. As stated by one of the regional managers, the main task of a career adviser is to support young people to make decisions, instead of making decisions for them:

> *"Careers advice in schools, it is worth understanding that careers advisors are not there to help them make the choices, they are there to advise young people on how to make the choices, not tell them what the choice should be. I am not sure that schools understand that very clearly either because I do hear from teachers… Well careers advisors will help them with their CV or help them with their job application forms or help them understand what their skills are but actually, that is not a career advisor's job to do that. The career advisor's job is to teach them career management skills so where to go and find out things and how to do the research."* (ACAR3 manager)

As part of DYW idea key expectation is that career advisors and other key influencers will support young people (ACAR4) to design their own pathways from school into the labour market. Actually, one of the young adults interviewed in the region acknowledged that he initially wanted to go to the university to become a lawyer, but that he changed his mind in a job fair when he got in touch with engineering companies. He discussed it with his career advisor, and after a visit to a college organised by the school he decided to go into college and into an apprenticeship in engineering.

However, the experience of other young adults differs. One of them (ACAR5) noted that career guidance was not that supportive for her and that she was mainly influenced by her dad and brother. Another of the young people interviewed (ACAR6) saw several adverts online saying *"Better choice than university, Modern Apprenticeships"*, which made him become interested in it and search for more information on the scheme. He later discussed it with his career advisor at school. He then got a placement in the company where his father is an employee. The common trait of the three young people interviewed (two male and one female) is that all three chose a career in engineering, which is not surprising given the ACAR labour market demand. However, it questions the concept of "positive destination" posed by one of the managers in the region (ACAR1), who wonders whether we should start considering the field of study to assess if it is a real positive destination for young people.

Reasoning on the implementation of DYW in the ACAR

The second analytical perspective concerns the implementation of the policy, which considers the interactions between the actors in the different phases of the policy cycle. As commented above in the introductory chapter and in the GCR section, one of the main goals of DYW is to link the regional education institutions with employers in the region as a way to smooth the transitions from school to an apprenticeship or to the labour market in general.

In ACAR the DYW regional team bears this idea in mind at all times. As stated by some of the managers interviewed in the region, they think their main role is linking the employers with the education institutions, but they also aim at making their skills agendas converge (ACAR1).

However, managers in the region also bear in mind that this is a national policy promoted by the SG and it certainly has a top-down approach. After the publication of the DYW document the SG pushed for the creation of regional groups that would regionally implement the policy. One of these groups is the North East one, which includes ACAR. Their primary role has been to link with local schools and employers and foster connections between them. However, they have noticed that different schools are set up in different ways and sometimes the contact person is the head teacher, in other cases a deputy head teacher, a guidance teacher, or a careers advisor that some schools are appointing as a DYW lead at the school level.

Therefore, according to some of the DYW managers in the region (ACAR2), it has taken a while to connect with and get to know the organisation of each school. The same manager has also argued that schools *"have been told"* by local authorities that they have to engage in DYW activities because this is a SG-driven policy. Hence, it poses some questions as to what extent local schools are engaging in DYW activities to support young adults at school or, conversely, whether they just participate because they understand it is a compulsory action dictated by the SG.

Some of the interviewees have mentioned that a lot of initiatives and programmes supporting young people in their educational pathways and transition to the labour market were already in place previous to the introduction of the DYW. DYW has served as a way to organise them and try to coordinate efforts in the region. It has also served as a way to recognise already existing practices and to identify duplications. Nevertheless, as argued by some of the interviewees, duplications are still existent:

> *"Sometimes what we find on our travels up 'til now that there's lots and lots of initiatives out there that are targeting young people, with a view to them benefitting and getting developed, making them up ready for the world of work. So, there's lots of initiative out there around building confidence and building self-esteem and lots on leadership and lots on employability skills and employers' expectations. So, there's quite a bit of duplication, there's lots of things out there that are very similar.*
>
> *[…] So, we need to make sure that we are working closely with the local authorities so that each other know what we're doing to make sure that we don't duplicate because they obviously want to make sure that this is being rolled out through their schools and we're certainly doing that. But because they've also got their own DYW agenda, we need to make sure that we're working together to make sure we're not duplicating and doing the same things." (ACAR2 manager)*

One way to face these duplications is coordinating people under the regional DYW umbrella: working on partnerships with educational institutions to make sure that there is a single voice promoting engagement between them and the regional employers. Otherwise, what has happened so far is that schools, colleges and universities have been contacting employers separately, thus making it a little chaotic and difficult for employers, as explained by one of the DYW managers:

> *"Now there is a bit of a problem here in what I see in practice is that my team go out and speak to employers, the work experience team and the local authorities go and speak to employers. I have said how we might try to join those together over time but also you have got employee engagement people from the college going to speak to employers and university people going to speak to employers as well. So you could have 5 different people in the north east coming to knock on your door on a single day." (ACAR1 manager)*

Actually, the ideal model suggested by the DYW national policy -- and what the regional team is trying to put in place -- is that the DYW team becomes the bridge between schools and employers. The regional DYW team would work as a node of information and a meeting place for employers and schools, avoiding the need for educational institutions to go out there and look for employers to engage with:

> *"Essentially I guess I'm the person that's front-facing the schools and businesses - what I do is I connect with a business and encourage them to engage with their local schools. Then I will make the introductions, support the meeting, get the round tables, speaking*

about what the school needs or would like and if that particular business or employer or organisation can support and offer something relevant.

[…] So we're engaged with business and industry, and find out what they do already or if they want to do anything, and then we find out what the schools are doing. And a lot of what we do is just matching them up, making the introductions, introducing a business to a school or vice versa; we facilitate the meetings, we'll support the meetings, and we'll basically support the relationship – we'll encourage them to build a relationship long-term and work together so that they both get mutual benefits from that relationship. (ACAR2 manager)

So far, the engagement has been between schools and employers, as this is the first stage suggested by the DYW planning. However, DYW managers in ACAR already have in mind the expansion of the connections with regional colleges and universities. They even mentioned the idea of beginning to work with primary schools, as a way to make children think about their future careers at an earlier age. Even if the national policy plans these actions for the forthcoming years, the ACAR DYW team would already like to be working on them. However, they claim they have not been able to do so because of limited human and financial resources.

Finally, the main implementation challenge touched upon is in terms of figuring out what the big picture is. In other words, where each person and institution fits and how they can better serve their needs and interests. While policy makers think that young people's needs are quite well covered by means of creating qualifications and structures to recognise them, this is not so clear for employers. Since the implementation of the apprenticeship levy for employers, the direct benefits for them have to be more obvious. As argued by one of the DYW managers:

"It is working with all these people to try and help them understand where they fit in the picture but also we are still trying to work out what the picture is. So it is a constant tension from that point of view because we have got to try and make it fit. We can't just say, here is a qualification, we are making this and it is up to you to work out whether it fits or not. Because the employers are paying for it through the levy, we have to make sure that it is fitting the needs of the employers as well as fitting the needs of the young person. Fitting the needs of the young person is easier because you create a structure and you create it at an SCQF level that is valid and useful and you provide exit routes that are built up. That is part of our job." (ACAR3 manager)

Therefore, while the implementation in the region seems to be following national directives, there are some tensions in reorganising and making clear the role of each individual or institution in the big picture of supporting young people in their educational and labour market transitions.

Reasoning on the originalities of DYW in the ACAR

The third analytical perspective is to identify the special features of the case study with regard to the integration of the specific measure into its context. One of the main aims of DYW national policy is to be open and flexible enough to allow regions to adapt the policy to meet local needs. As is well known, for the past decades ACAR economic activity has been very much dominated by the oil and gas industry. The predominance of this economic sector in the region has influenced other economic sectors directly or not directly related to it. Even as the dominating sector which makes most of the offers --educational and career expectations of young people are directed to this sector -- the 2014 oil price crisis has forced a rethink of some of the area-specific career guidance. However, DYW managers state that they are working based on the regional economic strategy:

> *"We have got a regional economic strategy so we know what our priority sectors are for the future. I have set up the teams to deliver against that so they have got a focus on getting employers from those sectors involved. We have also got a focus on employers which I believe are important to enabling a successful economy." (ACAR1)*

DYW is also concerned with the engagement of local and regional employers. One of the strongest points in ACAR is the ongoing work in engaging with employers and promoting a cultural change among employers. They wish for employers to think about how they would like to plan the workforce and which of the skills that young people have can be beneficial for their own businesses:

> *"We're trying to get employers to think about their work force planning. Where there's an agent work force, but then it's also about getting new ideas into industry. You've got, you know, with young people great kinda digital skills and things like that, and you know, by having young people in job roles that kinda can maximise that knowledge that they have, you know, a business can take advantage of new opportunities if there's young people who have good digital skills. So we're trying to kinda sell young people to employers." (ACAR7)*

However, this is quite challenging, as the region has a fair mix of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and multinational ones. The degree of engagement and the resources that they can put in place to support young adults at the beginning of their careers ranges from visits to schools to talk about the company and how it relates with their studies (SMEs), to a series of workshops preparing youths for the world of work including preparing a CV, preparing for an interview, communication skills, and so on (multinational companies). The approach from the DYW is to encourage all employers to participate to the extent that they can commit and feel comfortable with their involvement.

3.3. Analysis of DYW in the ACAR from the theoretical perspectives

After telling the story of DYW in ACAR and analysing the main correspondences in meaning, reasoning the implementation and the originality of DYW in ACAR, we analysed the results using the three theoretical perspectives that constitute the theoretical framework of the YA research project: Cultural Political Economy (CPE) (Jessop, 2010; Sum & Jessop, 2013), the Life Course Research (LCR) (Elder, 1998; Heinz, 2009) and the Governance perspective (GOV) (Altrichter, 2010; Ball & Junemann, 2012).

DYW in the ACAR from the CPE

The main directions and pathways suggested by DYW national policy easily fit within the ACAR context. The bridging between schools and employers and the promotion of the vocational pathway described by the national document can be easily identified in the testimony of regional managers. The focus on the key influencers of young adults' decisions is also in line with the DYW assumption that providing the available educational and labour market information will help young people make the best decision for them, supported by their parents, teachers or other key influencers.

The testimonies of the young adults interviewed also quite neatly fits into the overall structure and planning of DYW. Contrary to what we have seen for GCR, the three young adults interviewed have experienced linear trajectories. After school they either moved to college and/or engaged in an apprenticeship that smoothed their transitions to the labour market. Therefore, the empirical material gathered so far seems to suggest that the policy design is promoting the vocational path in the region and smoothing the transitions of young people.

DYW in the ACAR from the GOV

As argued above, the main task recognised and put in place by the regional DYW team has been coordinating and promoting the partnership work between schools and employers. ACAR has traditionally been an economically active region. The oil and gas industry and the economic activity related to it used to show a dynamic picture and the market was self-coordinating to some extent. With the introduction of DYW the institutional coordination has been promoted and there has been a period of establishing links and meeting people in the different institutions. This has facilitated the process of systematisation of the existing programs and initiatives to make them more efficient.

However, beyond this initial main task there are other priorities set by DYW, but they cannot all be done at once and some of the managers wondered how many priorities they can handle at the moment and how best to prioritise them. Similarly to the case of GCR, there is a tension in deciding which one has to take the priority and this is something that the national policy does not provide guidance about, leaving it to the regional groups. Moreover, it is worth pointing out that DYW regional groups do not have any coercive measure to make the rest comply or follow them but the connections and information they might gather.

DYW in the ACAR from the LCR

Although the young adults interviewed mainly argued that they made their own choices on their educational pathways and later careers, once the conversation developed they pointed out some key influencers. Some of them are part of the DYW policy in the region. The discussions with the career advisors at school or college seem to have made young people reason and elaborate on their educational choices. The job fair facilitated youths' getting in touch with the world of work. Furthermore, the online information available on careers, practical learning from MA schemes, and the testimonies of other young people encouraged some of them to undertake this route. These are actions which take part under the umbrella of DYW in the region.

The influence of the parents was also mentioned by two of the young adults. However, their influence seemed to have more to do with supporting and smoothing their decisions (get an internship placement or advice on how to prepare an interview) rather than in making the actual choices. It is also worth pointing out at this stage that young adults interviewed in ACAR did not talk about other life spheres beyond the education and work ones. Probably, they do not consider that other spheres of their personal life have interfered in their career plans.

Finally, the singularities of the area mean the careers youths have in mind are more related to engineering and technical fields than is usual in other Scottish areas. Even the only female young adult interviewed chose a mechanical engineering career. Therefore, it is quite obvious that in this case the context play an important role in the selection of the field.

4. Cross-case issues for the comparative analysis

Once we have presented the story of DYW for the two regions it is time to compare the two cases and point at similarities and differences with regards to the development and implementation of DYW in GCR and ACAR and the corresponding influence on young people's lives.

There are two main similarities worthy of mentioning: first, the main intention of DYW so far has been to link secondary schools in the region with regional employers. In both cases the DYW regional teams have prioritised this action and have worked towards making sure that all schools have connections with the world of work. In both regions this has served as a way to systematise and strengthen already existing connections between schools and employers while also initiating new ones. Similarly, the same has happened in the different actions already in place to support young people in their educational and career pathways. Support services such as education and career guidance from different institutions have been systematised and are being coordinated under the DYW regional umbrella. This has facilitated the detection of duplications and has linked different services to work more efficiently and better support young people once they enter into the DYW regional network.

Secondly, in both regions there is a rational approach to educational and labour market transitions. Even if in the case of GCR it is acknowledged that some disadvantaged young adults might have more difficulties in building their learning journeys, it is assumed that their main education and career routes are not affected by other life domains. Focusing on the 16-19 age band strengthens even more this assumption, leaving aside the rest of the targeted group by DYW policy (20-24). Practitioners in GCR who have direct contact with young adults witness a less standard approach to learning journeys.

Although the policy analysed is the same in both regions, there are an important number of differences. First of all, policy managers and practitioners have to deal with quite different realities. While in GCR the involvement is mainly with disadvantaged youth coming from socioeconomically vulnerable families and deprived areas with a multiple number of barriers, in ACAR the youth interviewed come from working class or immigrant backgrounds, but they do not show a number of social and health barriers that impede their educational and labour market transitions. Youth in GCR mentioned a number of personal situations (e.g. health problems, pregnancy, childbearing, elder care, financial constrains) that removed them from the standard and smooth educational and labour market transitions considered in DYW policy. This was not the case in ACAR, where the youth interviewed could easily fit into the definitions considered in the national document. They were probably standard examples of what national policymakers and the Wood Commission members had in mind when writing their recommendations to strengthen the vocational path in Scotland.

This is also obvious in the language and priorities expressed by regional managers and practitioners: while in GCR they are very much focused on equality issues and in working on the barriers that prevent these young adults from getting back into education or into the labour market, in ACAR the discourses of managers and practitioners focus on identifying the key influencers of young adults and how to further support them to make their own educational and career decisions. While in GCR the key influencers mentioned by youth are all family members or close friends, in ACAR they have mainly mentioned career advisors or activities related to DYW (e.g. job fair).

Another of the differences worth mentioning is the relationship between the regional DYW team and schools with employers in the region. While in GCR the DYW team is very proactive in looking for employers, regional employers seem to have a more passive role. Conversely, in the case of ACAR a more active role has been noticed from the employer's side in engaging with schools and other educational institutions. The different economic sectors, the amount of vacancies, the size of the firms and the scarcity of young people with vocational education and training probably form part of the equation to explain these differences.

In sum, the DYW national policy seems to fit to a better extent in ACAR. As argued throughout the report, DYW actions and ambitions might work to strengthen vocational education and training in Scotland among young people who are not highly disadvantaged in socioeconomic terms and that do not have difficulties in other life domains beyond education and training. Therefore, more efforts and resources should be directed to rethink the policy for the most disadvantaged young adults, who might need early intervention before they reach the last year of compulsory secondary education.

5. References

Altrichter, H. (2010). Theory and evidence on governance: Conceptual and empirical strategies of research on governance in education. *European Educational Research Journal*, *9*(2), 147–158.

Ball, S., & Junemann, C. (2012). *Networks, New Governance and Education*. Bristol: The Policy Press.

Cairney, P., Russell, S., & Denny, E. S. (2015). The "Scottish approach"to policy and policymaking: what issues are territorial and what are universal? *Policy & Politics*, 1–18.

Cook, A. (2006). *From popular enlightenment to lifelong learning. A history of adult education in Scotland 1707-2005*. National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE).

Elder, G. H. (1998). The Life Course as Developmental Theory. *Child Development*, *69*(1), 1–12.

Field, J. (2009). Lifelong learning in Scotland: cohesion , equity and participation. *Lifelong Learning*, *41*, 4–19.

Grek, S. (2011). Interviewing the education policy elite in Scotland: A changing picture? *European Educational Research Journal*, *10*(2), 233–241. http://doi.org/10.2304/eerj.2011.10.2.233

Heinz, W. R. (2009). Youth transitions in an age of uncertainty. In *Handbook of youth and young adulthood. New perspectives and agendas* (pp. 3–13). London: Routledge.

Jessop, B. (2010). Critical political economy and critical policy studies. *Critical Policy Studies*, *3*(3–4), 336–356. http://doi.org/10.1080/19460171003619741

Mark, R. (2013). From Adult Learning to Lifelong Learning in Scotland. In D. G. & A. K. T.G.K Bryce, W. M. Humes (Ed.), *Scottish Education. Fourth Edition: Referendum* (pp. 775–783). Edinburgh University Press.

Payne, J. (2009). Divergent skills policy trajectories in England and Scotland after Leitch. *Policy Studies*, *30*(5), 473–494.

Skills Development Scotland. (2014). *Regional Skills Assessment Glasgow Region*.

Sum, N.-L., & Jessop, B. (2013). *Towards a cultural political economy: Putting culture in its place in political economy*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

The Scottish Government. (2007). *Skills for Scotland. A Lifelong Skills Strategy*. Edinburgh, September 2007.

The Scottish Government. (2010a). *16+ Learning Choices. Policy and Practice Framework. Supporting all young people into positive and sustained destinations*. Edinburgh, April 2010.

The Scottish Government. (2010b). *Skills for Scotland: Accelerating the recovery and increasing sustainable economic growth*. Edinburgh, October 2010.

The Scottish Government. (2011). *Putting Learners at the Centre: Delivering our Ambitions for Post-16 Education*. Edinburgh, September 2011.

The Scottish Government. (2012a). *Action for Jobs - Supporting Young Scots into Work. Scotland' s Youth Employment Strategy*. Edinburgh, June 2012.

The Scottish Government. (2012b). *Opportunities for all: Supporting all young people to participate in post-16 learning, training or work*. Edinburgh, November 2012.

The Scottish Government. (2014a). *Developing the Young Workforce. Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy*. Edinburgh, September 2014.

The Scottish Government. (2014b). *Education Working For All! Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce Final Report*. Retrieved from http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00451746.pdf

The Scottish Government. (2014c). *Our ambitions for improving the life chances of young people in Scotland*. Edinburgh, April 2014.

UK Statistics Authority. (2015). Office for National Statistics. Retrieved October 10, 2017, from https://www.ons.gov.uk/