

Precarization as Deprivation

Good Work and Precarious Work in Europe

„Thou shalt not muzzle
he treadeth out the

„For he that hath, to him shall be given:
and he that hath not, from him shall be taken away
even that which he hath. “ (Mk 4,25)

„The laborer is worthy of his hire“ (Lk 10,7)

Precarization as Deprivation

Good Work and Precarious Work in Europe

I. Precarization of Work - a European Perspective

II. Good Work and Bad Work

II.1 Concepts of Good Work

II.2 The Concept of Precarization

III. Precarization as Key Issue in Modern Labour Society

III.1 Precarization: Deprivation of Rights

III.2 Precarization: Rupturing Social Cohesion

III.3 Precarization: Economic Risk

III.4 Precarization: A Threat to Social Justice

Precarization as Deprivation

Good Work and Precarious Work in Europe

I. Precarization of Work - A European Perspective

1. There is a phenomenon called precarization in Europe.
2. It has been intensified by the financial crisis in Europe but may also be seen as part of the problems leading to the crisis.

II. Good Work and Bad Work

3. Most ideas of 'good work' imply a formal and material freedom of choice, the latter implying in turn a basic social security.
4. 'Precarization' may be seen as the paradigm for 'bad work' in the developed industrial economies of the 21st century, even though it is closely intertwined with the situation in life.
5. It can roughly be characterized by a deprivation of those rights stemming from the participation in work, resulting in the return of a social insecurity which was thought to have been overcome in the second half of the 20th century.

III. Precarization as Key Issue of Social Ethics in Modern Labour Societies

6. In a Christian perspective, a deprivation of rights - especially hitting the least well off - is manifestly unjust.
7. Precarization, however, is also problematic for social, economic and political reasons.
8. For that reason, it needs to be tackled not only on a national, but also on the European level. The measures implied by the Europe 2020 strategy may not be nearly sufficient.

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I. Precarization of Work: A European Perspective

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I. Precarization of Work: A European Perspective

The Lisbon-strategy (2000, 2005):

‘a strategic goal for the next decade: to become the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world capable of

sustainable economic growth

with **more** and **better** jobs

and greater social cohesion,

and respect for the environment’.

(Europe 2020: smart sustainable, inclusive growth: 75% of 20-64 employed)

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Good Work and Precarious Work in Europe

I. Precarization of Work - a European Perspective

„with **more** jobs“?

	total EU 27 15-64	men EU 27	women EU 27	55-64 EU 27	part time total EU 27	part time men EU 27	part time women EU 27	limited term total EU 27	in-work poverty EU 27
2000	62,2%	70,8%	53,7%	36,9%	16,2%	6,5	28,9	12,3%	
2005	63,5%	70,8%	56,3%	42,3%	17,8%	7,4	30,9	14,0%	8,2%
(2008)	65,9%								
Lisbon 2010	70%		60%	50%					
2010	64,2%	70,1%	58,2%	46,3%	19,2%	8,7	31,9	14,0%	8,4%(2000)

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I. Precarization of Work - a European Perspective

Reactions to the European crisis according to labour market regime (Vaughan-Whitehead):

- external numerical flexibility (reduction of number of employed by firing (f.i.: England, Ireland, NMS))
- internal and external functional flexibility (transfer of employees in functionally equivalent positions within the company or outside, implies high qualification)(f.i.: Denmark, Sweden)
- internal flexibility (z.B. reduction of working hours (Kurzarbeit))(f.i. Germany, Austria, France)

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I. Precarization of Work - a European Perspective

Consequences of the crisis:

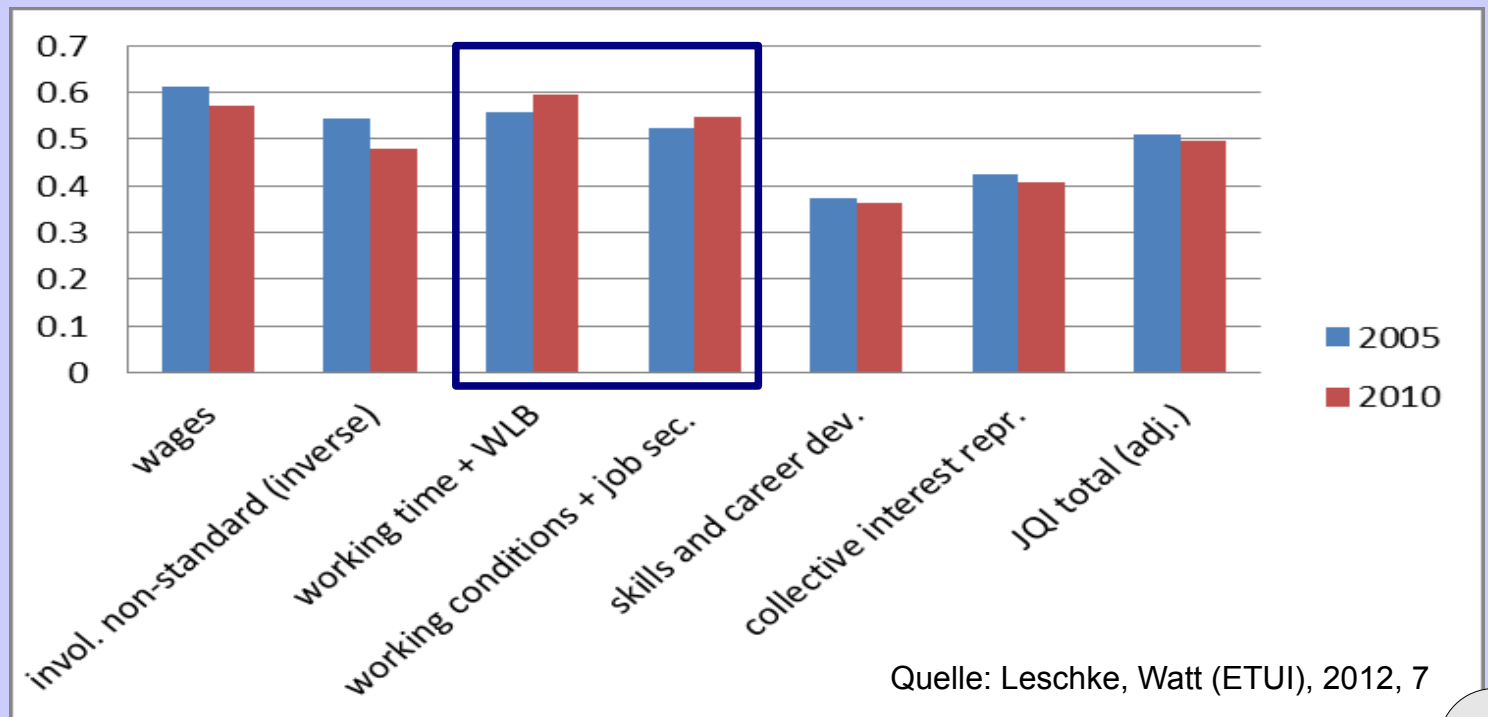
- time-shifted loss in human capital
- dual strategies even in states sporting a successful management of the crisis
- deteriorated bargaining position of perimeter-workforce
- low impact of subsidiary actions concerning most affected groups
- quality paradox: 'improvement' in work quality through compositional effects
- gender paradox: 'increased equality' without structural improvement
- policy paradox: crisis-induced public spending cuts in education and training

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I. Precarization of Work - a European Perspective

„with **better** jobs“?



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I. Precarization of Work - a European Perspective

Inequality of work and distribution as a cause of the crisis (among others)
(ILO/Stiglitz/Fitoussi)

- increasingly unequal distribution causes
 - a) a decrease in consumer spending (as low-income households consume more than high-income ones)
 - b) high savings rates resulting in free capital in high-income households which pours into the debt-financed US-economy and on the finance markets where it contributes to financial bubbles and increases the debts of weaker European economies
 - c) a fixation of trade imbalances via the impossibility of currency devaluation due to the Euro, resulting in increasing European economical inequality

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I. Precarization of Work - a European Perspective

„Not only did work inequalities contribute to generating the economic crisis, but these inequalities have only got worse as a result of it.“

Daniel Vaughan-Whitehead, *Work Inequalities in the Crisis, Evidence from Europe*, 2011, 36

Precarization as Deprivation

Good Work and Precarious Work in Europe

II. Good Work and Bad Work

3. Most ideas of 'good work' imply a formal and material freedom of choice, the latter implying in turn a basic social security.

4. 'Precarization' may be seen as the paradigm for 'bad work' in the developed industrial economies of the 21st century, even though it is closely intertwined with the situation in life.

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II. Good Work and Bad Work

II.1.1 A Good Active Life in a Protestant Perspective: External Calling (Beruf)

- motivated by the 'internal calling' of Christ
- directed at neighbour's service in loving and freedom
 - free: can't and mustn't be enforced
 - service: implies competence (economic, cultural, social capital)
 - neighbour: directed at other people's well-being
 - loving: mustn't result in any neighbour's harm
- potentially including everybody: nobody is uncalled for
- includes and transcends the area of gainful employment

- affinity towards the protective measures of secular 'good work'-concepts (primarily regarding 'freedom' and 'capital')

Precarization as Deprivation

Good Work and Precarious Work in Europe

II. Good Work and Bad Work

II.1.2 ILO: Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work

- freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining
 - the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour
 - the effective abolition of child labour
 - the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation
-
- scope: gainful employment
 - formal and material freedom through rights:
 - formal: elimination of forced labour and discrimination
 - material: social security and capital via the right to collective bargaining

Precarization as Deprivation

Good Work and Precarious Work in Europe

II. Good Work and Bad Work

II.1.3 Indicator systems

- Job Quality Index (European Trade Union Institute, ETUI)
- Decent Work Index (ILO)
- Index Gute Arbeit (DGB)

- regularly focus on commodified labour
- usually contain information on:
 - income and job security
 - labour market participation or exclusion, respectively
 - workload, requirements, stress
 - resources

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II. Good Work and Bad Work

II.1.4 Indicator Systems of 'Good Work': Problems

- pitting job quality against job quantity is possible
- implicit norm: the classical 'regular employment' (Mückenberger 1985: full time, indefinite duration, social security benefits, living wage, participation)
- focused on commodified labour

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II. Good Work and Bad Work

II.2 'Precarization' as Label for Bad Work

- return of social insecurity in employment relationships
- usually connected to 'atypical employment' and/or 'working poor'
- gender bias: women most concerned
- difficulty: interrelation with situation in life

Precarization as Deprivation

Good Work and Precarious Work in Europe

II. Good Work and Bad Work

II.2 'Precarization' as Label for Bad Work zones of vulnerability (Castel/Dörre):

Integration zone

1. secured integration ('the secure')
2. atypical integration ('the unconventional' or 'freelancers')
3. insecure integration ('the insecure')
4. endangered integration ('threatened by social relegation/ decline')

Precarity zone

5. precarious employment as opportunity/ temporary integration ('the hopeful')
6. precarious employment as permanent ('the realists')
7. disarmed precarity ('the content')

Disaffiliation zone

8. reversible exclusion ('the change agents')
9. controlled exclusion/ staged integration ('the excluded')

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II. Good Work and Bad Work

II.2 'Precarization' as Label for Bad Work

cultural background: the 'labour promise'

those engaging in (employed) labour are morally entitled to

- recognition
- material well-being
- political participation
- pursuit of a good life

Precarization as Deprivation

Good Work and Precarious Work in Europe

II. Good Work and Bad Work

II.2 'Precarization' as Label for Bad Work

- Precarization does not necessarily mean exclusion or poverty, but:

financial
social
psychic

insecurity by factual **deprivation of rights**

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III. Precarization as Key Issue of Social Ethics in Modern Labour Society

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III. Precarization as Key Issue of Social Ethics in Modern Labour Society

III.1 Theological Perspective: Precarization as Deprivation of Rights

Basic biblical intuition: God on the side of the poor and oppressed

Ex 20,2: I am the LORD thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

Dtn 24,14: Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy sojourners that are in thy land within thy gates.

Amos 5,24: Let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.

Matt 5,6: Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Matt 18,11: For the Son of man came to save that which was lost.

Matt 25,40: Jesus: As ye do unto the least of my brethren, ye do unto me.

Precarization as Deprivation

Good Work and Precarious Work in Europe

III. Precarization as Key Issue of Social Ethics in Modern Labour Society

III.1 Theological Perspective: Precarization as Deprivation of Rights

The political duty of Christians:

Prayer and „the struggle for a body of law which prevents its equality towards all from becoming a shroud for a factual unequal preservation and limitation of strong and weak, entrepreneurs and workers, rich and poor, employers and employed.“ (Karl Barth 1946)

Precarization as Deprivation

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III. Precarization as Key Issue of Social Ethics in Modern Labour Society

III.1 Theological Perspective: Precarization as Deprivation of Rights

Precarization primarily threatens the rights of those members of society who command only little economic, cultural and social capital. As the Jewish-Christian idea of justice is directed towards the interests of the weakest members of a given society, precarization is, in that perspective, unjust.

Precarization as Deprivation

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III. Precarization as Key Issue of Social Ethics in Modern Labour Society

III.1 Theological Perspective: Precarization as Deprivation of Rights

In a theological-ethical perspective, the danger connected to precarization lies in its tendency towards a deprivation of rights.

This danger is heightened by crisis, threatens rights concerning formal employment and concerns social security and job-floor participation ('voice').

However, informal labour also remains to be monitored.

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III.2 Sociological Perspective: Precarization as Threat to Social Cohesion

Flexibilization, mobilization and insecurity threaten stability and reliability of human relations

problematic consequences:

- individually: fragmentarized life planning
taylorized family life (Hochschild)
- socially: erosion of civil society (Sennett)
- politically: danger of populism (Heitmeyer)
national chauvinism, desintegration of fragile
European community (Habermas)

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III.3 Economic Perspective: Precarization as National and Business Risk

1. business enterprises act in the markets, but aren't structured as markets, but as organizations; they functionally disenable market laws to minimize transaction costs (Coase)
2. commitment, trust and loyalty are basic and focal, but scarcely 'contractable' resources in the relationship between principal und agent
3. the division in core and marginal or periphery workforce threatens those resources
4. precarization in the long run undermines job dedication/ commitment
5. precarization threatens European economic relations

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III.4 Political Perspective: Precarization as a Threat to Democracy

1. Precarization undermines the 'labour promise' (those who work are entitled to recognition, prosperity shares, participation, and the pursuit of a good life) and thus the moral resources of democratic labour society.
2. As precarization endangers equality of participational capabilities and thus the citizens' political equality, it is also unjust regarding a democratic society.
3. This is also true regarding the European Union.

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III.4 Precarization: Possible Courses of Action

1. European scale: social protection on a European scale: minimum wages (60% of \emptyset), securing flexibility ('flexicurity', minimum pensions, basic income schemes, investment in social infrastructure through personal service jobs
>(problematical) implication: politically extended European Union
2. National scale: nationally contextualized measures according to European floor
3. medium level:
 - companies : socially sustainable personal relations
 - trade unions: solidarity and counter-power - including atypical employment
 - churches: prayer and struggle for justice
keeping in touch with working life
accept entrepreneurial responsibility
4. individual level: qualification, solidarity, Christians: prayer and struggle for justice

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„The eyes of all wait for thee;
And thou givest them their food in due season.“

(Psalm 145,15)

= The promise of a fullness of life
for everyone holds true – for that reason
we may act faithfully and
accordingly.