

BEGUTACHTETE ARTIKEL**Segmented Labor Markets –
Segmented Solidarities?
The Effect of Labor Market Insecurity
on Social Cohesion****Georg Kanitsar*****1. Introduction**

In recent decades, the flexibilization of labor markets has intensified economic risks for workers in European societies.¹ In particular, the increase in precarious, contingent, and atypical labor and the unequal exposure to these employment forms across occupational groups proves to be a main challenge to the stability of welfare states.² However, employment insecurity has not only challenged the traditional institutions of the welfare state, it also poses substantial social risks. Workers exposed to labor market insecurity exhibit lower levels of life satisfaction, mental health, and physical health, show less engagement and productivity in the work place, and possess a distinctive set of political preferences.³ Although the personal, psychological, and economic implications of labor market vulnerability are well-documented, little is currently known about the ramifications for social cohesion.

This article sheds light on the impact of labor market insecurity on two main indicators of social cohesion: trust and solidarity. It builds upon recent work, which has identified a negative relationship between employment risks and generalized trust,⁴ and assesses the robustness of this finding with regard to three aspects. First, it tests whether the negative relationship extends to measurements of solidary concerns for the well-being of fellow members. Second, it probes whether the effect differs be-

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tween measures of global and local cohesion. Third, it examines in how far the effect is contingent on the decommodifying potential of the welfare state.

Conducting a multilevel analysis, the study utilizes data from the European Value Study (wave 2008) and the Labor Force Survey. The European Value Study provides items on generalized trust as well as items targeting the concern for the living conditions of others on a global scale, addressing large and encompassing collectives, as well as on a local scale, pertaining to the immediate surroundings of the respondent. Labor market vulnerability is captured by a worker's structural risk to become unemployed or atypically employed.⁵ The combined dataset includes 29 European countries and, thereby, permits a comprehensive exploration into the context dependency of labor market insecurity.

The study draws attention to the societal consequences of economic developments. The analysis demonstrates a negative impact of labor market vulnerability on generalized trust as well as attitudes of solidarity on a global scale. However, we add a qualification to the list of negative side effects accompanying the flexibilization of labor markets: attitudes of local solidarity. Thus, local forms of cohesion are to a lesser degree affected by labor market flexibilization than global forms of cohesion. The article further emphasizes the role of the traditional counterpart to economic liberalization, the welfare state, in soothing the societal tensions arising from labor market flexibilization. Across welfare arrangements, the results reveal considerable heterogeneity in the implications of labor market vulnerability. In line with previous findings, Nordic countries exhibit the highest levels of trust and perform best in bolstering the negative consequences of employment vulnerability. In contrast, in other welfare regimes labor market vulnerability predominantly has a negative effect on generalized trust and global solidarity. Against the backdrop of this finding, a more profound examination into the impact of economic liberalization on the social fabric of modern societies seems paramount.

2. Labor Markets, Solidarity, and Welfare States

2.1 The Dualization of Labor Markets

We live in the proclaimed "age of dualization".⁶ Since the 1970s, economically advanced countries have seen an unprecedented increase in the share of precarious and insecure labor.⁷ This development is propelled by both economic as well as societal transformations. In the course of the continued technological progress, employment in advanced economies has shifted from the industrial production sector to the service sector, as well as from mass production to knowledge intensive work.⁸ Simulta-

neously, the rise of tertiary education and the “feminization of the work force”,⁹ had a lasting impact on the composition of the labor force.¹⁰ Together these developments have shaped a labor force, in which risks of unemployment and atypical employment are now tremendously unequal between different sets of workers.¹¹

On the one hand, a substantial share of the labor force holds atypical contracts which are characterized by uncertain and unprotected employment conditions. In order to maintain economic flexibility and to react to volatile demand, hiring in these segments is contingent, temporary, and part-time.¹² These labor market “outsiders” are typically found in sectors and industries, where the threat of job replacement through outsourcing, global competition, and technological innovation is highly salient. Atypical workers are underrepresented in labor unions and are rarely targeted by a political agenda. Compared to insiders, they face a wage penalty, increased exposure to unemployment, and consequently lower welfare coverage.¹³ On the other hand, for many workers the standard employment relation thriving after the Second World War is still the rule. These workers occupy protected, permanent, and full-time positions. They are strongly represented in unions, still constitute a “politically important mass” and their regulated employment relations are well shielded from budgetary cuts and economic shocks.

However, labor market outsiders do not form a cohesive class. The outsider concept is highly heterogeneous and shaped strongly by individual and contextual factors.¹⁴ Being a labor market outsider does not necessarily overlap with a low socio-economic status as also high-skilled workers increasingly face atypical employment.¹⁵ At a contextual level, we observe that although sets of outsiders are similar, they are far from identical across countries.¹⁶ Some welfare regimes mitigate and counteract the impact of dualization, while other political institutions may exacerbate and accelerate dualization and flexibilization.¹⁷ Even within countries, employment protection may be tailored only to specific core sectors and industries.¹⁸ Despite the heterogeneity of the concept, the dual flexibilization of labor markets has decisively changed the nature of work and has posed complex challenges to the stability of many European welfare states.¹⁹

2.2 The Societal Consequences of Flexible Labor Markets

Already Durkheim (2012 [1893]) has considered the division of labor as decisive to sustaining social order. As the expansion of labor markets and the associated differentiation of labor renders individuals mutually interdependent, modern societies develop what Durkheim called Organic Solidarity. Accordingly, individuals recognize that they are entangled in a com-

mon cause and hence establish a concern for the well-being of others.²⁰ In the contemporary discourse, social order is typically examined under the umbrella term of social cohesion. Being a phenomenon on the societal level, social cohesion may be understood as the integrative bonds that develop between persons as well as between persons and the social unit to which they belong. Social cohesion encompasses notions of trust, solidarity, affective regard, unity, and commitment.²¹

Being considered an important element of social capital at the scope of neighborhoods as well as for the integration in society,²² measures on trust have so far dominated the empirical arm of research on social cohesion, in particular in connection with the welfare state.²³ Indeed, pioneering research has also examined the erosion of trust in the context of labor market insecurity,²⁴ however, has left it open in how far the accumulated findings also extend to other indications of social cohesion.

Next to trust, solidarity is an important lubricant of social cohesion. Although solidarity itself is an eclectic concept, the recent attention it has gained in academic discourse have contributed to disentangle its various meanings.²⁵ Thus, a consensual view holds that solidarity may be conceived as a subjective feeling²⁶ as well as an act.²⁷ Although the two are obviously interconnected, attitudes and acts of solidarity do not need to coincide.²⁸ In its version as an attitude, solidarity is regularly conceptualized as the concern that the members of a collective have for the well-being of each other.²⁹

While trust and solidarity are obviously both linked to social cohesion, they are not identical. People put trust in each other, if they judge the other person as trustworthy, however, that does not imply that they actually care for the other person. Reversely, individuals may be very much concerned about the well-being of another person, even if they are unwilling to trust that person. Ideal-typically, trust ensures cooperation among strangers,³⁰ whereas mutual concerns precede the incorporation of others into redistributive practices. Nevertheless, the lack of integration in a stable labor market is expected to threaten both solidary concerns and generalized trust.³¹

Recent empirical studies have illuminated the underlying mechanisms behind Durkheim's considerations and have identified three main channels for the link between labor market vulnerability and social cohesion. The first focuses on the importance of economic resources for inclusion in society, the second refers to the cultivation of social interactions in the workplace, and the third points to the underlying psychological preconditions for nurturing solidarity and trust. While these mechanisms primarily apply to unemployment, also new labor market risks arising from atypical and precarious employment have adverse effects on the sense of solidarity given that flexibilization is at its core an "individualizing force".³²

The most salient consequence of unemployment is economic. The economic resources from employment are necessary to maintain a minimum standard of living and fulfill basic economic needs. Spells of unemployment and irregular employment records do not only go in hand with decreased accumulated income, but also lower expected future income.³³ A loss of purchasing power hinders individuals to engage in many social activities³⁴ and constrains participation in social life. Reduced economic resources thus directly impede the conditions to establish trust and experience mutual solidarity.³⁵

Another important outcome of labor market vulnerability relates to social embeddedness at the workplace. Thus, regular employment embeds workers in a social network and stimulates interaction with social contacts.³⁶ Unemployment deprives individuals of the possibility to interact with a diverse set of citizens and exacerbates the formation of a common identity.³⁷ Also, short-term labor and high turnover leaves no opportunity to invest in lasting commitment and consequently impedes the identification with a wider collectivity.³⁸ Simultaneously beyond the working place, unemployment and precarious work was found to result in a weakening of social networks. Partly due to insufficient economic resources, the participation in voluntary associations, the number of social connections, and the inclusion in community living tend to decline.³⁹

Finally, unemployment is also associated with various psychological consequences, which hinder the evolution of trust and solidarity. Regular employment prevents exclusion from the labor market and hence also emotional and symbolic exclusion. The stress and the uncertainty associated with a risk of job loss and with exposure to precarious labor influence health, physical well-being and life-satisfaction.⁴⁰ According to the latent deprivation theory,⁴¹ employment provides workers with time structure, status and identity, regular activity and more certainty to plan for the future.⁴² Recent findings suggest that even anticipated job loss results in lower engagement and productivity, being an important indication of emotional withdrawal.⁴³

Together, these mechanisms suggest that labor market risks from unemployment and atypical employment are accompanied by lower levels of social cohesion.

Hypothesis 1: A higher labor market vulnerability is associated with less generalized trust and lower levels of solidarity.

Another shortcoming of the existing literature is that measures of social cohesion typically apply exclusively to the scope of a society. For example, the standard item employed in the measurement of trust addresses the "generalized other", which usually induces respondents to think about the average member of society. However, society is merely one reference group to which trust and solidarity norms may apply. Most importantly, so-

cietal cohesion contrasts with cohesion on a local, communal scope. In a similar vein, the counterpart to Organic Solidarity in Durkheim's theory, Mechanical Solidarity, relates to cohesion among small collectives, established as communities of similarity. Notwithstanding the tribal connotation of Mechanical Solidarity for premodern societies,⁴⁴ modernity does not cease to offer local reference groups for solidarity and trust.⁴⁵ Whereas the simultaneity of a global and encompassing form of cohesion and a local and restricted form of cohesion has evolved as a prominent tool of theorizing in sociological research, empirical research on societal consequences of labor market insecurity has either conflated the two scopes of cohesion or has been reduced to only one of them.⁴⁶

However, the implications of economic risks may indeed differ between local and global forms of cohesion. Interaction with broader social circles requires comparatively less economic resources than in local circles. Indeed, local communities are occasionally regarded as "safety nets" to welfare state failures of institutional reciprocity and (informal) familial and communal insurance systems regularly safeguard against economic hardships. Hence, local solidarity offers an alternative means to receive economic resources and combat social exclusion.⁴⁷ With regard to social interaction, job loss is rather linked to a retreat from wider society, whereas close networks offer more opportunities for social contacts even when being unemployed. In addition, substitutional satisfiers of psychosocial and mental needs, which help to maintain a time structure, tend to be focused on local areas.

Hypothesis 2: The negative effect of labor market vulnerability is higher for global than for local indications of social cohesion.

2.3 The Second Double Movement

Polanyi (1995 [1944]) has described the economic history of the twentieth century as a "double movement". On the one hand, the forces of economic liberalism are directed towards establishing free markets and creating flexibility to facilitate the trade of various goods. On the other hand, society strives towards social protection in order to curb the forces of the "satanic mill" and counterbalance its inherently destructive potential. The welfare arrangements of modern societies originate from this counter-movement. Thus, European welfare states have been designed as manifestation of institutional solidarity "to deal with the risks encountered in the typical life-course of a worker in an industrial economy".⁴⁸ Contemporarily, observers of socioeconomic change diagnose a "second double movement",⁴⁹ according to which the latest flexibilization on markets for the fictitious commodity of labor requires new forms of security to counteract the tensions of free markets. However, as the life-course of a worker ceases to

be “typical”, workers as well as welfare states are faced with new social risks.⁵⁰

Due to its decommodifying potential, welfare states also (re)produce the principle of social solidarity and preserve generalized trust. Although Western welfare states are heterogeneous with regard to their underlying normative principles,⁵¹ social cohesion is considered as indispensable to their organization.⁵² By providing social security, the welfare state insures citizens against the hardships of potential calamities (two-sided solidarity) and through unconditional welfare transfers towards the needy guarantees a minimum of social equality (one-sided solidarity). Even if the current welfare regimes appear institutionalized, and even if, from the citizen’s point of view, participation in its redistributive practices is considered to be inescapable, the inclusion of such a diverse set of individuals under a universal redistributive scheme attests a minimal level of mutual trust and reciprocal concern.⁵³

Welfare states mitigate the socioeconomic and psychological implications of labor market uncertainty and, if they are generous in their configuration, offer an economic compensation for economic losses from unemployment and irregular employment. They provide lasting security enabling citizens to maintain their embeddedness into their social network and, given they are not stigmatizing towards recipient, offset the psychological ramifications of unemployment spells.

Hypothesis 3: The negative impact of labor market vulnerability on generalized trust and solidarity is mitigated by decommodifying welfare states.

3. Methods and Data

The analysis of the hypotheses is based on the 2008 waves of the European Value Study (EVS) and the Labor Force Survey. Although the European Social Survey (ESS) evolves as the most popular choice among scholars interested in cross-country comparisons, only the EVS offers a fine-grained elicitation of concerns for collectives on different scopes. In addition, the EVS contains the exact three items, which are typically employed to measure trust in the ESS and which therefore build the empirical basis of reference studies.⁵⁴ Due to the availability of data for the labor market vulnerability indicator, the analysis encompasses 29 European countries, covering in total 42.352 respondents. As not all respondents replied to every item, the regressions vary slightly in the number of cases employed. The combination of the EVS and the LFS offers the possibility to a) assess the robustness of the accumulated findings with a new dataset containing a wider range of countries and b) examine whether the trends for generalized trust also hold for local and global solidarity.

3.1 Dependent Variables

The European Value Study provides data on the reported concern with various reference groups. The respective items read: "To what extent do you feel concerned about the living conditions of ..." your immediate family (Q83A), people in your neighborhood (Q83B), the people of the region you live in (Q83C), your fellow countrymen (Q83D), Europeans (Q83E), and all humans all over the world (Q83F). The items range from 1 (very much) to 5 (not at all). I group the latter three items to Global Solidarity using principle component analysis. Furthermore, I take the first two items and combine them, again using principle component analysis, to the outcome variable Local Solidarity.⁵⁵

In order to reconstruct the trust variable, items on trustworthiness ("Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?"; binary, Q7), fairness ("[...] do you think that most people would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance, or would they try to be fair?"; 1 to 10, Q8), and helpfulness ("Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful or that they are mostly looking out for themselves?"; 1 to 10; Q9) are combined.

All three outcome variables (Trust, Global Solidarity, and Local Solidarity) are standardized to the interval 0-1 with high values corresponding to a high concern with the respective reference group or high levels of trust.

3.2 Independent Variables

For the main explanatory variable, I adopt a structural measure of labor market vulnerability as proposed by Schwander and Häusermann (2013). The main idea of structural measures is that labor market vulnerability is not adequately assessed by singular items enquiring the current employment status. Rather, labor market risks are associated with biographies of regular job loss and difficulties to find stable employment. Thus, while unemployment refers to a temporal condition, labor market vulnerability captures the permanent labor market situation of an individual. In order to construct the labor market vulnerability variable, I use the rate of atypical employment and unemployment in a subject's age and gender specific occupational group. To that purpose, the measure reconstructs the post-industrial class scheme proposed by Oesch (2006). Accordingly, I distinguished between five occupational groups: capital accumulators, socio-cultural professionals, mixed service functionaries, low service functionaries and blue-collar workers and calculate age-group (cut-off point at 40 years) and gender specific unemployment and atypical employment rates for each country using the LFS dataset. Atypical employment thereby encompasses "involuntary part-time employment, fixed-term employment and helping family members".⁵⁶ The ensuing rate of labor market vulnera-

bility follows from the difference to the country average of unemployment or atypical employment, respectively.⁵⁷ Accordingly, labor market vulnerability emerges as a continuous concept.

The analysis further incorporates various control variables, which are considered to be correlated to trust and mutual solidarity.⁵⁸ Those encompass an ordinal measurement of education (low, middle, high), age, gender, a variable capturing whether the individual possesses the nationality of the country where she/he resides, a variable measuring the current employment status (unemployed, employed, self-employed, part-time employed, out of employment), an indicator about membership in a trade union, as well as a variable capturing the size of the town that the respondent lives in.

3.3 Estimation Method

The analysis proceeds in two steps. In the first step, to establish the impact of labor market vulnerability on the individual level, I use a linear random-intercept model in which individuals $i \in \{1, \dots, n\}$ are nested in countries $j \in \{1, \dots, m\}$.

$$Y_{ij} = \beta^0 + \beta^1 LMV_{ij} + \sum_{p=2}^P \beta^p X_{ij}^p + u_j^0 + r_{ij}$$

In this model, the outcome variable, Y_{ij} , is explained by a constant, β^0 , an estimate of the overall impact of labor market vulnerability, $\beta^1 LMV_{ij}$, P individual level control variables X_{ij}^p , and the random part of the specification, which consists of an error term at the individual level, r_{ij} , and an error term for the constant at the country level, u_j^0 .

In the second analytical step, I add random slopes to the estimation method in order to account for country-variation in the effect of labor market vulnerability. Importantly, next to letting the impact of labor market vulnerability vary across countries, u_j^1 , this model adds Q country level variables, Z_j^q , and their interaction term with labor market vulnerability. The intuition behind this procedure is to determine in how far certain variables on the country-level can account for the variation in the impact of labor market vulnerability between countries.

$$Y_{ij} = \beta^0 + (\beta^1 + u_j^1) LMV_{ij} + \sum_{q=1}^Q \delta^q Z_j^q + \sum_{q=1}^Q \gamma^q Z_j^q LMV_{ij} + \sum_{p=2}^P \beta^p X_{ij}^p + u_j^0 + r_{ij}$$

4. Results

4.1 Individual Level

This section explores in how far labor market vulnerability is associated with generalized trust, as well as global and local solidarity. Table 1 pro-

vides the results of the model including the individual-level determinants. While Model (1) concentrates on trust as an outcome variable and therefore serves as a replication of previous findings, Model (2), and Model (3) study its relation with Global Solidarity and Local Solidarity.⁵⁹

Table 1: Individual Level Determinants of Social Cohesion

Variables	(1) Trust	(2) Global Solidarity	(3) Local Solidarity
Labor Market Vulnerability	-0.0411** (0.0174)	-0.0309** (0.0150)	0.00153 (0.0113)
<i>Education (Ref: Lower)</i>			
Middle	0.0269*** (0.00475)	0.0203*** (0.00441)	0.00728* (0.00382)
High	0.0786*** (0.00740)	0.0448*** (0.00640)	0.0114 (0.00887)
Age	0.000413** (0.000194)	0.000531*** (0.000115)	0.000553*** (0.000137)
Female	0.0251*** (0.00347)	0.0110*** (0.00364)	0.0182*** (0.00377)
<i>Employment (Ref: Unemployed)</i>			
Employed	0.0463*** (0.0110)	0.0158 (0.00973)	0.0206** (0.00803)
Part-Time Employed	0.0473*** (0.0134)	0.0206* (0.0117)	0.0239** (0.0100)
Self-Employed	0.0415*** (0.0128)	0.00946 (0.0105)	0.0150 (0.00990)
Out of Employment	0.0409*** (0.0123)	0.0253*** (0.00960)	0.0179* (0.00951)
Trade Union Membership	0.0172*** (0.00482)	0.0189*** (0.00374)	0.0137*** (0.00417)
Constant	0.338*** (0.0183)	0.346*** (0.0177)	0.625*** (0.0228)
Observations	33,010	33,894	34,413
Number of groups	29	29	29
Chi2	488.5***	121.3***	201.5***

Linear random intercept model with clustered standard errors in parentheses. Additional Controls: Nationality, Size of Town. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Model (1) demonstrates the robustness of the findings in Kevins (2018). In the full model, labor market vulnerability has a significant negative effect on generalized trust. Additionally, the control variables point in the identical direction as found in the reference study. More precisely, trust increases with education and age, and female respondents were on aver-

age more trusting. Additionally, being member of a trade union also facilitated trust towards generalized strangers. Interestingly, the analysis reveals no difference with regard to the size of the home town and the nationality of the respondent. As compared to the other employment statuses, being unemployed goes in line with lower generalized trust.

Figure 1: Global Solidarity by Labor Market Vulnerability

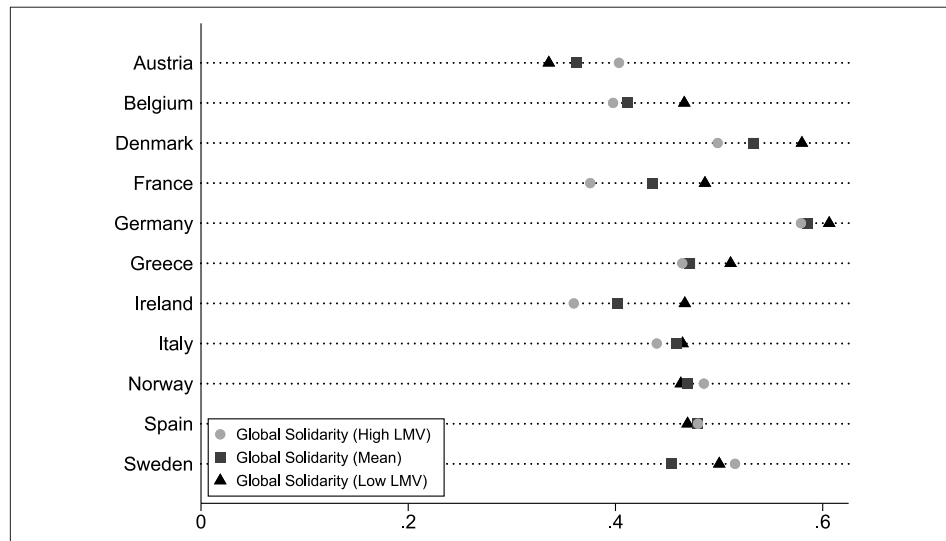


Figure shows the descriptive sample means of Global Solidarity for selected countries. High (low) LMV corresponds to the average of generalized trust for the 10 percent of the country-sample with the highest (lowest) values on Labor Market Vulnerability.

Turning to Global Solidarity we discover a similar pattern. In particular, Figure 1 shows the mean of the Global Solidarity variable for selected countries.⁶⁰ In the majority of countries, the dots representing high labor market vulnerability indicate a lower level of global solidarity than for low labor market vulnerability. Model (2) confirms that exposure to labor market risks significantly decreases the concern for global collectives. Equivalently, for education, gender, age, and membership in a trade union the findings correspond to those displayed for trust. In a similar vein as before, unemployed respondents voiced the lowest concern towards members of society, however, the difference has turned insignificant for almost all comparisons (except with those out of employment).

At last, for Model (3) the pattern is different. Most importantly, there is no effect of labor market vulnerability on local solidarity, suggesting that the impact of insecure employment conditions detected for trust only holds on a global scale, but not on a local scale. Apart from this finding, the regression outcomes resemble those of the other two specifications. Age and

trade union membership is associated with higher local solidarity. The same holds (although only partially) for the comparison of unemployment with other employment conditions.⁶¹

Overall, there is convincing support that exposure to labor market vulnerability impedes the formation of generalized trust and solidarity on a global scale (Hypothesis 1). However, this effect does not extend to local forms of solidarity. Labor market vulnerability reveals no significant relation with the local concern measure. Hence, with regard to Hypothesis 2, the analysis reveals not a weaker, but an in-existent effect for cohesion on a local scale.

4.2 Aggregate Level

In the second step, the analysis incorporates random slopes of the labor market vulnerability variable in order to capture the variance across countries. This step enables an analysis of how the country context mitigates or exacerbates the impact of labor market vulnerability on trust and solidarity. To that purpose, Table 2 includes the standard classification of welfare regimes as an explanatory variable.⁶² The table shows that the ramifications of labor market vulnerability differ considerably across different regimes.

In particular, Model (1) demonstrates that the negative impact of LMV on generalized trust is detected only for countries which already exhibit a relative high level of generalized trust on average. Most notably Nordic countries, but also Liberal and Continental countries, show comparatively higher levels of generalized trust for individuals with an average labor market vulnerability. For these countries, also the implication of labor market vulnerability carry the highest weight. Thus, in Nordic (-0.09 ; $p = 0.003$), Continental (-0.13 ; $p < 0.001$), and most distinctively in Liberal (-0.20 ; $p = 0.006$) countries, a higher labor market vulnerability is associated with substantially lower levels of trust. In turn, Southern countries, as well as those classified as Post-Communist and Former USSR, have initially lower levels of generalized trust, but also do not reveal a considerable negative impact of labor market vulnerability (Southern: -0.002 ; $p = 0.920$; Post-Communist: -0.05 ; $p = 0.107$; Former USSR: -0.03 ; $p = 0.469$). Note however, that since the LMV variable is centered in a one-point interval around zero, Nordic countries, in contrast to Liberal and Continental countries, still exceed the other welfare regimes in terms of generalized trust, even for individuals with a high labor market vulnerability.

Turning to the analysis of global solidarity reveals a slightly modified pattern across welfare regimes. Southern, Nordic and Continental welfare states have on average the highest levels of concern for others. The interaction terms signify that labor market vulnerability is accompanied

Table 2: Aggregate Level Determinants of Social Cohesion

Variables	(1) Trust	(2) Global Solidarity
Labor Market Vulnerability	−0.00230 (0.0230)	−0.0693** (0.0272)
<i>WFS Regime (Ref: Southern)</i>		
Liberal	0.186*** (0.0335)	−0.0761*** (0.0281)
Nordic	0.257*** (0.0419)	−0.0280 (0.0342)
Continental	0.142*** (0.0381)	−0.0362 (0.0437)
Post-Communist	0.00736 (0.0361)	−0.0733** (0.0303)
Former USSR	0.0525 (0.0458)	−0.130** (0.0561)
<i>Interactions</i>		
Liberal * LMV	−0.198*** (0.0742)	0.00699 (0.175)
Nordic * LMV	−0.0887** (0.0346)	0.144** (0.0713)
Continental * LMV	−0.129*** (0.0391)	0.00463 (0.0408)
Post-Communist * LMV	−0.0513 (0.0417)	0.0676 (0.0471)
Former USSR * LMV	−0.0299 (0.0511)	−0.0348 (0.0850)
Observations	33,010	33,894
Number of groups	29	29
Chi2	14930.63***	492.7***

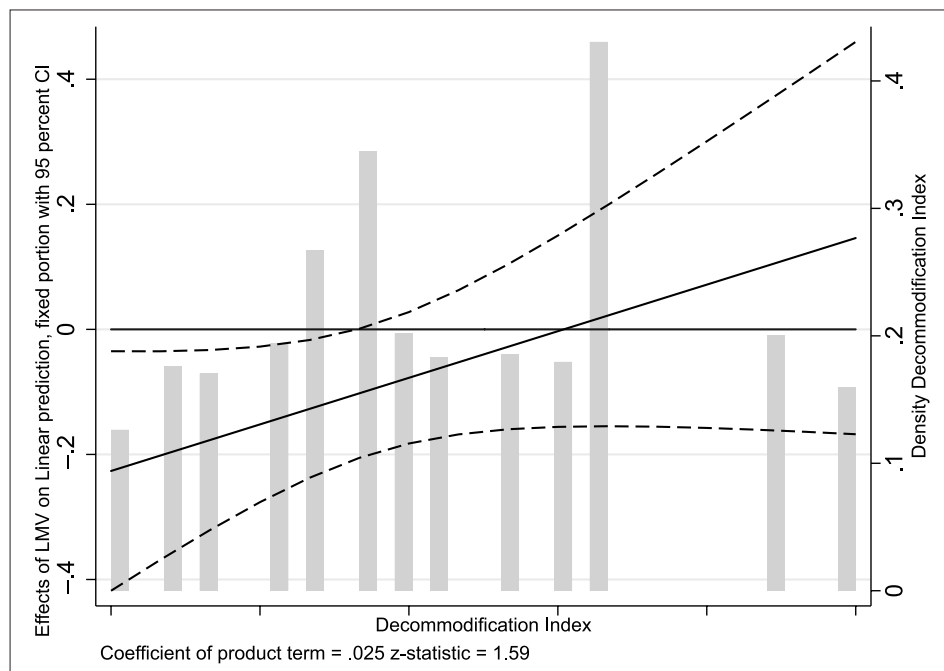
Linear random intercept and random slope (Labor Market Vulnerability) model with country clustered standard errors in parentheses. Additional Controls: Age, Gender, Income, Nationality, Trade Union Membership, Employment Status. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

with lower global concerns in the majority of welfare regimes, albeit staying partially insignificant (Southern: -0.07 ; $p = 0.011$; Continental: -0.06 ; $p = 0.029$; Former USSR: -10.4 ; $p = 0.198$; Liberal: -0.06 ; $p = 0.719$). The impact is annihilated in the Post-Communist (-0.002 ; $p = 0.964$) and the Nordic welfare regime ($+0.07$; $p = 0.251$).

Thus, the logic of the Nordic welfare regime seems to fare best in bolstering the negative implications of labor markets to societal cohesion. Since these countries are associated with the most decommodifying welfare arrangements,⁶³ the analysis further explored the link between the Decom-

modification Index by Scruggs et al. (2017) and the impact of labor market vulnerability. Figure 2 shows the interaction between the Decommodification Index on the horizontal axis and the impact of Labor Market Vulnerability on Global Solidarity on the vertical axis for 16 Western European Countries.⁶⁴ Albeit staying beyond the limits of conventional significance (z-score: 1.59; $p = 0.111$), the graph prompts that more generous welfare arrangements, indeed, perform better in canceling out the negative impacts of labor market vulnerability.

Figure 2: Interaction Effect of Decommodification and Labor Market Vulnerability on Global Solidarity



Explorative analysis based on an additional regression specification in which the Welfare State classifications are replaced with the Decommodification Index.

Although the analysis of cross-level interactions did not provide ultimate evidence with regard to Hypothesis 3, it supports the idea that the effect of labor market vulnerability varies strongly across countries and that welfare arrangements are accountable for part of this variation. Thus, the implications of labor market vulnerability are contingent on the welfare state context in which trust and mutual solidarity is cultivated. Most importantly, the Nordic countries perform best in counteracting the negative effects of labor market risks on global solidarity and still surpass the other countries in terms of generalized trust. This emphasizes the Nordic exceptionalism

and dovetails with the impact of universal social policies on universal forms of cohesion.⁶⁵ For the remaining countries the implications of labor market risks are predominantly negative, albeit they lack consistent statistical significance.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This article has provided a closer look on social cohesion at various layers, has shed light on its relationship with labor market insecurity and has explored the capability of the welfare state to reinstate social cohesion. Corroborating recent insights,⁶⁶ the article reports evidence that employment insecurity undermines generalized trust. Moreover, the analysis suggests that the list of negative implications of labor market insecurity can be extended by a lower degree of solidarity with global collectives. Next to worse health conditions,⁶⁷ a lower life satisfaction,⁶⁸ a wage penalty,⁶⁹ and restricted social insurance coverage, individuals facing a high risk of unemployment and precarious labor conditions have less favorable solidarity attitudes towards their social collective.

However, there is also a qualification to this list of detriments: labor market insecurity is not associated with a lower concern for local collectives. While flexible labor markets threaten the existence of global bonds among citizens, their ramifications appear less severe for local solidarity. This finding hints to the idea that local solidarities may bolster the decline in societal solidarity and therefore serve as an institutional complementarity.⁷⁰ Up to date little theoretical work and empirical evidence exists on the relationship between forms of solidarity across hierarchical levels.⁷¹ If there is discussion on solidarity across various layers, it mostly addresses the relation between national solidarity and European solidarity.⁷² However, also subnational levels of solidarity matter, in particular, in times where “fragmentalization” and “balkanization” are imminent threats to the stability of traditional welfare states.⁷³

Against this backdrop, an important contribution of the research project is to extend the analysis of social cohesion beyond the measure of generalized trust. Although, generalized trust serves as a prominent indication for social capital, the present analysis indicates that the typical formulation in surveys on generalized trust indeed alludes to “most people” and may not extend to trust and cohesion at a smaller scope.⁷⁴

The second subdimension of social cohesion – solidarity – however deserves additional mentioning. In line with previous studies, the article operationalized attitudinal solidarity as the concern for the living conditions of others. This measure seems to touch upon an affective dimension of solidarity.⁷⁵ In its affective connotation, solidarity rests on a shared identity, a

common conception of “we-ness“ and a mutual concern for the well-being of others. Whether this concern actually translates into a preference or towards policy measures behavioral indications favoring this collective is an empirical question that merits further attention.⁷⁶

Next to an affective dimension, solidarity also hinges on a utilitarian dimension, which bears on bonds that individuals maintain for their personal interests.⁷⁷ Focusing on the utilitarian side of solidarity delivers a different view on the implications of labor market risks. If labor market risks cause individuals to slip down the social ladder, they are more likely to demand (institutional) solidarity arrangements as (redistributive) solidarity aligns with their own self-interest.⁷⁸

This hints at a potential dilemma for welfare states. While labor market outsiders are more dependent on solidary arrangements, welfare states can count less on their affective identification with the collective. Thus, in the light of increasing flexibilization, welfare institutions are in need to be legitimized based on the self-interest of their citizens rather than on their moral underpinnings.⁷⁹ The analysis implies that generous and decommodifying welfare states perform best in evading this dilemma and reveal the lowest reduction in solidarity and trust from labor market insecurity. But while institutional solidarity and informal solidarity are considered to be correlated, additional work needs to take account of the multiple channels by which these are mutually reinforcing.

Social cohesion in modern societies is a highly complex and versatile phenomenon. While originally the welfare state was considered as the cradle of solidary arrangements, the globalization of economic and social processes has shifted the reference frame for solidarity to transnational levels, evoking demands for European, segmented, networked, or even global solidarity. At the same time, cohesion on subnational levels – for example relying on identities and social closeness – seems to be a permanent phenomenon permeating all kinds of societies. Paying attention to the fine-grained distinctions between social cohesion on various layers seems to be crucial to our understanding of contemporary economic and political transformations and their ramifications for society.

Endnotes

- 1 Barbieri (2009).
- 2 Kalleberg (2009); Rueda (2014).
- 3 Rehm (2009); Young (2012); Emmenegger et al. (2015); Voßemer et al. (2018).
- 4 Nguyen (2017); Kevins (2018).
- 5 Schwander, Häusermann (2013); Rovny and Rovny (2017).
- 6 Emmenegger et al. (2012).
- 7 Kalleberg (2009); Nachtwey (2016).
- 8 Piore, Sabel (1984); Acemoglu (2002).

- ⁹ Oesch (2006).
- ¹⁰ Esping-Andersen (1999); Häusermann, Schwander (2012).
- ¹¹ Lindbeck, Snower (2001); Palier, Thelen (2010).
- ¹² Barbieri (2009).
- ¹³ Gash, McGinnity (2007).
- ¹⁴ Erlinghagen (2008).
- ¹⁵ Häusermann et al. (2015).
- ¹⁶ Häusermann, Schwander (2012).
- ¹⁷ Thelen (2012).
- ¹⁸ Palier, Thelen (2010).
- ¹⁹ Rueda (2014).
- ²⁰ Baumann (1999).
- ²¹ Delhey et al. (2018); Schiefer, van der Noll (2017).
- ²² Coleman (1990); Putnam (2000).
- ²³ Rothstein (2002); Bjørnskov, Svendsen (2013); Brewer et al. (2014).
- ²⁴ Laurence (2015); Nguyen (2017); Kevins (2018).
- ²⁵ The text focuses on solidarity as a force that provides cohesion to a collective, instead of a call to protest or the motivating source of social movements (Banting and Kymlicka 2017).
- ²⁶ Van Parijs (2004).
- ²⁷ Sangiovanni (2015).
- ²⁸ Kanitsar (2019).
- ²⁹ Abela (2004); Rusu (2012).
- ³⁰ Cook (2005).
- ³¹ Paugam (2009).
- ³² Sennett (1998); Bauman (2001, 2013).
- ³³ Anderson, Pontusson (2007); Young (2012).
- ³⁴ Gallie et al. (2003).
- ³⁵ Nguyen (2017).
- ³⁶ Coyle-Shapiro, Conway (2004); Itzkovich, Heilbrunn (2016).
- ³⁷ Gundert, Hohendanner (2014, 2015).
- ³⁸ Dekker (2012); Sennett (2012); Laurence (2015).
- ³⁹ Putnam (2000).
- ⁴⁰ Witte (1999); Carroll (2007); Paul, Moser (2009); Wanberg (2012); Voßemer et al. (2018).
- ⁴¹ Jahoda (1981).
- ⁴² Cf. Gundert, Hohendanner (2014) 138.
- ⁴³ Van Knippenberg et al. (2007); Cheng, Chan (2008).
- ⁴⁴ Arts, van der Veen (1992).
- ⁴⁵ Komter (2005), Kymlicka (2015).
- ⁴⁶ Koster (2007); Gundert, Hohendanner (2014); Paskov (2016); Nguyen (2017); Kevins (2018).
- ⁴⁷ Gallie et al. (2003); Rothstein, Stolle (2008).
- ⁴⁸ Van der Veen (2012) 13.
- ⁴⁹ Kalleberg (2009); Levien, Paret (2012).
- ⁵⁰ Anderson, Pontusson (2007); Anderson (2009); Bredahl, Clement (2010).
- ⁵¹ Arts, Gelissen (2001); Mau (2004).
- ⁵² Kumlin, Rothstein (2005); Larsen (2007); Gelissen et al. (2012).
- ⁵³ De Beer, Koster (2009).
- ⁵⁴ Nguyen (2017); Kevins (2018).
- ⁵⁵ The analysis is robust to using all three items. However, since the reference group of a

region is highly ambiguous and the meaning of regional identifications may vary across countries, the analysis proceeds with using only the first two items.

- ⁵⁶ Schwander, Häusermann (2013) 254.
- ⁵⁷ The Labor Market Vulnerability variable is standardized to a one-point interval around zero.
- ⁵⁸ Brewer et al. (2014); Nguyen (2017); Kevins (2018).
- ⁵⁹ The respective null-models for trust, local solidarity and global solidarity have an ICC of 20.78, 24.31, and 9.64, respectively. This implies that for all three measures, at least 9 percent of the total variance is accounted for by differences between countries, suggesting that the use of multilevel modeling is appropriate.
- ⁶⁰ See Kevins (2018, p. 9) for a similar overview on the relationship between Trust and Labor Market Vulnerability.
- ⁶¹ A supplementary analysis shows that the findings are robust to using the theoretically most important element of each index only. Supplementary analysis are readily available from the author.
- ⁶² Esping-Andersen (1990); Arts, Gelissen (2002). The classification was extended to incorporate "Post-Communist" and "Former USSR" countries (Fenger 2007).
- ⁶³ Scruggs, Allan (2006).
- ⁶⁴ Due to the availability of the Decommodification Index from the Comparative Welfare Entitlements Dataset, the analysis had to be limited Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, and the UK. The respective regression table is readily available from the author.
- ⁶⁵ Delhey, Newton (2005).
- ⁶⁶ Laurence (2015); Nguyen (2017); Kevins (2018).
- ⁶⁷ Voßemer et al. (2018).
- ⁶⁸ Carr, Chung (2014).
- ⁶⁹ Gash, McGinnity (2007).
- ⁷⁰ Rothstein, Stolle (2008).
- ⁷¹ Lawler et al. (2016).
- ⁷² Beckert et al. (2004); Sankari, Frerichs (2016).
- ⁷³ Van Parijs (2004); Kymlicka (2015).
- ⁷⁴ Freitag, Traunmüller (2009).
- ⁷⁵ Van Oorschot, Komter (1998); De Beer, Koster (2009).
- ⁷⁶ Paskov (2016).
- ⁷⁷ Hechter (1987).
- ⁷⁸ Gelissen (2000); Jæger (2006).
- ⁷⁹ Mau (2004); Koos, Sachweh (2017).

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Abstract

The flexibilization of labor markets does not only challenge the traditional institutions of the modern welfare state, it also poses a substantial risk for the social fabric of modern societies. This article sheds light on the impact of labor market insecurity on three indicators of social cohesion. The analysis demonstrates that labor market vulnerability is associated with lower generalized trust and lower levels of solidarity on a global scale. However, this negative effect does not extend to solidarity with local collectives. Moreover, the article suggests that decommodifying welfare regimes are capable of mitigating the adverse effects of labor market vulnerability. The study concludes that a closer examination of the relationship between different measures of social cohesion is indispensable to further our understanding of the societal consequences of labor market flexibilization.

Zusammenfassung

Die Flexibilisierung der Arbeitsmärkte stellt nicht nur moderne Wohlfahrtsstaaten vor erhebliche strukturelle Herausforderungen, sondern birgt auch Risiken für den sozialen Zusammenhalt von Gesellschaften. Der vorliegende Artikel untersucht anhand eines länderübergreifenden Vergleichs den Einfluss von Arbeitsmarktunsicherheit auf Indikatoren des sozialen Zusammenhalts. Die Analyse verdeutlicht, dass Unsicherheit am Arbeitsmarkt mit niedrigerem Vertrauen und geringerer globaler Solidarität einhergeht, jedoch nicht mit einem negativen Effekt auf lokale Solidarität. Zudem weist die Analyse darauf hin, dass dekommodifizierende Wohlfahrtsstaaten den negativen Auswirkungen von Unsicherheiten am Arbeitsmarkt besser entgegenwirken können. Der Artikel liefert einen ersten Einblick in die verschiedenen Dimensionen und Indikatoren von sozialem Zusammenhalt und erzeugt damit ein tiefergehendes Verständnis der sozialen Auswirkungen von Arbeitsmarktflexibilisierung.

Key words: solidarity, social cohesion, trust, labor market insecurity, welfare states.

JEL codes: D63, H53, J40, Z13.