

CONFIDENCE IN EDUCATION

Young Finns' perceptions of the link between education
and employability – development over time 1999-2013

Emma Karoliina Pulkkinen

University of Helsinki

Faculty of Social Sciences

Sociology

Master's Thesis

October 2016



HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

Tiedekunta/Osasto – Fakultet/Sektion – Faculty Faculty of Social Sciences		Laitos – Institution – Department Department of Social Research	
Tekijä – Författare – Author Emma Karoliina Pulkkinen			
Työn nimi – Arbetets titel – Title CONFIDENCE IN EDUCATION: Young Finns' perceptions of the link between education and employability – development over time 1999-2013			
Oppiaine – Läroämne – Subject Sociology			
Työn laji – Arbetets art – Level Master's Thesis		Aika – Datum – Month and year October 2016	Sivumäärä – Sidoantal – Number of pages 120
Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract			
<p>This thesis looks at the development of young Finns' confidence in education between 1999 and 2013. The purpose of the thesis is to explore how economic turbulence in the form of booms and busts affects young people's perceptions of the link between education and employability. The starting point of this research is the rapid expansion of education in Finland and its effects on the labour market. The average educational level of Finns has increased dramatically in a short period of time. Educational expansion has not only resulted in a better educated population, but has also had its effects on unemployment levels of the highly educated, as well as the number of individuals who are over-educated for their jobs. When the supply of educated labour has come to exceed the demand for it, education no longer guarantees a job, but is increasingly necessary to better position oneself on the labour market.</p> <p>Previous research in the field has largely focused on the link between educational credentials and employability, as well as youth transitions from education to the labour market. Such transitions from education to employment are often aided by work experience acquired during one's studies. Furthermore, while education alone may no longer be enough for a smooth transition, those young people with higher levels of education are still better off than their less educated counterparts. This thesis will focus more on young people's own perceptions of the relationship between education and employability rather than observing their school to work transitions. While youth expectations of the labour market are increasingly researched, this thesis offers a new perspective by introducing the concept of 'confidence in education'. Young people's confidence in education is still very much under researched in the sociology of education as well as sociology of work.</p> <p>The data utilised in this study is a collection of Finnish Youth Barometers from 1999 (N=1251), 2007 (N=1903), and 2013 (N=1903). The Finnish Youth Barometer is an annual survey that collects data on young people's attitudes and values. This research will utilise two survey questions regarding young people's confidence in education. The aim of this thesis is to see if there are differences in how young people have responded to these questions in 1999, 2007, and 2013. In addition to the development of young people's confidence in education over time, this thesis will also look at how one's confidence level in education may depend on their age or primary activity. The methods include descriptive statistics for the chosen variables as well as the Kruskal-Wallis test, which is used to analyse between group differences.</p> <p>Results show that young Finns' confidence in education follows the development of the Finnish economy. While confidence in education has remained at a high level between 1999 and 2013, there seem to be clear differences in the level of confidence when comparing times reflecting economic busts (1999 and 2013) with a time of economic prosperity (2007). Furthermore, there are also observable differences between young people in education and those who are in employment. Confidence in education is higher among young people who are still in education when compared to those in employment. This is reinforced by the result that confidence in education is higher among the younger age groups than the older ones; the younger age groups are more likely to still be in education, while the individuals in the older age groups are more likely to have already acquired some work experience.</p> <p>These results show that confidence in education is linked to developments in the economy: young Finns had higher confidence in education during the economic busts of the 1990s and the most recent economic and financial crisis that started in 2008. The fact that confidence in education is higher in times of economic turmoil signals that the value of education has not decreased as the average educational level has increased. In fact, education seems to maintain its value, especially during bad times. Educational credentials give an individual a competitive advantage in an overcrowded labour market where supply of labour exceeds demand. In addition, the fact that confidence levels are lower among those young people who are either already in employment, or have more likely already had work experience, signals that experienced realities of the labour market may not match with previous beliefs that education better's one's employability. More research is needed to better examine the reasons why confidence in education diminishes as a young person ages.</p>			
Avainsanat – Nyckelord – Keywords education, work, employability, youth, economic crisis			



HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

Tiedekunta/Osasto – Fakultet/Sektion – Faculty Valtiotieteellinen tiedekunta		Laitos – Institution – Department Sosiaalitieteiden laitos	
Tekijä – Författare – Author Emma Karoliina Pulkkinen			
Työn nimi – Arbetets titel – Title CONFIDENCE IN EDUCATION: Young Finns' perceptions of the link between education and employability – development over time 1999-2013			
Oppiaine – Läroämne – Subject Sosiologia			
Työn laji – Arbetets art – Level Pro Gradu -tutkielma		Aika – Datum – Month and year Lokakuu 2016	Sivumäärä – Sidoantal – Number of pages 120
Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract			
<p>Tässä tutkimuksessa tarkastellaan suomalaisten nuorten koulutususkon kehitystä 1999–2013. Tarkoituksena on pohtia, kuinka talouden nousu- ja laskukaudet vaikuttavat nuorten käsityksiin koulutuksen ja työllistymisen suhteesta. Tutkimuksen lähtökohtina toimivat Suomen koulutustason kehitys viimeisen 20 vuoden aikana ja sen seuraukset työelämässä. Suomalaisten koulutustaso on noussut dramaattisesti lyhyessä ajassa. Samaan aikaan koulutustason nousu on johtanut tilanteeseen jossa korkeakoulutettujen työttömyys on nousussa ja moni työntekijä on ylikoulutettu työtehtäviinsä nähden. Koulutus yksin ei enää takaa työpaikkaa, mutta työllistyminen ilman sitä on vaikeaa.</p> <p>Aikaisempi tutkimus on keskittynyt lähinnä koulutuksen ja työllistymisen väliseen suhteeseen sekä nuorten elämän siirtymiin. Nuorten siirtymistä koulutuksesta työelämään helpottaa koulutuksen aikana kerätty työkokemus. Tämän lisäksi korkeasti koulutetut nuoret ovat paremmassa asemassa kuin heidän vähemmän koulutetut toverinsa, siitä huolimatta että koulutus yksin ei ole enää kilpailuvaltti työmarkkinoilla. Tässä tutkimuksessa keskitytään enemmän nuorten omiin käsityksiin koulutuksen ja työelämän suhteesta kuin heidän varsinaisiin siirtymiin. Vaikka nuorten työelämäodotuksia tutkitaan entistä enemmän, tämä tutkimus käsittelee aihetta uudesta näkökulmasta. Nuorten koulutususko on vielä vähän tutkittu aihe työelämän sosiologiassa ja koulutussosiologiassa.</p> <p>Aineistona toimivat vuosien 1999 (N=1251), 2007 (N=1903) ja 2013 Nuorisobarometrit. Nuorisobarometri on noin vuoden välein suoritettava kysely, jonka tarkoitus on selvittää 15–29 vuotiaiden suomalaisnuorten arvoja ja asenteita. Tässä tutkimuksessa katsotaan tarkemmin kahta koulutususkoon liittyvää kysymystä ja kuinka nuorten vastaukset näihin kysymyksiin eroavat vuosina 1999, 2007 ja 2013. Koulutususkon kehityksen lisäksi tämä tutkimus tarkastelee myös miten eri-ikäiset ja eri elämäntilanteissa olevat nuoret kokevat koulutuksen ja työllistymisen suhteen. Menetelminä toimivat kuvaavat tilastomenetelmät sekä ryhmäeroja avaava kvantitatiivinen Kruskal-Wallis testi.</p> <p>Nuorten koulutususkon kehitys seuraa talouden nousu- ja laskukausia, vaikka koulutus onkin pysynyt suhteellisen korkeana 1999–2013. Nuorten koulutususko nousee talouden laskukausina, ja laskee nousukausina. Tämän lisäksi myös nuoren elämäntilanne vaikuttaa hänen koulutususkonsa asteeseen: vanhemmat ikäryhmät – eli nuoret joilla on jo todennäköisemmin työkokemusta – eivät usko yhtä lujasti koulutuksen arvoon työllistymisen kannalta. Samaan tulokseen päästään myös katsomalla nuoren pääasiallista toimea: koulutususko on voimakkaampaa opiskelijoiden kuin työelämässä jo olevien keskuudessa.</p> <p>Tulokset kertovat että nuorten työhön ja koulutukseen liittyvät asenteet ovat kytköksissä Suomen työ- ja taloustilanteeseen. Laskukausien korkeampi koulutususko kieli siitä, että koulutuksen arvo ei ole kärsinyt suomalaisten koulutustason noustessa. Sen sijaan koulutus säilyttää merkityksensä, varsinkin huonossa taloustilanteessa. Koulutus tarjoaa kilpailuvalttin työmarkkinoilla erityisesti laskukausina, jolloin työnhakijoista ei ole pulaa. Toisaalta opiskelijoiden ja työelämässä jo olevien, sekä nuorempien ja vanhempien ikäryhmien, koulutususkon erot kertovat koulutuksen arvostuksen olevan korkeimmillaan silloin, kun nuori on vielä koulutuksessa. Tarkempaa tutkimusta kaivataan selvittämään miksi nuorten koulutususko hupenee heidän vanhetessaan.</p>			
Avainsanat – Nyckelord – Keywords koulutus, työ, nuoret, taloudelliset kriisit, työelämävalmiudet			

Contents

1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
2 SOCIOLOGICAL DISCOURSE ON YOUTH, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT ..	4
2.1 The purpose of education	4
2.1.1 Changing society, changing purpose of education	4
2.1.2 Discourse on employability	6
2.2 Confidence in education and educational expansion	9
2.2.1 Defining confidence in education	9
2.2.2 Educational expansion and educational inflation	11
2.3 Transition to adulthood	14
2.3.1 Life-course studies and emerging adulthood	14
2.3.2 Transitions to adulthood: transitions from education to employment.....	17
3 PREVIOUS RESEARCH.....	21
3.1 Youth transitions from education to employment	21
3.1.1 Patterns of labour market entry	21
3.1.2 Graduate employability and occupational expectations.....	23
3.2 The relationship between education and the labour market	25
3.2.1 The employer perspective on employability – the skills debate	25
3.2.2 Educational inflation and confidence in education	27
3.3 Finnish unemployment statistics: youth and the highly educated.....	29
3.3.1 Youth unemployment in Finland.....	29
3.3.2 Rising unemployment among the highly educated in Finland.....	30
3.4 Confidence in education in the Finnish Youth Barometers	31
3.4.1 Background on the Finnish Youth Barometer	31
3.4.2 Development of youth attitudes over time	32
3.5 Summary of previous research	35
4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	36
5 METHODOLOGY	37
5.1 Data	37
5.2 Sampling	39
5.3 Variables	40
5.3.1 Dependent variables.....	40
5.3.2 Independent variables.....	44
5.4 Methods.....	47

6 RESULTS	50
6.1 Development in confidence in education 1999-2013	50
6.1.1 Descriptive statistics and graphical representations	50
6.1.2 Kruskal-Wallis test for ‘year of interview’	52
6.2 Age group versus primary activity	55
6.2.1 Age groups	55
6.2.2 Primary activity.....	68
6.2.3 Kruskal-Wallis test for ‘age group’ and ‘primary activity’	81
7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	96
7.1 Economic instability and youth transitions	96
7.1.1 Confidence in education in times of economic booms and busts	96
7.1.2 Transition to adulthood and confidence in education	99
7.2 Policy implications and further research	101
7.2.1 Education and labour market policy in Finland	101
7.2.2 The next steps for research on confidence in education	104
7.3 Reflexivity, research ethics, and critical analysis of the research process	106
BIBLIOGRAPHY	110
APPENDICES	119

List of tables and figures

Figure 1: Development of confidence in education (variable 1) 1994-2013	33
Figure 2: Development of confidence in education (variable 2) 1997-2013	34
Figure 3: Finnish GDP growth 1995-2013	38
Figure 4: Finnish GDP per capita 1995-2013	39
Figure 5: Finnish unemployment 1995-2013	39
Figure 6: ”Education significantly betters one’s employability”, 1999-2013	50
Figure 7: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, 1999-2013	51
Figure 8: “Education significantly betters one's employability” by age group (1999)	56
Figure 9: “Education significantly betters one's employability” by age group (2007)	56
Figure 10: “Education significantly betters one's employability” by age group (2013)	57
Figure 11: “Education significantly betters one's employability”, completely agree with the statement (1999-2013)	58
Figure 12: “Education significantly betters one's employability”, somewhat agree with the statement (1999-2013)	59
Figure 13: “Education significantly better one's employability”, somewhat disagree with the statement (1999-2013)	60
Figure 14: “Education significantly better one's employability”, completely disagree with the statement (1999-2013)	61

Figure 15: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market” by age group (1999).....	62
Figure 16: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market” by age group (2007).....	63
Figure 17: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market” by age group (2013).....	64
Figure 18: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, completely agree with the statement (1999-2013)	65
Figure 19: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, somewhat agree with the statement (1999-2013)	66
Figure 20: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, somewhat disagree with the statement (1999-2013)	67
Figure 21: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, completely disagree with the statement (1999-2013)	67
Figure 22: “Education significantly betters one's employability” by primary activity (1999).....	68
Figure 23: “Education significantly betters one's employability” by primary activity (2007).....	69
Figure 24: “Education significantly betters one's employability” by primary activity (2013).....	70
Figure 25: “Education significantly betters one's employability”, completely agree with the statement (1999-2013).....	71
Figure 26: “Education significantly betters one's employability”, somewhat agree with the statement (1999-2013).....	72
Figure 27: “Education significantly betters one's employability”, somewhat disagree with the statement (1999-2013).....	73
Figure 28: “Education significantly betters one's employability”, completely disagree with the statement (1999-2013).....	74
Figure 29: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market” by primary activity (1999).....	75
Figure 30: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market” by primary activity (2007).....	76
Figure 31: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market” by primary activity (2013).....	77
Figure 32: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, completely agree with the statement (1999-2013)	78
Figure 33: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, somewhat agree with the statement (1999-2013)	79
Figure 34: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, somewhat disagree with the statement (1999-2013)	80
Figure 35: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, completely disagree with the statement (1999-2013)	81
Table 1: Composition of 1999 sample	46
Table 2: Composition of 2007 sample	46
Table 3: Composition of 2013 sample	47
Table 4: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for ”education significantly betters one’s employability”, grouping variable ’year of survey’	53

Table 5: Mean ranks for "education significantly better one's employability", grouping variable 'year of survey'	53
Table 6: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'year of survey'	54
Table 7: Mean ranks for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'year of survey'	54
Table 8: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "education significantly better one's employability", grouping variable 'age group', 1999	82
Table 9: Mean ranks for "education significantly better one's employability", grouping variable 'age group', 1999	82
Table 10: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "education significantly better one's employability", grouping variable 'primary activity', 1999	83
Table 11: Mean ranks for "education significantly better one's employability", grouping variable 'primary activity', 1999	83
Table 12: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'age group', 1999	84
Table 13: Mean ranks for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'age group', 1999	85
Table 14: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'primary activity', 1999	85
Table 15: Mean ranks for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'primary activity', 1999	86
Table 16: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "education significantly better one's employability", grouping variable 'age group', 2007	86
Table 17: Mean ranks for "education significantly better one's employability", grouping variable 'age group', 2007	87
Table 18: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "education significantly better one's employability", grouping variable 'primary activity', 2007	88
Table 19: Mean ranks for "education significantly better one's employability", grouping variable 'primary activity', 2007	88
Table 20: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'age group', 2007	89
Table 21: Mean ranks for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'age group', 2007	89
Table 22: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'primary activity', 2007	90
Table 23: Mean ranks for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'primary activity', 2007	90
Table 24: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "education significantly better one's employability", grouping variable 'age group', 2013	91
Table 25: Mean ranks for "education significantly better one's employability", grouping variable 'age group', 2013	92
Table 26: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "education significantly better one's employability", grouping variable 'primary activity', 2013	92
Table 27: Mean ranks for "education significantly better one's employability", grouping variable 'primary activity', 2013	93
Table 28: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'age group', 2013	93

Table 29: Mean ranks for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'age group', 2013.....	94
Table 30: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'primary activity', 2013.....	95
Table 31: Mean ranks for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'primary activity', 2013.....	95

1 INTRODUCTION

Education maintains its importance in modern Finnish society. Since the end of the Second World War, each generation in Finland has been more educated than the last (Aro, 2014). Education remains one of the main predictors of occupational success, and can even influence one's future income. In economics education is also seen to have positive externalities that not only benefit the individual, but society as a whole. Education in the form of basic numeracy and literacy can make all of our daily lives easier. At the other end of the educational spectrum research done by educational institutions can influence a vast number of areas such as healthcare, business and society as a whole. The investments in education made by states seem to support this belief: more and more money is spent on education (Wolf, 2002). Between 2005 and 2012, expenditure per student in primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education increased by an average of 21% in OECD countries (OECD, 2015). However, the trend reversed as the result of the economic crisis: between 2008 and 2012, investments in education fell in nearly one quarter of OECD countries (OECD, 2015). In 2013, Finnish education spending made up 1.8% of total GDP for tertiary education, and 3.9% of total GDP for primary to non-tertiary education (OECD Data, 2013).

The still on-going economic and financial crisis has taken its toll on the Finnish labour market, especially impacting the employment prospects of young people. Youth unemployment across Europe has increased immensely with the current crisis, including Finland. In the last quarter of 2015, the youth unemployment rate in the EU-28 was 19.6%, and 21.9% in the Euro area (Eurostat, 2016b). In Finland, the average youth unemployment rate for 2015 was 22.4%, dropping to 18.2% in the last quarter (Eurostat, 2016b). This crisis has led to a realisation of the importance of young people for the future of Europe. Beyond youth unemployment figures, another point of worry is the growing number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs). The share of NEETs has risen during the economic crisis: between 2008 and 2015 the NEET rate of young people rose by 2.4% (Eurostat, 2016a). The most recent OECD 'Education at a Glance' report also has worrying information about the amount of young people at risk of social exclusion in Finland, especially among young men: over a fifth of young men are now classified as NEETs (OECD, 2016). In January 2013 Finland introduced the Youth Guarantee, signifying the importance of preventing the

exclusion of young people from education and the labour market (Eduskunta, 2014). No later than April 2013, the Youth Guarantee was endorsed by all EU Member States: each Member State “made a commitment to ensure young people’s successful transition into work by establishing Youth Guarantee schemes” (European Commission, 2015). The reason for bringing about such programmes is quite simple – while such ‘guarantees’ cost a lot of money, it may cost Europe, including Finland, far more if nothing is done. For reference, the growing number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) resulted in an estimated loss of €162 billion for European economies in 2012 (Eurofound, 2014). The costs are likely to be even bigger in the future, if these excluded young people turn into excluded adults. It is therefore no surprise that young people are on Europe’s radar. The Youth Guarantee can be seen as a response to the mistakes of the past. For example, in Finland the previous economic depression of the 1990s, and a failure to support young people then, has led to increased costs in mental healthcare for the young people who grew up in that time period (Gretschel, Paakkunainen, Souto, & Suurpää, 2014).

While states across Europe are realising the importance of young people for the future of Europe, young people are also often viewed as ‘hedonistic’ and unwilling to take responsibility for the continuation and upholding of the current system; however at the same time young people find it difficult to plan their careers, start a family, and become what is expected of them, all due to the economic turbulence and associated changes in the labour market (Mary, 2012). But even with the on-going turbulence and changes young people maintain their trust in the power of education and its relevance for both entering and staying in the labour market. Confidence in education, and in educational institutions is vital if the goal is to increase the average educational level of the population, and make sure that individuals have the skills necessary to enter and stay in the labour market. Essentially there are two sides to the coin: how to make sure individuals have the right skills for themselves, and whether they can provide the right skills demanded by employers. This thesis will concentrate on the perspective of the individuals, specifically young people, and how they view the relationship between education and the labour market. A special focus will be given to how Finnish young people’s confidence in education has developed over time, focusing on three years representing the ups and down of Finnish economic development. This thesis adds to

the research done by the Finnish Youth Research Society and Nuora¹ on the Finnish Youth Barometers. Furthermore, this thesis will look at the Youth Barometer data from the perspective of youth transitions, by looking at how levels of confidence in education differ between age groups, as well as groups of primary activity.

The thesis is structured as follows. Chapter 2 outlines existing sociological discourse on the subjects of youth, education and employment. Special focus is given to defining the central concept of the thesis, confidence in education, and discussing the relevance of employability discourse for the topic. This discourse section also touches on the arguments for what the purpose of education actually is, especially in the Finnish context. Another important part is to give some historical background on educational expansion both in Finland and abroad, as well as the effects of educational expansion on the value of educational credentials. Chapter 3 then outlines previous research done in this field, as well as some relevant statistics on unemployment figures for young people and the highly educated. Chapters 4 and 5 outline the research questions and the methodology, including a description of the data used, the variables chosen, and the methods of analysis. Finally, chapters 6 and 7 bring together both the results of the quantitative analysis and the interpretation of these results in the wider context of sociological discourse in the fields of education and employment.

¹ Nuorisosiain neuvottelukunta, or 'Nuora' is the Finnish Advisory Council for Youth Affairs, and is attached to the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture.

2 SOCIOLOGICAL DISCOURSE ON YOUTH, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

2.1 The purpose of education

2.1.1 Changing society, changing purpose of education

In the fields of sociology and philosophy, education is understood as “denoting ideologies, curricula, and pedagogical techniques of the inculcation and management of knowledge and the social reproduction of personalities and cultures” (Scott & Marshall, 2009). However, in the sociology of education the focus more often turns to the examination of mass schooling systems of modern industrial (and post-industrial) societies (Scott & Marshall, 2009). Indeed, in this thesis education and related concepts will refer to such mass schooling systems, focusing on learning and knowledge creation that happens in formal educational institutions rather than more informal settings. This is not to say that informal settings cannot produce knowledge or act as spaces for learning; however, education has become largely synonymous with formal schooling systems since the expansion of both secondary schooling and mass higher education (Collins, 2000).

The purpose of education can be seen as both social and economic. According to McArthur (2011), especially higher education should contribute to the economic and social welfare of the whole society. Conversely, UNESCO stresses the importance of the social aspect, stating the purpose of education to be the development of *youth* that are: qualified in taking societal action, critical and independent, tolerant and understanding, and globally and environmentally aware of their surroundings (Mandic, 1999: 40 in Popova-Koskarova, 2011: 169). In its purest form, the social purpose of education is to define what kinds of individuals such a system wants to produce. For example, in 19th century Germany the purpose of education was to produce hard working and useful citizens; in 20th century United States it was the development of an adaptable business person; and in contemporary Japan the ideal citizen is an individual with high organisational skills and work discipline (Popova-Koskarova, 2011: 168). Other social aspects of the purpose of education include the pursuit of knowledge for the sake of knowledge itself (and the preparation of students for such pursuit), and creating a social purpose and collective identity for those individuals who are outside ‘normal’ life, i.e. work (Collins, 2000; Noddings, 2015). What these examples demonstrate is that the purpose of education can differ depending on the point in time

and the culture in question. However, according to Wolf (2002: xiv), it seems that past ideals of promoting certain moral values, citizenship, and society have in the industrial era given way to stressing education's role in the promotion of economic growth.

The economic purpose of education is best described as the preparation and training of workers for the labour market and the economy: education becomes a tool through which primary goals such as business, innovation and skills can be achieved (McArthur, 2011). However, McArthur (2011) would argue that the economic and social purposes, often seen as contradictory to one another, are and should be inextricably linked: social justice cannot be separated from economic factors. Similarly, Noddings (2015) argues that the social and economic purpose can be brought together under a unifying purpose of creating better adults. According to Bruner (1960 in Noddings, 2015: 234):

We might ask, as a criterion for any subject taught in primary school, whether, when fully developed, it is worth an adult's knowing, and whether having known it as a child makes a person a better adult...it should follow that a curriculum ought to be built around the great issues, principles, and values that a society deems worthy of the continual concern of its members.

Both the economic and social purposes outlined above fit this ideal of creating better adults, given that the ability to work and live harmoniously in a society demands knowledge of certain skills, values and principles. But while the social and economic purposes are linked with one another, the different weights given to each purpose has developed over time along with changes in both the economy and the wider society. The increasing focus on the link between education and employment has often been understood as the result of changes in the economy and society, such as the expansion of education, the increasingly precarious nature of work, and increased global competition. Both precarity and globalisation fall under what Beck describes as the rise of a 'risk society' (Beck, 1992).

The expansion of education has essentially led to a world where the influx of highly skilled individuals has increased to the point where employers can demand very specific skill sets that fit their needs – all thanks to a large supply of qualified candidates (Collins, 2000; Järvinen & Vanttaja, 2001; Kivinen et al., 2007). On the other hand, increased flexibility and precarity in the labour market has reduced the incentives of

employers to provide such skill development themselves due to a fear that such investments will go to waste as an employee changes jobs (Moreau & Leathwood, 2006; Tomlinson, 2012). This has increasingly shifted the responsibility of education and skill development to educational institutions such as universities and the individuals themselves (Green et al., 2013; Moreau & Leathwood, 2006). Finally, firms and governments justify this sort of practice by a need to remain globally competitive, assuring that better skill matching and the reduction of skill gaps will allow jobs to remain within regional or national borders (Green et al., 2013; Harvey, 2000; Puhakka et al., 2010).

This sort of shift to emphasising the economic role of education is also apparent in the Finnish context, especially in the higher education sector. According to Kivinen et al. (2007), the Nordic welfare state has traditionally focused on equality of opportunity when it comes to education: the state should do its utmost to make sure that individuals from different backgrounds can compete for the same positions given the same opportunities. Furthermore, a tradition of “civilising the masses” was also behind the expansion of education in Finland: the introduction of public schooling was seen as a way to transfer both practical skills such as numeracy and literacy, as well as social and moral skills (Alasuutari, 1996). However, the economic crisis of the 1990s brought to light the inherent connection between education and employment, and policy since then has concentrated more and more on forming ever stronger links between the two (Aro et al., 2005; Järvinen & Vanttaja, 2001). The employment of graduates is receiving increasing attention from the government, with the concept of ‘employability’ even creeping into how the Ministry of Education and Culture plans to distribute university funding (Ahola & Hoffman, 2012). It seems that the equality of opportunity agenda has given way to the employability agenda at least in public discourse (Kivinen et al., 2007). This concept of employability and the increased focus on the economic purpose of education will be further explored in the following section.

2.1.2 Discourse on employability

The valuation of scholarship has hardly increased, but the economic value of education on the other hand has (Wolf, 2002). The concept of employability is both complex and contested: the meaning of employability largely differs depending on the perspective taken as well as the cultural context; in fact, the word ‘employability’ is often difficult to translate into other languages (Eurydice, 2014). In its simplest form, employability is

a concept that describes the terms by which a person's capability to get a job is assessed (Eurofound, 2010). However, Green et al. (2013: 11) go further and suggest employability is conceptualised as “gaining, sustaining and progressing in employment”, stressing the fact that employability is not only about getting people into employment, but keeping them there as well. This is also compatible with an increasing focus on lifelong learning, as education is no longer limited to the time before one enters the labour market (Green et al., 2013; Harvey, 2000). Much like the purpose of education, the concept of employability has also shifted in meaning over time, and has come to encompass a broader spectrum of people as outlined above. The concept of employability can also be seen as both absolute and relative: absolute in the sense of strictly defining those that are employable and those who are not, and relative meaning that an individual's employability is relative to that of others in the labour market as well as the opportunities available (Green et al., 2013).

While employability can be defined and described from several perspectives, a key distinction can be drawn between supply-side and demand-side perspectives. Most of the focus of the employability discourse has been on supply-side issues, i.e. the employability of the graduate or the individual (Eurydice, 2014). Indeed, it is this supply-side perspective that has led to a shift in responsibility to the individual: it is the individual who must continually update their skills and knowledge to enhance their employability in relation to other individuals (Green et al., 2013). The demand-side on the other hand refers to the needs of the labour market and how educational institutions can respond to such labour market demands (Eurydice, 2014). There is also often an assumption that somehow employability leads to employment; however, the two do not necessarily follow, as someone who is employable can be employed, unemployed or underemployed (Wilton, 2011 in Tymon, 2013: 843). This suggests that the demand-side perspective should also consider whether the requirements employers are putting on graduates and employees are realistic and justifiable, or whether employers should take back at least some of responsibility for skill development, both hard and soft, of present and future employees.

In the European context, employability has been a key concept for the design of labour market policies since the first ‘European Employment Strategy’ was adopted in 1997 (Eurofound, 2010). However, over time the concept of employability has become increasingly important in EU wide discussions on education and training: most recently,

the 'Education and Training 2020' strategy has even set a benchmark on graduate employability (Garrouste, 2011). Furthermore, the employability agenda has also been linked to the Bologna Process, which has increasingly demanded that universities concentrate more on employability (Ahola & Hoffman, 2012). The fact that the Bologna process aims for a unified higher education system in Europe has essentially forced universities to come to a common understanding of graduate qualifications and employability (Rooney et al., 2006). This need for standardisation and unification has also spilled over into the Finnish discourse on employability: the effects of the implementation of the Bologna process can be seen for example in recent quality assurance schemes, and recent reforms that directly mention employability as key (Ahola & Hoffman, 2012). As for the need for a unified higher education system in Europe, the Bologna process is seen as a response to the free movement of labour within the EU, with the process allowing the free migration of experts across European borders, resulting in a larger pool of skilled individuals (Puhakka et al., 2010). Relating to the previous discussion of a shift in responsibility over employability, this larger pool of talent has essentially increased the supply of talent available to employers, which in combination with other structural changes has increased the power of employers when it comes to recruitment. This power means that employers are able to demand very specific skills without necessarily providing for an opportunity to develop those skills within the workplace. All in all the Bologna process and the free movement of labour within the EU have also played their part in the development of the employability agenda in Finland and Europe more generally.

The concept of employability is also linked to a wider debate about skills requirements and skills gaps. According to Cedefop (2015), four in 10 businesses within the European Union find it difficult to attract employees with the right skills for the job. However, in a time of high unemployment and unfilled vacancies it could be argued that what to employers may seem to be skill gaps may just be skill mismatches, suggesting inefficiencies in taking advantage of existing skills (Cedefop, 2015). On the other hand, the European Union's promotion of learning-by-doing education programmes such as apprenticeships and the development of work-related skills for (often young) individuals seem to suggest that even the discourse of skill mismatches is assuming that the problem is with the individuals, and not the employers' demands for specific skills or the inability to recognise such skills (Cedefop, 2015b). All in all the demands of the

labour market have become more intense: especially young people are expected to be geographically mobile, flexible and always available (Mary, 2012).

In addition to blaming the individual, the skills mismatch debate is increasingly putting the blame on universities, as they fail to equip graduates with “appropriate skills and dispositions that enable them to add value to the labour market” (Tomlinson, 2012: 412). However, Aro et al., (2005), also argue that there are some skills that simply cannot be learned in formal education. All in all the discourse is very much centred on what universities and individuals can do for skill development and therefore employability, though apprenticeship programmes could also be seen as a tool to take some of the learning back to the workplace. Nevertheless, the skills that are increasingly valuable are those skills that can be of use for the economy and the labour market, which is a large step away from the social purpose of education that was discussed previously.

2.2 Confidence in education and educational expansion

2.2.1 Defining confidence in education

For the purpose of this thesis, **confidence in education**² is defined as a belief that educational investments provide better employment opportunities. This is justified by the previously outlined connection between the labour market and education, as well as the increasing amount of discussion around the concept of ‘employability’. However, it should be noted that the Finnish concept of ‘koulutususkko’ does not only refer to this sort of individual optimism in the power of education, but to a joint societal belief in the link between education and societal wellbeing. Research in the field of confidence in education is relatively limited, but research in the field of trust in institutions is not (Bormann & John, 2014). According to Bormann & John (2014: 3), “trust can be understood as a form of expectation based on information from the past.” In essence, present decisions impacting the future are made based on information from the past. In the case of institutions, trust can increase due to good past performance of the institution in question (La Porta et al., 1996). Similarly, confidence in education could be seen as trust in educational institutions, though more broadly education can cover both formal

² In Finnish the concept is known as ‘koulutususkko’. This concept of ‘koulutususkko’, translated in this thesis as ‘confidence in education’, is not as well established in English-speaking literature as it is in Finnish social research. The suggestion of using ‘confidence in education’ comes from Professor Ann Phoenix.

and informal settings. But if confidence is considered comparable to trust, then confidence in education could at least partially be seen as a result of the reputation of educational institutions; for example, if educational institutions are seen to give better employment prospects, the expected trust or confidence in these institutions should be relatively high. Similarly, an individual's level of confidence in education and educational institutions could be influenced by own past experiences, the past experiences of friends and family, as well as experiences portrayed by the institutions themselves e.g. the media and schools. As stated by Bormann & John (2014: 2): "Trust provides a sense of certainty and creates a sense of coherence, so that communication, decision-making and action-taking are possible." All in all, trust in societal institutions is important for their functioning and even their existence.

In Finland, confidence in education can be seen to date back to the 1800s when the idea that all children should receive a basic education became increasingly popular (Ahtonen, 2012). Indeed, the educational attainment of Finns has changed considerably in a short amount of time thanks to huge public investments in education: today, having no qualifications beyond basic education is as rare as it was having qualifications beyond basic education in 1970 (Aro, 2014). This national investment in education has been described as a belief in the benefits of education for society – both socially and economically, as outlined in the discussion on the purpose of education. Furthermore, in the Finnish context, the continued belief in education after the 1960s very much stemmed from its observable effects on social mobility: many Finns were able to move up the social hierarchy thanks to education (Silvennoinen & Klas, 1996). Social mobility, or put it differently, the belief in egalitarianism has become an integral part of Nordic education policy (Kivinen et al., 2007). However, strong confidence in education, which is implied by past heavy investment in education, is still not a confidence shared by all. According to Silvennoinen & Klas (1996), confidence in education tends to be stronger among those who already possess higher levels of education: while those with lower levels of education believe that the benefits of education accrue to others and not them, those with higher levels of education believe that education open doors for everyone, regardless of social background. Consequently, those with stronger confidence in education are more likely to educate themselves, while those who lack such confidence are less likely to invest time in educational pursuits. Furthermore, according to Meriläinen (2011), in Finland a universal

confidence in education and its role in equality came to an end in the 1980s, and was eventually replaced by a more individualistic view of education.

All in all, educational belief can be observed from the perspective of individuals, policy makers, and employers alike. The continued investment in public education at all levels can be seen as a firm belief of the government and policy makers in the benefits of education for society as a whole. Recently however, even this can be questioned with increasing cuts to education. From the employer perspective, their confidence in educational credentials is clear from their growing skill requirements. While one may still question whether skills learned through education directly translate into working life, the sheer amount of years spent in education may signal a ‘tenacity’ that is valued in the labour market (Kivinen et al., 2007). At the individual level, confidence in education is best observed by the growing number of individuals who graduate high school and go into tertiary education. However, it is increasingly difficult to use such proxies as indicators of confidence in education: due to educational expansion, and investment and interest in higher credentials, these indicators may no longer reflect the belief that education *will* provide better opportunities and outcomes but that such investments and interest are a necessary prerequisite for such opportunities and outcomes. It is getting more and more difficult to justify to young people who are going through education why they must work hard - the rewards are no longer immediate (Sitra, 2015).

2.2.2 Educational expansion and educational inflation

Very much related to the development of confidence in education is the concept of educational expansion. As already stated previously, the educational attainment of Finns has changed dramatically over the past 40 years alone: after the end of the Second World War, each generation has been more educated than the last (Aro, 2014). This is the result of vast educational expansion at all educational levels: this expansion has been “made in the spirit of egalitarian education policy” (Kivinen et al., 2007; Lampinen, 1998). Educational expansion has been a reality of Finnish society since the 1960s: in 1960 only 16% of Finns over the age of 15 had completed at least upper secondary education – the figure was 55% by 1995 (Järvinen & Vanttaja, 2001: 197).

Educational expansion has also had its consequences for the value of education in modern society, which has essentially led to educational inflation (Aro, 2014). This

lowering of educational value is essentially the result of a mismatch between the supply of highly skilled employees and the demand for such employees. According to Aro (2003, 2014), one explanation for the diminished value of education is the effect of educational expansion on the job competition model. In the job competition model, potential employees are put in a ranking based on ‘signals’ that would suggest their suitability for the job (Aro, 2003; 2014). One such signal is education, or in other words credentials (Aro, 2003; 2014). The assumption is that those with higher credentials are more suitable and are therefore higher up on the ranking (Aro, 2003; 2014). When there are an increasing amount of potential employees with higher and higher credentials but no similar expansion in the amount of jobs for these levels of education, employers will tend to hire from the top of the ranking (Aro, 2003; 2014). This results in overqualified employees at all levels, and leaving those without or with little formal credentials outside of the labour market (Aro, 2003; 2014).

In contrast, human capital theory would state that education is an investment by the individual that will eventually pay off in higher wages. According to Becker (1964), most investments in human capital, including educational credentials, increase overall earnings when looking at the individual’s earnings at an older age. This is because the initial cost of education is already covered at that older age – when one is younger, education presents itself as a net cost, because one’s earnings have not had enough time to cover them (Becker, 1964). The human capital theory also aims to explain why some people earn more than others. Observed earnings are seen to be gross of the return on human capital; therefore, those who invest more in their human capital have higher earnings (Becker, 1964). College graduates are found to have higher earnings than their less educated counterparts: “the rate of return to an average college entrant is considerable, of the order of 10 or 12 percent per annum” (Becker, 1964: 154). On the other hand, it should be noted that some investments in human capital do not impact earnings because they are collected not only by the individual themselves but also by the firms, industries or countries that employ them; these investments include hiring costs and executive training (Becker, 1964). Becker (1964) states that it is these investments that help explain why unemployment is higher among the unskilled versus the skilled in the United States: more specific capital is invested in skilled employees, and therefore there is more incentive to hold on to them.

However, the world has changed considerably since Becker studied the earnings of college graduates in post-war United States. With an increasing amount of individuals with higher and higher levels of education, having a degree is no longer the only competitive advantage in the labour market - and may therefore not transfer into a higher paying job. In fact education is increasingly becoming a necessity rather than something that provides one with added value on the labour market. All in all education is still technically an investment - but a very necessary one. Therefore, in many ways educational inflation has not necessarily diminished the value of education, but actually increased it: educational expansion and growing requirements from the side of the employer have resulted in the need to obtain more and higher levels of education (Aro, 2003). Even with educational expansion those with higher education are still more likely to earn more than their less-educated counterparts: investments in education have been found to have positive effects on the working situation and income development of individuals both in Finland and abroad (Asplund & Maliranta, 2006).

Nevertheless, these growing skill requirements of an industrial society have essentially translated into educational requirements: "Education prepares students in the skills necessary for work, and skills are the main determinant of occupational success" (Collins, 1979: 7). Furthermore, developments in technology have also imposed a certain need for technological literacy among the workforce (Collins, 1979). However, it should be noted that the skill demands of an occupational position are not fixed: instead the demands adjust to the supply of labour available for that position: it is essentially a bargaining process (Collins, 1979). Education, like skills, is a 'positional good' (Wolf, 2002). Already after the 1960s, high school education was the norm and a large amount of students continued to further education in the United States (Collins, 1979). Simultaneously people in the US started to realise that college no longer guaranteed jobs; even though this is essentially what individuals were promised entering into further education (Collins, 1979). As the number of highly skilled unemployed or underemployed began to rise, the blame often turned to education: that it was not correctly preparing students into the real world, and that education should be brought closer to everyday concerns (Collins, 1979). The real issue however was the oversupply of highly skilled individuals in the labour market.

One of the main reasons that individuals go into education is to get a decent job (Collins, 1979). Essentially this means that the desired result of education or reason for

going into education are outside what happens in the classroom. Most skills relevant for work are learned *at work*. Nevertheless, the blame of an oversupply of highly skilled workers has been put on educational institutions not preparing students for real life, instead of shifting at least part of the blame on the employers who expect ready-made employees straight from educational institutions. An employer's interest is to acquire high-performing employees with minimal costs – transferring the cost of skill acquisition from the employer to formal education funded by the state or the individual therefore follows this interest (Lampinen, 1998). At the same time, educational institutions have become a convenient way to hide the amount of people who are not in the labour force, giving the illusion that there are less unemployed individuals than there actually would be. For example, the Finnish Youth Guarantee has been criticised for forcing young people into education, the labour market, or training, while the real effectiveness of the programmes or work they are put into in the long run is questionable (Gretschel et al., 2014). While such measures appear as a success in statistical evidence, e.g. a drop in youth unemployment, they may not significantly alter the lives of young people in the long run.

2.3 Transition to adulthood

2.3.1 Life-course studies and emerging adulthood

Using the frame of a “life-course” refers to the idea that in life an individual moves through sequential life stages, including childhood, youth, adulthood and old age (Aries, 1962 in Moore, 2011). Furthermore, life courses are also culturally constructed (Meyer, 1988 in Hammer, 2007). As defined by Hammer (2007: 249): “Each life stage is accompanied by the cultural definition of needs, competencies, tasks and behaviours thought to be appropriate for individuals belonging to a given age group”. Therefore, the expectations society has for a young person in Finland may largely differ from those in another European country, not to mention within Finland. However, this idea that life can be easily split into stages is very rigid and has recently been replaced by a more flexible understanding of the life-course; this is especially relevant in the experiences of youth today, as they may achieve the social status of an adult in one aspect of life, but fail to ever achieve it in another (Moore, 2011). One's position along the life course can also be determined in different ways: for example whether one is a child or adult could be determined by biological age or alternatively the acquirement of certain life experiences - it all depends on how society chooses to place individuals on this

‘timeline’(Speder et al., 2014). For example, childhood has often been defined in terms of shared experiences: children spend most of their time in school, and their actions are restricted by parental and societal control (Valentine, 2003). Adults on other hand are legally defined as those over 18, an age that suddenly comes along with both rights and responsibilities (Mary, 2012). It has not always been the case that age itself has translated into certain informal cultural and social expectations (Speder et al., 2014). In fact, the life stages we now take for granted have not always existed: for example, ‘adolescence’ was only invented when our economies became more industrialised (Mary, 2012)

While the life-course model may not perfectly reflect reality, it still remains the measuring stick towards which young people compare themselves (Moore, 2011). Brannen (2015) calls this the ‘destandardisation’ of the life-course: even though the life-course type of thinking remains in society, the life-course itself may look quite different. The focus however, is often on redefining the stage of youth, rather than finding “adulthood” itself a problematic concept (Brannen, 2015). An alternative to comparing youth and adulthood is to come up with a completely new stage of life. Arnett (2000, 2007) has decided to call the ambiguous period between youth and adulthood ‘emerging adulthood’. ‘Emerging adulthood’ refers to the period of life from the late teens through the twenties, with a special focus on the age bracket between 18-25, and is a distinct life phase that is not quite adolescence and not quite adulthood (Arnett, 2000). In contrast, in the German context emerging adulthood was largely seen as an extension of the youth phase of the life-course (Bynner, 2005). Arnett (2000: 469) describes the life phase of ‘emerging adulthood’ as having “relative independence from social roles and from normative expectations”. Furthermore, this period in one’s life when a young person is allowed to ‘explore’ what life has to offer has been made largely possible by economic affluence, prolonged life expectancy, and the contraceptive revolution (Arnett, 2000; 2007). The experiences of individuals are then tightly connected to the societal environment of their time - emerging adulthood as a distinct life phase has only really developed as economic and social wellbeing has developed (Arnett, 2000).

According to Riley (1987) it is impossible to disconnect the study of societal change and individual life course processes. This is especially relevant in the study of age in sociology: as a cohort of people age, i.e. move chronologically forward in time, they

develop biologically, psychologically and socially (Riley, 1987). Through this aging process, individuals are constantly reallocated into different stages of life with different social rules and roles, being re-socialised into each stage (Riley, 1987). While this movement occurs somewhat by individual choice, there are also societal rules and mechanisms that define one's place within the social structure (Riley, 1987). However, aging is also a unifying experience, particularly for those aging and moving across the stages of life at the same time. According to Riley (1987), each cohort, i.e. those born around the same time, has a unique experience of aging due to social change: because society changes, people in different cohorts age in different ways. On the other hand, cohorts also influence social change: as successive cohorts age in new ways they alter the existing social structure (Riley, 1987). "The world of our mothers is unlike the world of today" (Rose Coser in Riley, 1987). Emerging adulthood could then be seen as a new form of aging.

In response to social change, millions of individuals in a cohort begin to develop new age-typical patterns and regularities of behavior (changes in aging); these behavior patterns then become defined as age-appropriate norms and mores, are reinforced by "authorities," and thereby become institutionalized in the structure of society (social change); in turn, these changes in age norms and social structures redirect age-related behaviors (further changes in aging). (Riley, 1987: 4)

However, equally important is the fact that social change and the aging of cohorts do not happen along the same timeline: therefore, depending on the pace of social change, one cohort may live through the norms of their parents' or even grandparents', simultaneously trying to adjust to the new norms of a changing society - alternatively, a person born in a cohort where social change has recently taken place may only be socialised into those new norms (Riley, 1987). This is of course assuming that one could pinpoint a timeline for social change to begin with: each cohort lives through social change, as did the ones before them and those that will come after (Riley, 1987).

Probably the major social change of our time that has altered successive cohort experiences of aging is the dramatic decline in mortality, which has had equally dramatic consequences for the different stages of the life course (Riley, 1987). The prolongation of life has been accompanied by a prolongation of schooling and working

life - and with prolongation of schooling attention has even turned to the possibility of pushing the working life further into the later years of one's life. Retirement was still rare at the turn of the 20th century, while now it occupies approximately one quarter of a person's 'adult' life (Riley, 1987). The prolongation of life has also altered family life, with adults having more time with their children, and living adult life together for a longer period of time; even the meaning of death has been redefined (Riley, 1987). While the prolongation of life, along with other social changes, has had its impact on all stages of the life course, the effects have not been identical for all stages. The next section will concentrate on how these social changes have altered youth transitions into adulthood.

2.3.2 Transitions to adulthood: transitions from education to employment

Another important area to look at is the 'transition to adulthood' literature. According to Gauthier, 2007: 218), 'transition to adulthood' refers to one of the early parts of life course when a person leaves the stage of adolescence to gradually adopt a series of adult roles. As discussed briefly in the context of emerging adulthood, the transition of a young person to adulthood can refer to a number of things: in a societal rather than biological sense it is most often seen as the transition of a young person from school to work; however, it could also refer to the transition from living with one's parents to living with a partner and starting a family. Indeed, an individual can technically be seen as an adult in one sphere, and a young person in another; for example, while legally one becomes an adult at 18, economic independence may only be achieved in the late 20s (Mary, 2012). The boundaries between youth and adulthood have become blurred – especially if one solely concentrates on what age corresponds to which stage of life (Mary, 2012). Other boundaries to cross include entering sexual relationships, becoming a citizen, and leaving the home (Punch, 2002 in Moore, 2011). In reality there seems to be paradoxical changes happening in the transition to adulthood, as it simultaneously decelerates and accelerates: longer periods in education, and a lack of secure employment, are postponing these transitions to later in one's life; simultaneously, the breaking down of families, sexual liberation, and moving for school or work are forcing young people to become independent adults early on (Jeffrey & McDowell, 2004 in Moore, 2011). This thesis will concentrate on the former - the transition from school to work. This is not to say that other forms of transition are not relevant, but in the context of employability and confidence in education it is this transition from school to work

that is of most relevance. However, one should note that often these different transitions are also interconnected: for example, one's ability to start a family can rest on one's ability to provide for the family, which is often done through paid employment. It is this example that demonstrates the relevance of employment and the world of work for people's everyday lives.

In this line of thinking, changes in the world of work can have a large impact on people's everyday lives: according to (Kalleberg, 2009: 1): "Work is a core activity in society. It is central to individual identity, links individuals to each other, and locates people within the stratification system." While not to diminish the importance of other aspects, 'work' in the modern industrialised world has become a major, identifying aspect of people's lives (Kalleberg, 2009). A large part of people's time is spent at work, making it a unifying experience that is difficult to separate from other aspects of life (Kalleberg, 2009). For young people there is the added dimension that they may still not have completely transitioned into the labour market – and therefore, not completely to adulthood either. There is often the assumption that a young person's transition from childhood to adulthood is linear, exactly because transitions from school to work are assumed to be linear (Valentine, 2003). For often enough, young people's transitions to adulthood are characterised by economic independence, of which wage labour is of course only one possible (but important) source (Smeeding & Phillips, 2002: 103-106). The transition itself is shaped by the surrounding environment: the labour market, the family, educational systems, and consumer culture to name a few (Valentine, 2003).

Also early transitions are becoming increasingly difficult as traditional skills are being replaced by new technologies; society has come to define these skills as being achieved in education, therefore education is being prolonged, as is the transition to work and in essence adulthood (Valentine, 2003). Education itself has also become an increasingly important part of the transition to adulthood, mainly through its effect on employment and other aspects of life. According to Bourdieu (1984: 150), young people can experience a "broken trajectory effect" when a failure to achieve in education or fulfil family roles results in "blighted hope or frustrated promise". On the other hand, this prolonging of education has resulted in two opposing phenomena: while it has opened up more possibilities for young people to follow different paths, it has also created an underclass of young people being left behind (Valentine, 2003). Indeed, education is becoming so important, that those who fail to achieve it will get left behind: while

education used to be something that added your value in the labour market it is increasingly becoming a necessity. In a time when the working period of one's life is becoming increasingly intensified, being left behind in the 'peak years' can have detrimental effects on other parts of the life course (Brannen, 2015).

One of the main reasons why young people's transitions to adulthood have become increasingly complex is the changing economy. According to Beck (1992), the post-industrial era is characterised by a new modernity, which encompasses changes in the labour market, familial relations and class cultures, which will essentially translate into very different pathways for young people to follow. The requirements of the knowledge economy have made education increasingly important in attaining a job, or at least a well-paid one (Granter, 2009: 102). In fact, in the knowledge economy, the best jobs are the ones that require higher education (Arnett, 2004: 145). With this growing need for education, young people are increasingly going into higher education in order to better their chances of getting a well-paid job in the future. It is this prolonging of education that has also prolonged the period of youth: instead of moving straight from school to work, and starting a family, as during the Fordist era, young people are lengthening their period of youth by furthering their education (Valentine, 2003: 40). In fact, this prolonging of education can have a large impact on the transition to adulthood: young people today may be forced to continue living with their parents due to the high cost of living and education. Indeed, according to White & Wyn (2008: 131), more and more young people are staying at home for greater periods of time than ever after WWII. There is an increasing phenomenon of the older generations supporting the younger generations, as young people are no longer making smooth and quick transitions into working life, and therefore are often unable to provide for themselves (White & Wyn, 2008: 131).

Another option besides depending on one's parents for support is to work while studying. In fact, according to Doogan (2009: 161), because higher education has not been completely funded by the state, students often *need* to combine their studies with work. Indeed, young people often habit multiple situations, e.g. working while studying, demonstrating that a clear-cut transition from school to work is no longer the norm (Plug & du Bois-Raymond, 2005: 65). This is where the changing economy has come to benefit youth: the increasing amount of temporary and part-time work, or 'flexible work', has made higher education possible for students whose parents may not have the

resources to support them. This sort of ‘flexible work’ may be one reason for the changing attitude to work, and the decline of primacy in the role of work in the human experience, especially for youth. Unfortunately, the ‘flexible’ work often available for students mainly consists of McJobs, i.e. low paid service sector jobs, unlikely to be jobs that they truly “love” (Arnett, 2004: 143-144).

In fact, according to Doogan (2009: 164), students do not see themselves staying in these jobs in the long run. Whether a student or not, young people see these jobs as temporary: something to help support themselves while looking for something more meaningful (Arnett, 2004: 143). These first jobs that young people and students acquire are often only for making money; whether to finance their consumption, living or education. But it is precisely because of the work’s temporary nature, and the primacy of financial reward, that the significance of paid work for these young people has declined. However, all of this discussion has revolved a lot around a largely Anglo-Saxon context, whereas Breen & Buchmann (2002) make the point that institutional context, whether it be for example labour market regulation or the welfare state regime, can play a large role in cross-national differences in transitions to adulthood. For example, in the Finnish context, it is important to keep in mind the role of the welfare state in assisting young people in these transitions, as well as the structure of the education system.

3 PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Youth transitions, especially from education to employment, are of interest to a wide range of stakeholders, including policy makers, academics, as well as educational institutions. Therefore, it is no surprise that previous research in this field is very rich, constituting of both quantitative and qualitative studies. This section will showcase previous research touching on the topics of youth transitions from education to employment, graduate employability, skill gaps, and finally educational expansion and confidence in education.

3.1 Youth transitions from education to employment

3.1.1 Patterns of labour market entry

Youth transitions from education to employment have been researched widely in both academic and policy making contexts. The reason policy makers are so interested in the subject is growing concern over rising youth unemployment figures and the skills demands of the economy. In societies with ageing populations, such as most countries in Europe, making sure that most if not all of the working age population is in employment will be vital to ensure that the growing population in retirement are provided for. For example, the growing number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) resulted in an estimated loss of €162 billion for European economies in 2012 (Eurofound, 2014). It is therefore no surprise that the European Union has developed an interest in European youth, not at least in their school to work transitions: the introduction of the European Youth Strategy explicitly states the need to create more and equal opportunities in education and the labour market (European Commission, 2016). While such concerns have existed to some extent in the past as well, the most recent economic and financial crisis has highlighted this need with its detrimental impact on youth unemployment.

A relatively recent report from the EU agency Eurofound (2014), analysed relevant indicators of transitions to adulthood in Europe, including indicators describing school to work transitions. While the indicators also included ones describing transitions to adulthood beyond employment (e.g. age of leaving the parental home, age of starting a family), the key findings of the study were largely related to employment. Furthermore, a young person's ability to leave the parental home or to start a family are largely connected to their ability to derive an income to do so, which is often very much related

to their ability to find employment (Eurofound, 2014: 2). In the end a smooth transition from education to employment is often a prerequisite for an independent and autonomous life. In the European context, those countries that were able to integrate school and working life, whether through apprenticeship systems (e.g. Germany and Austria) or early labour market experiences while studying (the Nordic model), displayed smoother transitions from education to employment. However, an added issue in the current European climate is the increased inability of young people to hold a job even if they manage to get one. Young people are increasingly employed under temporary contracts, and only a quarter of those under study managed to change those temporary contracts into permanent ones (Eurofound, 2014). Indeed, the economic downturn has increased competition between job-seekers, putting young people at a relative disadvantage to the rest of the working-age population due to their lack of or minimal work experience. Education is also becoming increasingly important: in 2009 those with a tertiary level qualification took an average of 5 months to find their first employment, while the average was around 10 months for lower qualifications (Eurostat, 2015). Similarly, the OECD (2015), found that while on average over 80% of people with tertiary education were employed in OECD member countries in the year 2014, the figures were lower for those with lower levels of education. However, the data also shows that younger adults (25-34) have higher unemployment rates compared to older adults (55-64 year olds) at all levels of education (OECD, 2015).

Youth transitions have also been of great interest to academic researchers. A large amount of these studies have been cross-country comparisons; such comparisons allow researchers a way to analyse potential reasons why transitions are smoother in some countries compared to others. These cross-country comparison include a large amount of literature on the differences and similarities within Europe (Baciu, 2013; Billari, 2004; Billari & Liefbroer, 2010; Buchmann & Kriesi, 2011; M Lindberg, 2008; Matti Lindberg, 2009; Scherer, 2005; Wolbers, 2007), the Nordic countries (Albaek et al., 2015), and 'industrialised countries' (Gauthier & Furstenberg, 2002; Smeeding & Phillips, 2002). These sort of cross-country comparisons mainly look at whether institutional, cultural and societal differences could possibly explain any differences in the smoothness of youth transitions from education to employment. For example, according to Scherer (2005), discussion on youth unemployment has long concentrated on a perceived need to deregulate the labour market; however, she suggests that it is

national institutional differences more generally that impact the smoothness of school to work transitions. For example, the UK is characterised by a rapid labour market entry yet unstable employment; Germany by a rapid entry and stable employment; and Italy by a difficult entry, but once they have found employment it is relatively stable (Scherer, 2005). These differences are largely explained not only by their labour market regulation, but also their educational systems. For example, while Germany has relatively strict employment regulation, it also has an educational system that clearly signals the skills it provides to employers; this is seen to result in a smoother transition because the employer knows what they are investing in (Scherer, 2005).

On the other hand, all of the countries in this study showed that education has a significant effect on labour market entry; such a similarity signals the importance education holds in modern societies today (Scherer, 2005). The individual's educational level, as well as the national or local educational system, have been found important determinants of patterns of labour market entry (Albaek et al., 2015; Baciú, 2013; Buchmann & Kriesi, 2011; Danziger & Ratner, 2010; Leventhal, Graber, & Brooks-Gunn, 2001; Wolbers, 2007). Lastly, Lindberg (2009) makes a similar comparison between European countries, grouping Germany and Finland under the same institutional frame. His study concentrates on early career mobility, and mobility within the educational system. According to Lindberg (2009), in countries such as Finland and Germany, student mobility within the education system is relatively high when compared to other European countries. However, this mobility in education is not reflected in mobility in the labour market: very often the first job a graduate gets is already of a relatively high status (Lindberg, 2009). In contrast to e.g. their British counterparts, young people in Finland and Germany prolong their education and often work during their studies (Lindberg, 2009). Lindberg (2009) concludes that the status and stability of employment after a young person graduates is often much higher in Germany and Finland than in the UK, precisely because these young people already have work experience. Labour market entry, and the employability of graduates, is therefore not just dependent on education, but previous work experience as well.

3.1.2 Graduate employability and occupational expectations

Very much linked to research on labour market entry is research on graduate employability. A lot of research in this field falls into two categories: labour market outcomes x amount of time after graduation (Garrouste & Rodrigues, 2012; Mason,

Williams, & Cranmer, 2009; Moreau & Leathwood, 2006; Murphy, Blustein, Bohlig, & Platt, 2010; Teichler, 2002; Tomlinson, 2012; Tuominen, Rautopuro, & Puhakka, 2011); and occupational expectations of soon-to-be graduates (Gedye, Fender, & Chalkley, 2004; Oliver, 2011; Puhakka et al., 2010; Tomlinson, 2007, 2008, 2012). A lot of the research on what kind of jobs graduates end up doing is done by the educational institutions themselves. For example, in Finland, universities collect data annually on the employment outcomes of their graduates (Aarresaari, 2016). The survey is sent to graduates five years after graduation (Master's degree), with the anticipation that by then they are already well established within their field. The purpose of these surveys is not only to observe the career paths of graduates, but also to find out how well the graduates' skills match the needs of the labour market (Tampereen yliopisto, 2016). Furthermore, the research data acts as a source of information for current and future students on the potential career paths a certain field of study could lead to (töissä.fi, 2016).

An interesting aspect of employability research highlighted by Tomlinson (2007, 2008, 2012) in the UK context is the fact that graduates are increasingly aware that a degree is not enough in the competitive labour market. While students still see the importance of having a degree, and the place this offers them in the competitive ranking of the labour market, they have also come to realise that their future labour market outcomes depend on more than their credentials (Tomlinson, 2008). While mass education has been seen as a solution to providing equal opportunities in the labour market, educational expansion has essentially led to giving increased value to other aspects beyond education. The fact that 'the degree is not enough' can have the power of maintaining those from disadvantaged backgrounds in their disadvantaged positions, even if they acquire the necessary educational credentials (Tomlinson, 2008). Similar observations have been made by Finnish researchers as well (Puhakka et al., 2010; Tuominen et al., 2011). While unemployment figures are lower for those with higher degrees, the growing number of graduates has led to a situation where a degree is a necessity, but alone not enough (Tuominen et al., 2011). Furthermore, the type of the degree has an increasingly important role to play: Tuominen et al. (2011) discovered that those graduates with 'generalist' degrees found it more difficult to find employment than

those with a ‘professional’ degree³. With a larger number of highly qualified candidates, employers are able to pick and choose graduates with an education that best matches the job in question, making the choice of one’s field of study increasingly important as well.

Lastly, another trend is to look at the incidence of over-education and under-education, or skill mismatches in different countries. For example, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) has collected data on skill mismatches in Europe (ILO, 2014). According to the ILO (2014), the incidence of over-education as a percentage of total employment is somewhere between 11.1% and 27%. More specific information on whether young people feel they are overeducated for their jobs has been done by the Finnish Youth Barometers (Myllyniemi, 2014). For example, in 2013 respondents were asked: ‘Does your current employment match your educational background?’; 38% of respondents reported being in employment that completely matched their educational background, while the overall majority thought that their job matched their educational background at least to some extent. International comparisons have shown that Finnish youth tend to find jobs that match their educational background relatively quickly after their graduation; one potential explanation that has been found is the high incidence of graduates who worked during their studies (Myllyniemi, 2014). However, while these sort of data sets can describe what the situation in the labour market is now, they do not necessarily provide solutions for the future, i.e. how such skill mismatches can be tackled and what exactly are the skills required by the labour market.

3.2 The relationship between education and the labour market

3.2.1 The employer perspective on employability – the skills debate

Another perspective on employability research is the study of what kind of skills graduates would need to be more employable. According to Ahola & Hoffman (2012), education research in Finland has rarely concentrated on asking employers what kind of skills they actually expect from graduates. Discussion often concentrates on the bigger picture: what sectors will provide employment, what kind of qualifications do individuals and in effect the labour market need. For example, Cedefop (2015a) describes the majority of Finnish skill demand up until 2025 to consist of more job

³ A ‘professional’ degree refers to a degree that offers some sort of official credential for a certain profession, e.g. a psychologist or teacher. A ‘generalist’ degree on the other hand could be applied to a larger variety of different types of employment.

opportunities requiring mid-level or high-level qualifications, and that most of these jobs will be in healthcare, engineering, science, business, and teaching. While rarer in research on employability, there are also some studies that look at the employer perspective and the specific skills that are expected of graduates (Broecke, 2015; Desjardins & Rubenson, 2011; Humburg, Van der Velden, & Verhagen, 2013; Puhakka et al., 2010; Raybould & Sheedy, 2005; Stasio, 2016; Taylor, 2005).

Taylor (2005) specifically looks at what kind of skills employers expect from graduates, and how well this fits with students' perceptions of what is expected of them. While the context of the study is largely in vocational education, many of the same expectations and issues are apparent in public discussion regarding education in general. Public discussion seems to revolve around the idea that there are skill shortages that need to be filled; however, the ambiguity of what these skills actually are makes it difficult for educational institutions and students themselves to follow the needs of employers (Taylor, 2005). In fact, Cedefop (2015b) states that at least half of all European enterprises, and up to 2/3 of them, face other difficulties besides actual skills gaps when looking for skilled workers. Therefore, while there may be sectors or employers that truly face skill gaps, the issue may also not be skill related: the employer may not be able to provide a competitive wage, or they just might not be committed to talent development themselves (Cedefop, 2015b; Taylor, 2005).

Nevertheless, those employers that do experience skill shortages often stress the importance of very generalist skills or social skills. For example, Puhakka et al. (2010) found that the most important skills expected of Finnish graduates are: problem-solving skills, teamwork and social skills, communication skills in Finnish, information acquisition skills, and organisation and cooperation skills. While these skills may to some extent be taught in formal education, they are also acquired and perfected on the job. Indeed, expectations among employers seem to be getting higher and higher, and the supply of highly qualified graduates is continuously increasing along with it. In Finland, Salminen (2013) went through development in employment ads and discovered ever-increasing requirements from employers for employees. With the already high supply of highly qualified individuals and graduates, and with this number continuously increasing, employers are able to have such ever-increasing requirements. One historical development to blame for this phenomenon is educational expansion.

3.2.2 Educational inflation and confidence in education

Research in the area of educational inflation can involve a number of different types of terms such as over-education and credential inflation, though all of these essentially describe the same thing: the relationship between educational credentials and the labour market. As was already expressed by Collins in the late 1970s, each generation has spent more and more time in education, achieved higher and higher credentials, and taken jobs that have higher educational requirements (Collins, 1979). In fact, education has become increasingly important with each generation, and still remains an important predictor of a person's occupational success (Collins, 1979). The trend in tertiary degree acquisition between 2000 and 2014 in the OECD has been positive: in 2000 the OECD average for the number of individuals with a tertiary degree was 22%, in 2014 the OECD average was 34% (OECD, 2015). Furthermore, having a tertiary degree is more likely among the younger population, i.e. those between 25 and 34 years old, as the OECD average for having a tertiary degree was 41% in 2014 for this age group (OECD, 2015). The respective figures for Finland when looking at the population between the ages of 25 and 64 are 33% in 2000, and 42% in 2014 (OECD, 2015). Interestingly enough though, only 40% of Finns in the age group of 25-34 have a tertiary degree, which is lower compared to the average of the population in the age range 25-64 (OECD, 2015).

The phenomenon of educational or credential inflation, or over-education, have been looked at by a number of authors, including Aro (2003, 2014); Smyth & McCoy (2011); Vaisey (2002); and Werfhorst & Andersen (2005). In the Finnish context, credential or educational inflation is a relatively recent phenomenon. While Collins was writing about credential inflation in the US context already in the late 1970s, only a third of the Finnish population had educational credentials beyond compulsory or basic education (Aro, 2014). In his doctoral thesis Aro (2014) found that educational inflation in Finland between 1970 and 2008 has been especially prominent at the lowest tertiary level and the lower university level (i.e. Bachelor's degree). However, while most of the attention is on the increasing number of tertiary degrees and educational attainment, there is also research that delves more into the consequences of such inflation. In fact, educational inflation or over-education can have vast societal consequences: for example, among men in the US, over-education is a significant predictor of lower job satisfaction, political polarisation, and a weakened belief in the link between hard work and success

(Vaisey, 2002). Another societal impact is the effect of credential inflation on educational attainment: according to Werfhorst & Andersen (2005), people are generally less likely to invest in education when its value is *relatively* low. This follows directly from human capital theory: if education is less likely to help you in the labour market, then people are less likely to invest in it (Werfhorst & Andersen, 2005). Therefore, if educational expansion leads to a loss in educational value, this could lead to people investing less in education. In this case other aspects may become more important in the labour market, such as networks, social skills, and other class-related personal characteristics (Werfhorst & Andersen, 2005). Alternatively, education maintains its significance but the status of the educational institution and the specific field of study or specialisation become increasingly important in standing out in the labour market. According to Wolf (2002: 244): “having the right qualifications, in the right subjects, from the right institutions, is of ever growing importance.” All in all educational inflation is the result of the labour market not keeping up with educational expansion.

Research in the field of confidence in education on the other hand is quite limited. Outside of Finland something similar to the concept of ‘confidence in education’ has been discussed by relatively few (Gedye et al., 2004; Morgan, Leenman, Todd, & Weeden, 2013; Tomlinson, 2008). The only research specifically on trust in education includes research done in Germany by Schupp & Wagner, the Bertelsmann Foundation, and the opinion research institute Ipsos (in Bormann & John, 2014). While the other articles do not mention confidence in education as a concept in itself, or belief or trust for that matter, they essentially look at how individuals, especially young people, see the value of a degree. For example, Tomlinson’s (2008) respondents expressed an understanding that their career paths would be more complex than getting a degree and moving directly into the labour market; in effect they view to be in heavy competition with other graduates with similar backgrounds and aspirations, as the number of graduates continues to increase. In contrast, Morgan et al. (2013) take a different perspective, looking at how young people’s belief in educational requirements is reflected in patterns of college entry: the study found that those students with uncertain or inaccurate beliefs about the educational requirements of their expected jobs were less likely to go to college than those with accurate beliefs. Therefore, confidence in education, or in other words the perception of the relationship between education and

employment can influence both how a young person views their chances on the labour market, but also whether to bother with education in the first place.

In the Finnish context, the concept is mainly touched upon by two articles (Ahtonen, 2012; Silvennoinen & Klas, 1996). These two papers mention confidence in education as a term in itself, known in Finnish as 'koulutususkko', and attempt to measure it as well. For example, Silvennoinen & Klas (1996) find that those respondents who had been unemployed the longest also believed that in a society of mass unemployment educational investments such as vocational education will not solve the issue of mass unemployment. Aro et al. (2005) on the other hand do not specifically mention confidence in education as a concept, but do discuss the perception of educational value among different generations in Finland. Lastly, the trend in confidence in education specifically among Finnish *youth* has been analysed using the Finnish Youth Barometers (Myllyniemi, 2014). However, before turning to confidence in education in the Finnish Youth Barometers, it is relevant to discuss the state of the Finnish labour market, as this has potential consequences for young people's confidence in education. These statistics also give a better picture of the kind of labour market young people have been facing under the time period studied.

3.3 Finnish unemployment statistics: youth and the highly educated

3.3.1 Youth unemployment in Finland

Youth unemployment is a global problem: in 1993 there was an estimated 70 million unemployed young people, corresponding to a 12% youth unemployment rate; in 2003 already almost half of all the unemployed in the world were 15-24 year olds (88 million), corresponding to a youth unemployment rate of 14% (Järvinen & Vanttaja, 2005). However, there are large differences between countries; for example, in the industrialised countries youth unemployment actually decreased in the decade covering the latter half of the 1990s and the early 2000s (Järvinen & Vanttaja, 2005). Potential explanations for the 'success' of the industrialised countries are the prolongation of education as well as labour market activation policies that especially target youth (ILO, 2004: 8-9 in Järvinen & Vanttaja, 2005). More recently, youth unemployment has once again become an issue even in the industrialised world, including Europe: while Europe reached its lowest youth unemployment rate during the early 2000s, the economic crisis that hit in 2008 would change everything (Eurostat, 2016b). Youth unemployment in

Europe reached its peak in 2013 at 23.9% (Eurostat, 2016b). However, there are huge differences even within Europe: for example Finland has managed to stay at or below the EU-average, while countries such as Spain and Greece have had youth unemployment rates well above the average (Eurostat, 2016b).

But while Finnish youth unemployment may in comparison be lower to some other European countries, the average annual unemployment rate among 15-24 year olds in Finland has also gone through some dramatic changes. The youth unemployment rate in Finland was as high as 34% in 1994, dropping gradually to 21.5% in 1999. According to Järvinen & Vanttaja (2001), Finnish society went through a dramatic change with the economic depression of the 1990s, resulting in an unemployment rate that was permanently higher than before the crisis – even an economic boom did not reduce the rate back to its original level. Nevertheless, looking at the time period under study in this thesis, between 1999 and 2013, youth unemployment was at its lowest in 2007, at 16.5%, rising to 19.9% in 2013. This is indeed a sharp contrast to the figures before the economic downturn of the 1990s: in 1989 the youth unemployment rate was 8.6% (Statistics Finland, 2016). Finnish youth unemployment has then followed a similar pattern to the rest of Europe; however, in comparison, youth unemployment rates for example in Greece and Spain are far higher. In 2013, the youth unemployment rates in these two countries were over 50%; while these numbers have dropped to under 50% in 2015, they are still very high in comparison to the rest of Europe (Eurostat, 2016b). Nevertheless, young people within Finland are less likely to compare themselves to the Greeks and Spanish than they are to other Finnish youth. Therefore, increases in youth unemployment can also impact the way young people perceive the labour market, and the value of acquiring educational credentials. According to a study by Rice (1999), in the UK, participation rates in further education are positively related to the unemployment rate in the local labour market.

3.3.2 Rising unemployment among the highly educated in Finland

A worrying trend in a context where young people are encouraged to educate themselves – and where education is seen as at least a partial solution to high youth unemployment figures – is the growing unemployment figures of the highly educated. According to Taulu (2016), the increases in unemployment during the 2000s have been largest among those with a Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctoral degree. The largest

increases in unemployment have been among those with a Doctoral degree (Taulu, 2016). However, it should be noted that while unemployment among the highly educated is increasing, the unemployment figures for them are far lower than their less educated counterparts (Taulu, 2016). The most recent figures from 2016 show that the number of unemployed is increasing most for those with an equivalent to a Bachelor's degree, and those with some sort of post-graduate degree (after Master's degree) when comparing to the situation in 2015 (Taulu, 2016). Interestingly the number of unemployed in general has decreased in the time period, but this is largely because of a decrease in the number of unemployed among those with no tertiary qualifications (Taulu, 2016). This seems to go against what young people are told: that education 'guarantees' a job.

However, it should be noted that in most cases unemployment among the highly educated is unemployment immediately after graduation (Tuominen et al., 2011). Therefore, smoothening transitions to the labour market could partially solve rising unemployment among the highly educated. Another point to consider in the discussion of 'academic unemployment' is whether the degree acquired is 'generalist' or 'professional', i.e. are they degrees that prepare the student for employment in various fields or a very specific field. According to Tuominen et al. (2011), transitions among those with a 'professional' degree are often easier than those with a 'generalist' one. This is also evident among the unemployment statistics of the highly educated: the number of unemployed is far higher among those with generalist degrees such as a business degree or humanities degree, versus those who have graduated as doctors, dentists or architects; the only exception is engineers, specifically those working in construction (Taulu, 2016). Nevertheless, unemployment after graduation, even with educational qualifications, is becoming more and more probable. This can potentially impact young people's confidence in education, and whether they find investments in education are worth the trouble.

3.4 Confidence in education in the Finnish Youth Barometers

3.4.1 Background on the Finnish Youth Barometer

The Finnish Youth Barometer is an annual survey measuring Finnish youth's values and attitudes. The survey was conducted by the Advisory Council for Youth Affairs (Nuora) from 1994, but was then taken over by the Finnish Youth Research Network in 2004. It

has been conducted since 1994 and continues annually to this day, with the exception of the years 2003 and 2011 when no surveys were conducted. The initial motivation to conduct the surveys spurred from rising youth unemployment and concern of social exclusion after the depression of the 1990s. The survey started with the overall themes of employment and education, but as time passed the barometer came to encompass several different themes. Themes beyond employment have included among others: faith in 2006, youth culture and art in 2009, and welfare and wellbeing in 2012⁴.

It is apparent that the collection of the barometers began with the intention of longitudinal analysis, in addition to an analysis of the current youth's set of values and attitudes. However, in practice the move to specific themes for each year has led to less and less space being provided to recurring questions. For example, the questions related to employment attitudes and values used to be repeated annually, but according to the 2013 report, there has been a four year gap in asking these question due to the space provided to other questions (Myllyniemi, 2014). In addition, the original design of the survey has not held the test of time and some questions have been reformulated, as have different categories for the background variables, such as education.

3.4.2 Development of youth attitudes over time

In the 2013 report on the Finnish Youth Barometer a closer look is given to how Finnish youth's responses have changed over time (Myllyniemi, 2014). Therefore, in addition to summarising the distribution of responses in 2013, the report also summarises how these distributions have changed over time. While this is done for all the questions that have been repeated at one instance or another, let us concentrate on the two questions that will also be further analysed in this thesis:

1. Education significantly betters one's chances of being employed
2. Lifelong learning is important for staying employed

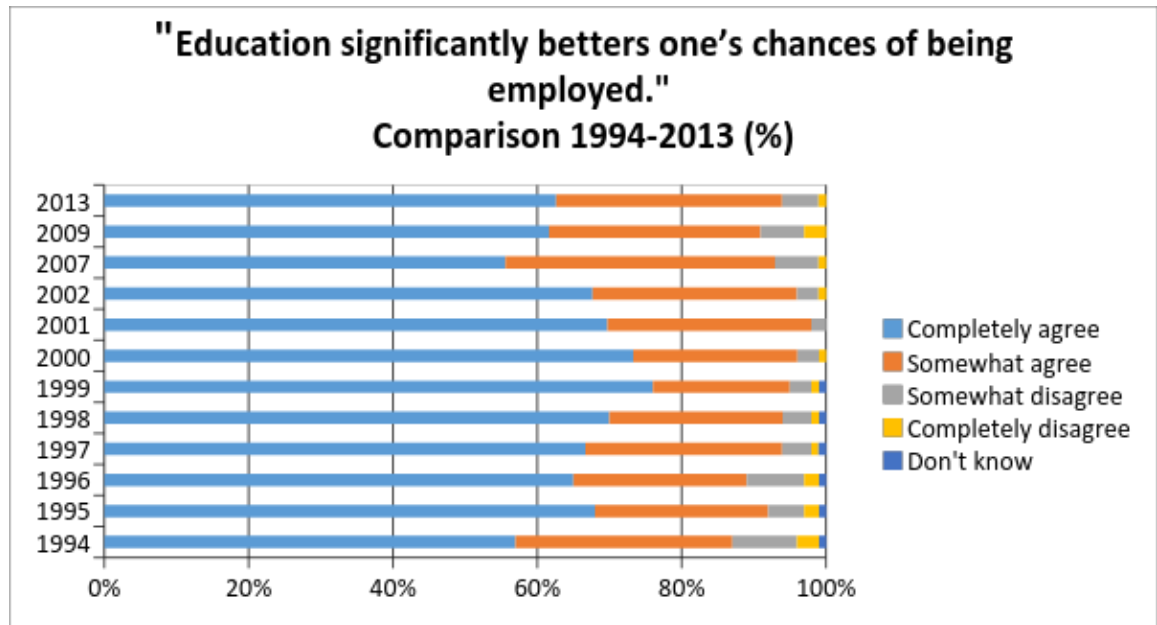
For a description of these variables for the purpose of this thesis please refer to the methods section. The purpose of this section is to report how these questions were analysed in the 2013 report of the Finnish Youth Barometer.

According to Myllyniemi (2014), more than 9 out of 10 young people believe that education betters their chances of employment. The importance of education for one's

⁴ For more information on the Finnish Youth Barometers: (Nuorisotutkimusseura, 2016; Valtion nuorisoasiain neuvottelukunta, 2016).

employability is then almost a given; however, there are also signs that these beliefs may have altered slightly over time. The figure below shows the overall distribution of response from 1994 to 2013 (for those years that this questions was asked):

Figure 1: Development of confidence in education (variable 1) 1994-2013



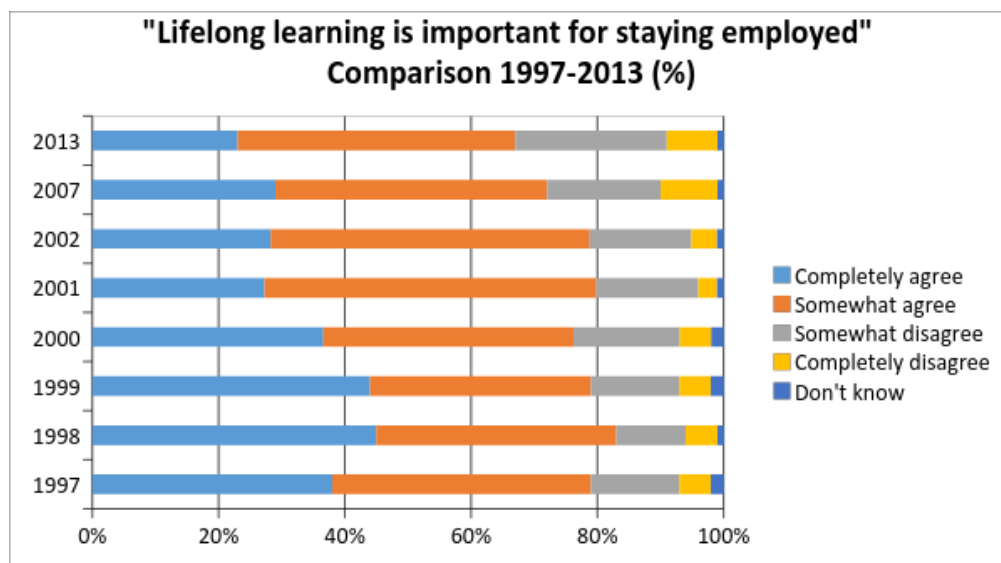
(Myllyniemi, 2014)

From the figure one can see that while confidence in education experienced an increasing trend from 1994, it started to decrease in the first years of the early 2000s. It wasn't until 2007 that confidence in education began to increase again. According to the report, a connection can be made between confidence in education and youth unemployment (Myllyniemi, 2014). The rising trend in confidence in education coincides with the economic depression of the 1990s when youth unemployment was high. However, in the boom years work was available also for less-skilled young people, which in turn resulted in the lowering of the youth unemployment rate. In 2008, as the economic and financial crisis hit, youth unemployment started to rise once again, along with the belief in the importance of education for employability. While the state of the economy alone cannot explain levels of confidence in education among young people, it is interesting to note that turning points in these levels have occurred after booms and busts. For the future it will be interesting if this trend continues as the economy starts to pick up again.

Another important trend related to confidence in education is the rising educational level of young people in Finland. In 1970, 18% of 25-34 year olds had completed a higher education degree, while the percentage had more than doubled in 2010 to 37% (Repo, 2012 in Myllyniemi, 2014: 67). While education has been found to reduce the chance of unemployment, young people are expected to be better and better educated. Furthermore, education has been found to have a lessening impact on wages (Idman, 2012 in Myllyniemi, 2014: 67). In addition to looking at the trend in confidence in education overall, the report also claims that confidence in education tends to drop as a young person graduates (Myllyniemi, 2014). This drop is most substantial among youth in secondary level vocational education (Myllyniemi, 2014). This is only a brief statement made in the report and is not further developed. This leaves space for further analysis as to establishing what differences in confidence in education there are among those who are at school, who are already graduated and at work, and those who are somewhere in the middle. This will be further explored in this thesis.

On another note, the report also links the question on the importance of lifelong learning for confidence in education (Myllyniemi, 2014). According to the table below (see Figure 2), Finnish youth's belief in the importance of lifelong learning for employment have declined since the early 2000s. While the decline is not steep, it is interesting in the sense that it doesn't seem to match the rhetoric of the importance of lifelong learning, the rise in education levels among young people, and the pressure for flexibility and ability to learn in the labour market.

Figure 2: Development of confidence in education (variable 2) 1997-2013



(Myllyniemi, 2014)

Also interesting is that while this question also measures confidence in education in some sense, it does not follow the same trend pattern as the question on the importance of education for employability. This led the report to consider the wording of the question and how the young people could have interpreted it: perhaps more and more young people no longer believe even lifelong learning can guarantee one's place in work (Myllyniemi, 2014). In 2008, the Finnish Youth Barometer asked young people what aspects they thought were important for getting a job; motivation, work experience and occupational skills came up as even more important than education (Myllyniemi, 2014). As for important life skills, young people identified social skills as crucial for survival in the labour market (Myllyniemi, 2014). Furthermore, belief in the importance of lifelong learning seems to increase with age – another brief mention in the report that will be further developed in this thesis.

3.5 Summary of previous research

In summary, previous research on confidence in education is still relatively limited, especially in the field of youth research. However, research on educational inflation, employability and patterns of labour market entry touch upon many related issues: the value of education, developments in the labour market, and the relationship between educational credentials and labour market prospects. While this thesis will concentrate on the concept of confidence in education, it is hard to isolate it from all the other concepts. However, there is obviously a gap in research for looking specifically at confidence in education, especially with quantitative data sets.

4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This thesis aims to further study the phenomenon of confidence in education among young people, especially its development in the Finnish context. On the basis of previous research and existing sociological discourse, I have formulated the following research questions:

1. How has Finnish youth's confidence in education developed between 1999-2013?
 - a. Are there observable differences in young people's confidence in education during boom versus bust years?
2. Does a young person's confidence in education depend on whether they are in education or employment? Have there been differing developments among those that are in education versus those who are in employment over time?
3. Does one's position on the transition path to adulthood impact one's confidence in education? Does a young person's age impact their confidence in education?

The first question will aim to build further on what has already been done by Myllyniemi (2014): on top of observable differences in percentages, statistical analysis will be applied to show whether young people's confidence in education differ between the three years under consideration. While much of the analysis of observable percentage differences has been done by Myllyniemi (2014), the reports do not mention any other statistical methods that would have been used to demonstrate changing youth perceptions over time.

The second and third questions are chosen on the basis of transition to adulthood and life-phase literature: if a person's life or youth can be split into distinct life phases, there may be differences in youth perceptions depending on the age group they belong to. Furthermore, the experiences of those who are in education versus those who have already left it are expected to differ. This in reference to the employability discourse, and how those who are already in employment are expected to have experiences of a mismatch between acquired educational credentials and the job they end up in. This in turn would result in a more realistic perception of the link between education and labour market outcomes.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Data

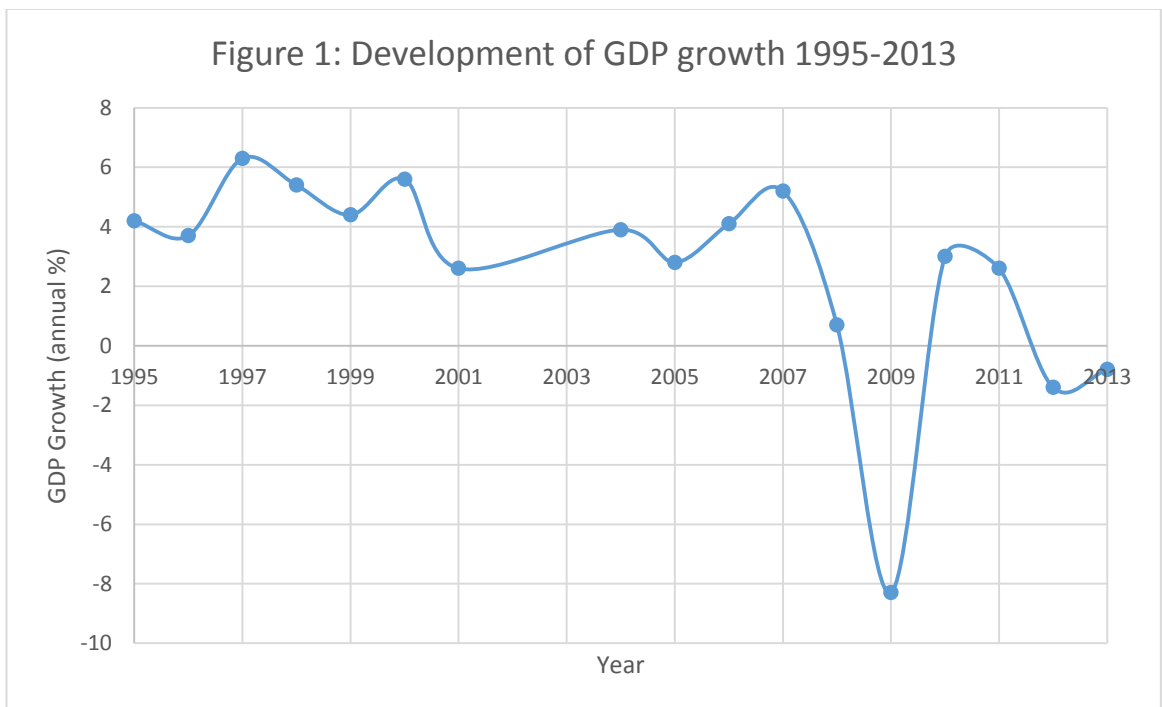
The quantitative data source that used in this thesis is the Finnish Youth Barometer— an annual survey sent out to young people between the ages of 15 and 29 in Finland. The data is best described as repeated cross-sectional data, as the survey is administered to a new sample of interviewees every year (Rafferty, 2011). The data sets are available upon request at the Finnish Social Science Data Archive. The barometer measures young people’s attitudes, values, and experiences, with changing themes every year; for example the theme of the barometer in 2014 was equality and discrimination. There are, however, also some recurring questions repeated on a regular basis, but not annually. The survey also includes background information on the participants, including gender, age, education, employment, mother tongue, etc. The results are also published annually by the Advisory Council for Youth Affairs together with the Finnish Youth Research Society (Valtion nuorisoasiain neuvottelukunta, 2016).

The data sets chosen for this thesis span three different years: 1999, 2007, and 2013. This selection is mainly due to practical reasons: not only is looking at the data for all 20 years time-consuming, a detailed analysis for 20 years would take up most if not all of the page numbers granted for a Master’s thesis. Furthermore, while one of the original ideas of the barometer was to ask the same questions every year, this has not happened in practice. When one is working with a pre-existing data set instead of collecting the data oneself, there are bound to be some issues with the data that make it hard to use for one’s own purposes. The first issue with the data is the fact that the work related questions have been asked with a different frequency and at very different points in time. Therefore, I have had a hard time finding 3 points of time in the data that I could compare, as some of the questions asked in the 1990s have not been repeated in recent years. Furthermore, for several of the questions wording may have changed, as well as key categories for background variables such as education. This has resulted in recoding of some of the variables, which is further discussed in the variables section.

After comparing sociological discourse on youth, education and employment to what the data can offer for the theme at hand, I have identified two variables that share the years outlined before: 1999, 2007 and 2013. As for why these three points in time are interesting, 1999 was a time when Finland was only just starting to boom with the rise

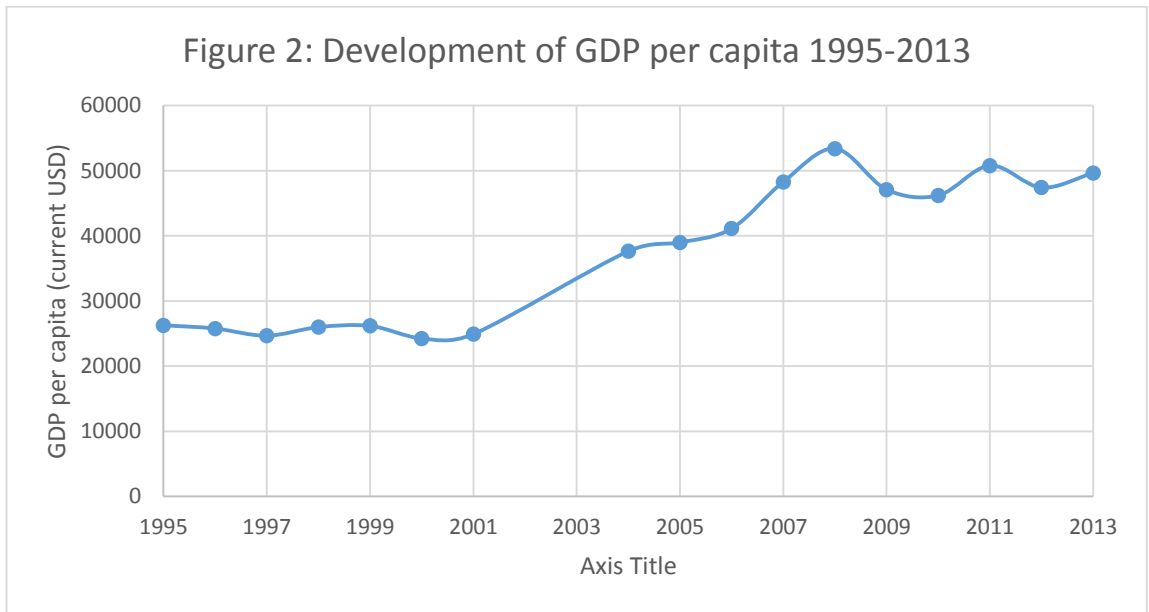
of Nokia and other technology corporations. The effects of the previous economic depression that started in the early 1990s and went on well into the late 1990s are also hypothesized to be visible in the 1999 data. 2007 on the other hand is exactly before the economic and financial crisis struck, with a continuous period of growth behind it. Finally, 2013 is well into the economic crisis at hand. These points in time therefore allow for the comparison of a time after the economic depression of the 1990s, 2007 demonstrating the final year of an unprecedented period of growth in Finland, and 2013 representing a period in time after the beginning of the most recent economic and financial crisis. Below is the development of the Finnish GDP per capita, GDP growth, and unemployment figures from 1995-2013 (See Figures 1, 2 and 3) which showcase the development of the Finnish economy and labour market during the chosen time period. While these are not perfect measures of the state of the economy or the labour market for the specific time points, they demonstrate the relevance of the chosen time period for further study. While drops in GDP growth and GDP per capita along with increases in unemployment may not exactly correspond with the years in question, it should be noted that the effects on the national economy often have a delayed effect on the lives of individuals. These delayed effects are hypothesised to be more visible in the perceptions collected for the Finnish Youth Barometers during the years in question.

Figure 3: Finnish GDP growth 1995-2013



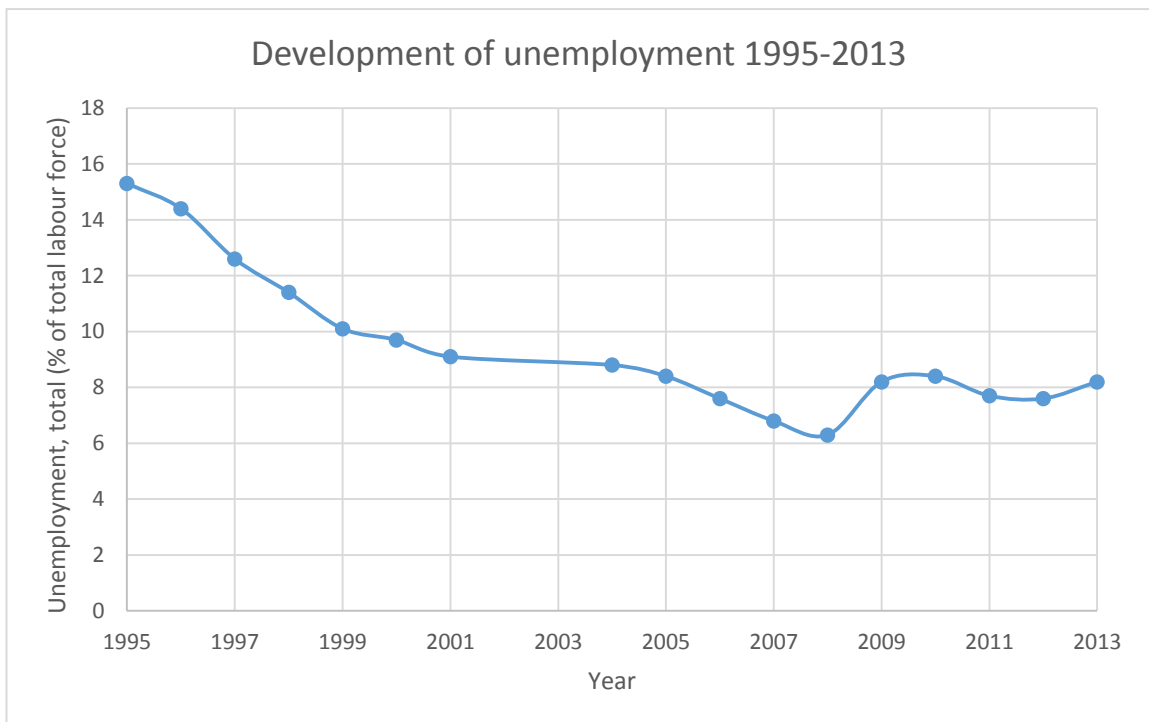
Source: (The World Bank, 2016)

Figure 4: Finnish GDP per capita 1995-2013



Source: (The World Bank, 2016)

Figure 5: Finnish unemployment 1995-2013



Source: (The World Bank, 2016)

5.2 Sampling

As already stated above, the Finnish Youth Barometer is collected on an annual basis (Myllyniemi, 2014). The practice for data collection has remained virtually the same.

The survey is conducted by phone interview. Potential participants are found through the Finnish Population Information System (Population Register Centre, 2016); a list of all 15-29 year olds in the system (excluding those living in Åland) are then connected with telephone numbers (landline and mobile) and personal details. The reports for the different years of the barometer have varying information on the sampling strategy and how the data was collected. Below is the available information on the sampling and data collection for the three different years.

In 1999 the interviews were done between 22.3.-1.4.1999 by Statistics Finland. In this year the number of young people in the sample was 1412 (n=1412), all of which had Finnish as their mother tongue. In 1999 a comparative group of 250 40-45 year olds were also interviewed. In total 1460 interviews were conducted, averaging at 9 minutes per interview. Of the total sample (including the adult group) of 1662, 196 persons were classified as “missing” (Saarela, 1999: 5).

In 2007 a random sample was drawn in a similar fashion as in 1999, but this time with quotas to make sure both genders and mother tongues (Finnish and Swedish), and different age groups and areas in Finland, were represented in the sample. The phone interviews were conducted in April 2007. 1903 young people were interviewed (n=1903), of which 103 were Swedish-speaking (Myllyniemi, 2007: 12).

In 2013 the phone interviews were conducted in June and July by TNS Gallup Oy. A random sample of 22 215 was drawn from the population of 15-29 year old young people in Finland (excluding Åland). A random stratified sub sample of 8 726 was taken and connected to phone numbers in order to conduct the phone interviews. A total of 1903 interviews were successful (n=1903). The calculated response rate out of all the phone interviews that were attempted was $1903/7333*100\% = 26\%$. Noteworthy in the report is the growing trend of young people not answering their telephones (Myllyniemi, 2014: 11). Furthermore, one might consider whether in the future telephone interviews are the best way to reach young people.

5.3 Variables

5.3.1 Dependent variables

As outlined above, there are some issues with the data; however the chosen questions have all been asked in the three years under study: 1999, 2007 and 2013. The point of

the study is to analyse the trend in young people's confidence in education in the period between 1999 and 2013. In addition, another goal of the thesis is to examine whether there are some differences between groups as regards to their confidence in education. The two questions measuring confidence in education, and therefore the dependent variables in this study are:

1. Koulutus parantaa olennaisesti työnsaantimahdollisuuksia

1. Education significantly better one's employability

2. Työelämässä pysyminen edellyttää jatkuvaa kouluttautumista

2. Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market

The above two questions in bold, are written in Finnish and appear here as they were asked in 2013. The italicised translations are unofficial translations of the barometer questions, as the research was conducted in Finnish and only a summary of the report exists in English.

According to Myllyniemi (2014), both variables described here measure confidence in education. While Myllyniemi (2014) does not open his reasoning, it could be argued that the statement holds when looking at how confidence in education is defined in the literature, as discussed previously. Education and employment are inextricably connected, and confidence in education can be seen as a belief that higher and higher education is necessary to both find and remain in employment. This is what is measured by the two questions: education's impact on finding employment, and its impact on remaining in employment. While the two questions measure different things, they can both be seen as indicators of confidence in education: one in the belief that education will help in finding a job, the other the belief that the idea of 'lifelong learning' is essential for staying in the labour market. On the other hand, both questions can also be seen to measure employability, or rather the role education plays in the concept.

However, there are some design issues with these dependent variables as well. For example, the wording has not remained exactly the same over the years. When working with data sets from several years, it is crucial to make sure that the any differences observed are the result of real variation and not due to a change in survey methodology or design (Rafferty, 2011). On the other hand, changing the wording of a survey

question is not necessarily a bad thing: it may be that the wording in the past was poor or that the wording from that time period does not suit the world we live in today. Nevertheless, it is possible that the validity of comparing responses to these questions could be compromised due to word changes, and is indeed another caveat of the data set used. The specific wording of the two questions, in Finnish, for the different years can be found in Appendix 1.

Another issue is the translation of the question from Finnish to English, as the meaning of the question in Finnish may not exactly match its English translation. According to the University of California (2007), the issue of language and translation in survey design has only recently been given the attention it deserves. Translation is difficult precisely because some expressions and words may not be directly translatable; therefore, sometimes direct translations need to give way to translations that have more of a 'semantic equivalence':

A well-translated survey instrument should have semantic equivalence across languages, conceptual equivalence across cultures, and normative equivalence to the source survey. (University of California, 2007: 1)

In this thesis, the direct word to word translation of the first question under study would be: "Education betters significantly the possibility of receiving employment." The last part has been moulded into one word in English, i.e. 'employability', so as to better fit the English language while maintaining the meaning. As discussed previously, employability is how employable one is, and could also be interpreted as one's chances of becoming employed or in fact 'receiving employment'. While the translation can be seen to maintain the meaning of the original question in Finnish, it is also possible that some of the meaning behind it is lost in translation. Furthermore, though the wording of the question implies that what is being asked is whether education is important more generally, it is possible that the young person has answered the question from their personal point of view. Even so, this can also be an interesting perspective to consider for the analysis of any differences that exist between different groups of respondents: the construction of one's own reality may be a reflection of personal experiences, but those experiences may also reflect opportunities and obstacles that exist for a certain group of people. This is where quantitative analysis of a large number of respondents

can minimise such effects, and rather analyse the experiences of a group of individuals on average, rather than one individual per se.

The responses themselves essentially measure agreement with the statements made. Both variables are measured by a Likert scale with options as follows: 1 = completely agree, 2 = somewhat agree, 3 = somewhat disagree, 4 = completely disagree, and 5 = don't know. The coding or ordering of the Likert scale from 1 to 5 has also not been the same for all three years. However, the Likert scale itself really only consists of number 1 to 4; it could even be argued that this is not a Likert scale, because there is no 'neutral' response between somewhat agree and somewhat disagree. Essentially the design of the available responses is forcing the respondent to lean towards one way or another, unless they choose 'don't know'. It should also be noted that in 2013, the number 4 corresponded to completely agree, while the number 1 corresponded to completely disagree. For 1999 and 2007 the coding was as outlined above, where 1 = completely agree and 4 = completely disagree. Therefore, the responses for 2013 were recoded to match the Likert scale for the years 1999 and 2007. On the other hand, just the ordering of the Likert scale response options could potentially have an effect on the participants' responses (Weng & Cheng, 2000). However, the Youth Barometer surveys were conducted by phone, meaning that the respondents were probably given the five different options verbally, rather than them filling out a 1 to 5 scale in front of them on paper. Furthermore, according to Weng & Cheng (2000), previous research on the effects of ordering have been inconclusive. Nevertheless, it is another potential caveat of the data used.

Another issue with Likert scales discussed in the literature is whether they are considered an ordinal or an interval variable (Cohen & Lea, 2004). While a lot of studies choose to consider Likert scales as interval variables for the purpose of performing certain statistical tests, this study will make no such assumptions (Cohen & Lea, 2004). This is mainly due to the reason that the specific design of these survey questions, and their responses, do not follow the idea that distances between responses are identical. For example, the distance between somewhat agree and somewhat disagree, is not necessarily the same as the distance between somewhat disagree and completely disagree. Furthermore, as discussed above, a lack of a neutral option and/or the addition of a 'don't know' option reduce the interval quality of the variable. The two

dependent variables can however be seen as ordinal rather than categorical variables as there is an observable ordering of responses (Cohen & Lea, 2004).

5.3.2 Independent variables

One of the research questions directly refers to how there may be different developments in and experiences of confidence in education depending on the stage of life the young person is at. The independent variables used in the preliminary analysis then are age group and primary activity. These two independent variables act as proxies for the idea of youth transitions from school to work, and allow for the analysis of the attitudes of young people depending on their current status in society, mainly whether they are still studying or already in employment. Furthermore, the year of interview also acts as an independent variable that will be used to analyse whether there are differences between respondents depending on the year they were interviewed in. Below is a more detailed description of the three independent variables used.

Age group

The age range chosen for this study is young people between the ages of 15 and 29. This has also been the age range used in the majority of the Finnish Youth Barometers, with a few exceptions: in some years a younger reference group has been included, while in others an older comparison group, in addition to some years allowing those aged 30 to be involved. Therefore, the data sets were first cleaned up to have the same age range of 15-29 before assigning each participant to an age group. The three age groups are as follows: 15-19, 20-24, and 25-29. These age groups have also been used in the official reports for the Finnish Youth Barometers, so most of the coding for these three age groups has already been done by Myllyniemi (2007; 2014).

The age group acts as a proxy for a young person's stage of life. Most young people in the first age bracket are still in formal schooling, and often have little if any work experience. In the second age group most young people will be already in further education, have some work experience or will be in the very beginning of their careers. The final age bracket then mainly includes young people who are in the labour market or are finishing their studies. Therefore, these age groups roughly divide young people on the basis of which stage they are in on the path from school to work. This is however, a rough estimate rather than an official categorisation: someone in the first age bracket may already be working full-time, while someone in the last one may only be

starting their studies. Nevertheless, belonging to a certain age group often comes with certain societal expectations, as outlined by Speder et al. (2014), and Valentine (2003). However, it makes sense to use another variable to describe a young person's stage of life, i.e. their primary activity.

'Pääasiallinen toiminta' or primary activity

'Pääasiallinen toiminta', the original Finnish term used in the survey, refers to the young person's primary activity in society. There are some differences in the categories over the three years, so the data was first coded so that the same categories apply throughout the three data sets. These categories are: 1 = student, 2 = employed, 3 = unemployed, 4 = other, 5 = no response. Most young people in the sample are either in education or in employment. Primary activity can also indicate the stage of life that a person is in: if they are primarily in education, they have yet to transition into the working life; if they are primarily in employment, they have more than likely already transitioned from school to work. It should however be noted that once again, this is a proxy for a young person's stage of life, and may not reflect individual experiences: one could be primarily in employment in order to finance their education for example. Nevertheless, those who are primarily in employment are known to have work experience, while this may not be true for those who are primarily in education. In this respect it will be interesting to compare if there are any differences in the responses depending on whether one looks at differences between age group versus primary activity.

Year of interview

To compare responses in the three different years, the data sets for these years were combined as one data set, with an added independent variable of 'year of interview'. This will allow for analysis comparing respondents depending on the year they were interviewed, as well as compare different groups in different years: e.g. whether students from the three years have similar responses. Each respondent was given a code based on the year they were interviewed, i.e.: 1 = 1999, 2 = 2007, and 3 = 2013.

Below is a breakdown of the number of respondents belonging to each year, as well as the number of respondents for the different age groups and primary activities. Worth noting is that the number of respondents was higher in 2007 and 2013, which can also

affect the results. The distribution of males and females is given here as reference, but is not a point of interest for this research.

Table 1: Composition of 1999 sample

Category	n	% of total sample
Male	630	50.4
Female	621	49.6
Total	1251	100
Aged between 15 and 19	478	38.2
Aged between 20 and 24	431	34.5
Aged between 25 and 29	342	27.3
Total	1251	100
Students	657	52.5
Workers	417	33.3
Unemployed	96	7.7
Other	81	6.5
Total (=n)	1251	100

Table 2: Composition of 2007 sample

Category	n	% of total sample
Male	949	49.9
Female	953	50.1
Total	1903	100
Aged between 15 and 19	635	33.4
Aged between 20 and 24	638	33.5
Aged between 25 and 29	629	33.1
Total	1903	100
Students	1091	57.3
Workers	656	34.5
Unemployed	58	3.0
Other	96	5.0
No response	1	0.1
Total (=n)	1903	100

Table 3: Composition of 2013 sample

Category	n	% of total sample
Male	974	51.2
Female	929	48.8
Total	1903	100
Aged between 15 and 19	613	32.2
Aged between 20 and 24	645	33.9
Aged between 25 and 29	645	33.9
Total	1903	100
Students	805	42.3
Workers	829	43.6
Unemployed	141	7.4
Other	120	6.3
No response	8	0.4
Total (=n)	1903	100

5.4 Methods

The detailed description of the data and methods chosen is vital for the credibility of the research study (Freese, 2007). This allows for the replicability of the study, meaning that the results can be verified by other researchers. Lastly of course the data itself needs to be available in order for the possibility to recreate the study. However, as discussed in Wasserstein & Lazar (2016), the validity of any conclusions made is not just about replicability, but also includes the choosing of appropriate methods, properly conducted analyses, and the correct interpretation of the results. This section will justify the methods chosen, while further sections will concentrate on the analysis and interpretation of the results.

The methods chosen for this study are quantitative, as the purpose is to study aggregate rather than individual phenomena. Repeated cross-sectional data is a good tool for studying aggregate change, i.e. any changes in population groups; it does not however give insight into individual or micro level change (Rafferty, 2011). However, as the purpose of this study is to look at the development of confidence in education over time, as well as any between group differences, quantitative analysis of repeated cross-sectional data is appropriate.

The first step of the analysis includes descriptive statistics of the data for the three different years. The descriptive statistics chosen are response frequencies, depicted by the number of responses for each category, as well as the percentage of the total number of responses. These descriptive statistics will be reported for the two dependent variables, broken down for each year. In addition, the breakdown of responses depending on each independent variable will also be provided for the three years under study. Central tendency in the form of a mean will not be measured, because the dependent variable is seen as an ordinal rather than interval variable; this is because the distance between the different values for the Likert scale are not seen as equal, since there is no neutral option between somewhat agree and somewhat disagree.

Furthermore, the existence of a 'don't know' option would distort the mean as the scale is from 1 to 5. All of these results will then be presented in bar charts in order to see if there are some observable differences between the three years. The descriptive statistics and their visual representation will take the large bulk of the analysis section given that there are three years worth of data, two dependent variables under study, and two more independent variables on top of the year of the interview. This thesis will therefore not concentrate on measures of central tendency.

The next step of the analysis will concentrate on finding statistical evidence for the existence, or lack there-of, of any differences between groups. This means a comparison of responses depending on the year of the interview, between age groups, and between different forms of primary activity. The statistical test chosen is the Kruskal-Wallis test, which is an alternative to the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The reason the Kruskal-Wallis is used instead of the one-way ANOVA is the assumption that the dependent variables are ordinal rather than interval (Cohen & Lea, 2004; Pallant, 2002). Furthermore, according to Cohen & Lea (2004) and Pallant (2002), the Kruskal-Wallis test is better suited for cases where the categorical variables consist of more than two categories. Since all independent variables under analysis consist of three or more categories, the Kruskal-Wallis test is deemed appropriate. It should also be noted that for this test the option of 'don't know' will be left out so as not to distort the results – without this option the dependent variables can be seen as truly ordinal, allowing for the chosen statistical test to be performed. The alpha level is set to 0.05 which is equal to a confidence interval of 95%. This means that when running the Kruskal-Wallis test, a significance level with a value below 0.05 is seen as statistically significant, and will

result in a rejection of the null hypothesis. However, should the significance level be below 0.01 (corresponding to a 99% confidence interval), this will also be mentioned. The null hypotheses for the Kruskal-Wallis tests are as follows, and apply for both dependent variables separately, as well as for the different years (for hypotheses 2 and 3):

1. There are no differences in responses between 1999, 2007, and 2013.
2. There are no differences in responses between different age groups.
3. There are no differences in responses between different groups of primary activity.

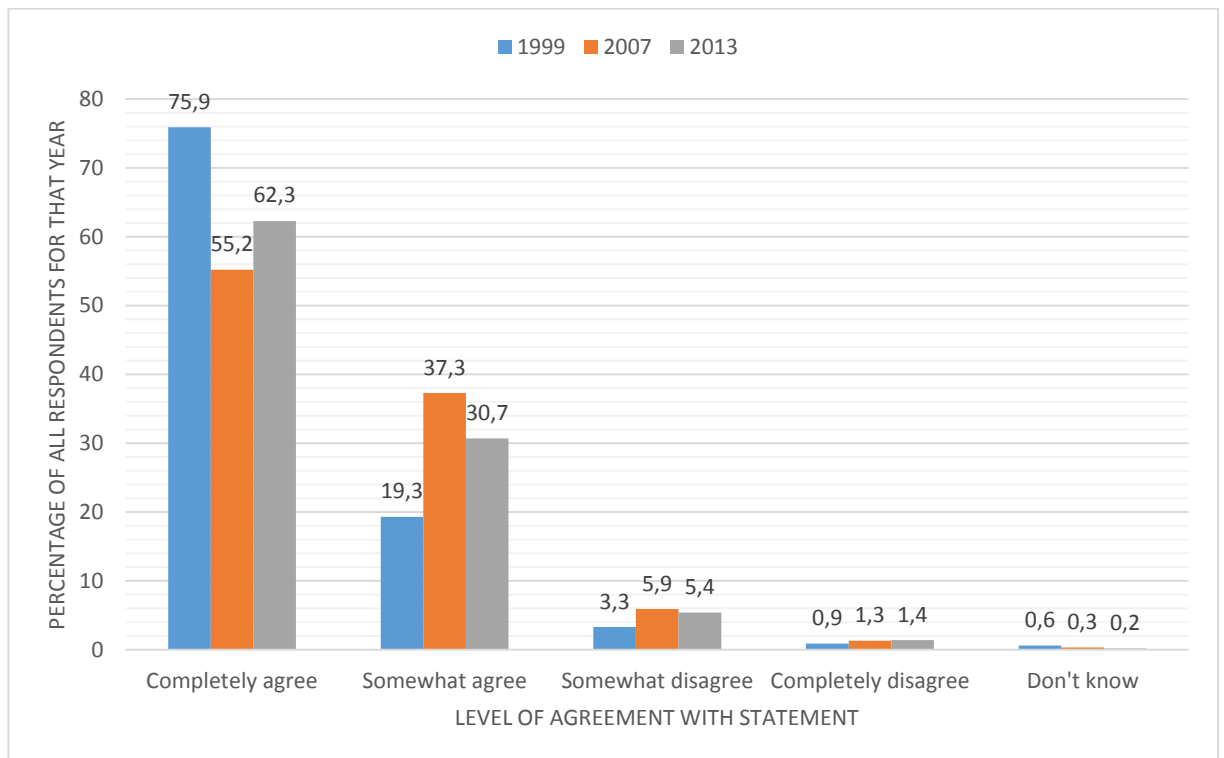
6 RESULTS

6.1 Development in confidence in education 1999-2013

6.1.1 Descriptive statistics and graphical representations

As discussed previously, the Finnish Youth Barometer data has already been used to briefly describe the development of educational belief from 1994 to 2013 by Myllyniemi (2014). However, it is worthwhile to go over these results for the three years under research in this thesis, i.e. 1999, 2007 and 2013. Figures 6 and 7 show how the level of agreement with the two statements “Education significantly better one’s employability” (dependent variable 1) and “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market” (dependent variable 2) have developed over time. These figures represent the youth population of 15-29 year olds as a whole.

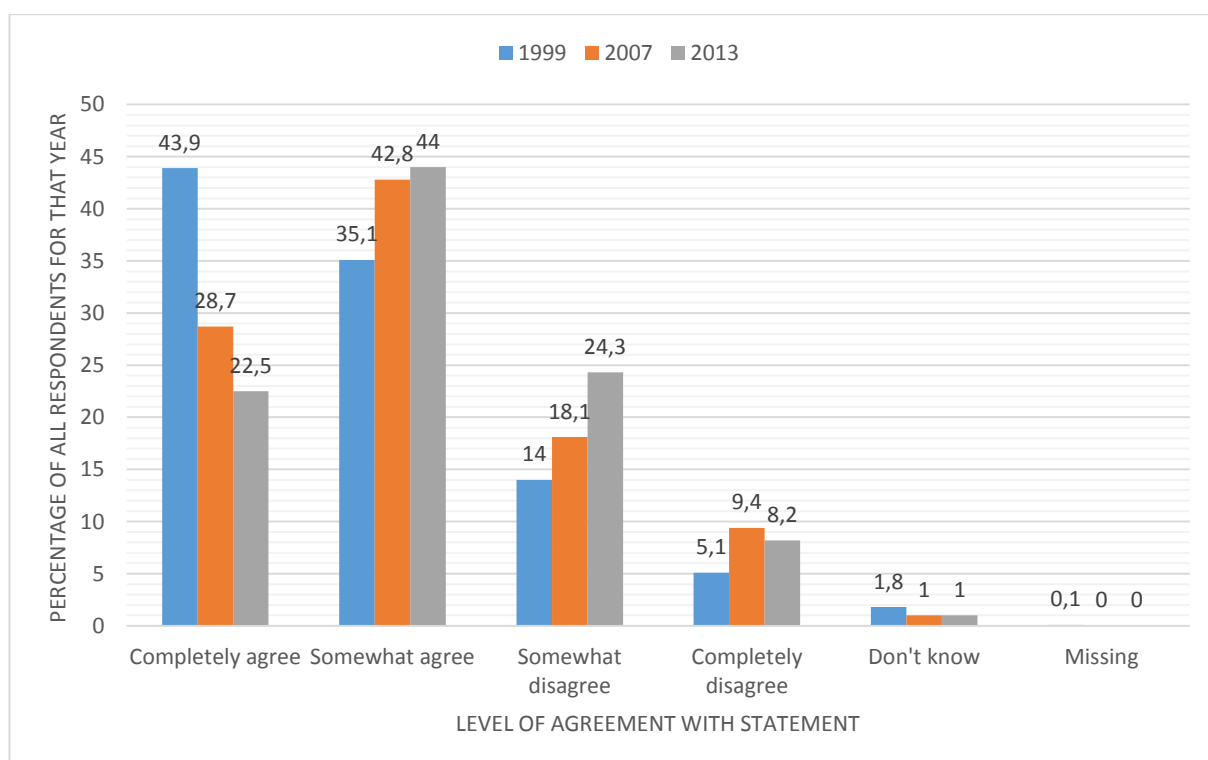
Figure 6: “Education significantly better one’s employability”, 1999-2013



As can be seen in Figure 6, the number of young people who completely agree with the statement that “education significantly better one’s employability” was at its highest in 1999. Since then, the number of young people completely agreeing with this statement dropped quite significantly in 2007, while rising again in 2013. In contrast, the number of young people who somewhat agree with the statement has had the opposite development, being at its lowest in 1999, while rising in 2007 before dropping slightly

again in 2013. While the percentages are smaller for those who somewhat disagree, completely disagree, or don't know, at least the development of those who somewhat disagree seems to follow a similar pattern as the development of those who somewhat agree. For the three years in question, the percentage of those who somewhat disagree was at its lowest in 1999, rising in 2007 before slightly dropping in 2013. In addition, the percentage of young people who completely disagree with the statement has been slightly increasing since 1999, being 0.9% in 1999 and 1.4% in 2013. Nevertheless, looking at the percentage of young people who completely or somewhat agree with the statement, confidence in education seems to be lower in times of economic prosperity (2007) and higher in times of economic distress (1999 and 2013). However, in 2013 confidence in education did not reach the same proportions as it did in the late 1990s.

Figure 7: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, 1999-2013



For the second statement, i.e. “continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market” the pattern is quite dissimilar. Confidence in education, as measured by the level of agreement with this statement, is more scattered among the different responses. The percentage of young people who completely agree with this statement is lower compared to those who completely agree with the first statement: for example, in 1999 the percentage of young people who completely agree with the first

statement is 75.9% while the percentage of young people who completely agree with the second statement in the same year is 43.9%. As for the development of those who completely agree with the second statement, the percentage has been steadily decreasing since 1999, being at its highest in 1999 at 43.9% while dropping to 22.5% in 2013. At the same time the percentage of young people who somewhat agree or somewhat disagree with this statement has been rising: in 1999 the percentage of youth somewhat agreeing was 35.1% and 44% in 2013; in 1999 the percentage of youth somewhat disagreeing was 14% and 24.3% in 2013. The only response that seems to follow a similar boom versus bust pattern, as was the case with the first statement, is the percentage of youth who completely disagree with the second statement: being at its lowest in 1999, rising in 2007 while dropping slightly in 2013. Nevertheless, the development of the level of agreement with these two statements follows relatively different patterns, potentially signalling that the two statements measure different things or are interpreted very differently by the respondents. Furthermore, while the bar charts show that the percentages for the different levels for the different years vary, we cannot simply conclude that there is a difference between levels of confidence in education among the youth in 1999 versus those in 2007 and 2013 – more statistical evidence is required. The next part of this thesis will run the Kruskal-Wallis test for the entire data set, encompassing all years, to see if there is a difference between respondents' responses in 1999, 2007, and 2013.

6.1.2 Kruskal-Wallis test for 'year of interview'

As outlined in the methodology section, the statistical test used to determine whether there is statistical evidence of between group differences is the Kruskal-Wallis test, an alternative to ANOVA. First, the test statistics for the first dependent variable "education significantly better one's employability" are computed. The test statistics and mean ranks computed by SPSS are found in tables 4 and 5. According to table 4, the significance level for this computation is 0.000. As the significance level value is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis, and can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in the continuous variable across the three groups. It should also be noted that the significance level is below 0.01. This means that we now have statistical evidence to support what was observed in the descriptive statistics: that there are differences between young people's level of agreement with the statement.

Table 4: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "education significantly betters one's employability", grouping variable 'year of survey'

Test Statistics^{a,b}

Education
significantly
betters one's
employability

Chi-Square	136,251
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	,000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Year of survey

Table 5 on the other hand gives more insight into which group has the highest overall ranking, which then corresponds to the highest score on the continuous variable. According to table 5, the highest ranking is for the year 2007. This means that young people interviewed in the year 2007 have the highest score. In the case of the dependent variable "education significantly betters one's employability", the higher the score the less they agree with the statement. This goes together with what is shown in the descriptive statistics: the level of confidence in education, or agreement with the statement, decreased in 2007.

Table 5: Mean ranks for "education significantly betters one's employability", grouping variable 'year of survey'

	Ranks		
	Year of survey	N	Mean Rank
Education significantly betters one's employability	1999	1243	2190,21
	2007	1897	2713,76
	2013	1900	2543,62
	Total	5040	

The same procedure was also followed for the second dependent variable: "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market". The test statistics computed by SPSS are now found in tables 6 and 7. As can be seen in table 6, the significance level value for the second dependent variable is also less than 0.05, and we therefore reject the null hypothesis, and can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in the continuous variable across the three groups. Furthermore,

the significance level is again below 0.01. This means that we once again have statistical evidence to support what was observed in the descriptive statistics: that there are differences between young people's level of agreement with the statement.

Table 6: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'year of survey'

Test Statistics^{a,b}

Continuously
educating oneself
is important for
staying in the
labour market

Chi-Square	159,280
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	,000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Year of
survey

Table 7 once again shows the mean ranks, this time for the second dependent variable. According to table 7, the year with the highest mean rank is 2013. In the case of this dependent variable "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", the higher the score the less they agree with the statement. This goes together with what is shown in the descriptive statistics: the level of confidence in education, as measured by this variable, reached its lowest point in 2013.

Table 7: Mean ranks for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'year of survey'

	Ranks		
	Year of survey	N	Mean Rank
Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market	1999	1227	2095,11
	2007	1883	2537,31
	2013	1884	2719,77
	Total	4994	

6.2 Age group versus primary activity

6.2.1 Age groups

The next step is to observe how the distribution of responses for the dependent variables look like when comparing different categories with one another. The chosen independent variables are ‘age group’ and ‘primary activity’. Figures 8, 9 and 10 showcase how the distribution of responses for each year for “education significantly betters one’s employability” looks like when looking at the three different age groups: 15-19 year olds, 20-24 year olds, and 25-29 year olds. A common pattern for all years is that confidence in education is stronger among the younger age groups: the percentage of respondents within the age group who completely agree with the statement is higher for 15-19 year olds when compared to 20-24 and 25-29 year olds; similarly the percentage of 20-24 year old who completely agree with the statement is also higher than the percentage of 25-29 year olds who do so.

In contrast, the percentage of those who somewhat agree with the statement follows the reverse pattern: the percentage of individuals who somewhat agree with the statement is higher for the older age groups. For example in 1999, while 23.7% of respondents within 25-29 year olds somewhat agree with the statement, the corresponding figure for 15-19 year olds is 15.9%. A similar pattern, though less obvious, also exists in the group of young people who somewhat disagree with the statement: the percentage of those who somewhat disagree is higher within 25-29 year olds than within the 20-24 and 15-19 age groups. All in all, each year demonstrates a similar pattern: the percentage of those who completely agree decreases with age, and the percentage of those who somewhat agree and somewhat disagree increases with age. The percentages for those who completely disagree or don’t know are so much smaller when compared to the other responses, that patterns are far less clear.

Figure 8: “Education significantly betters one's employability” by age group (1999)

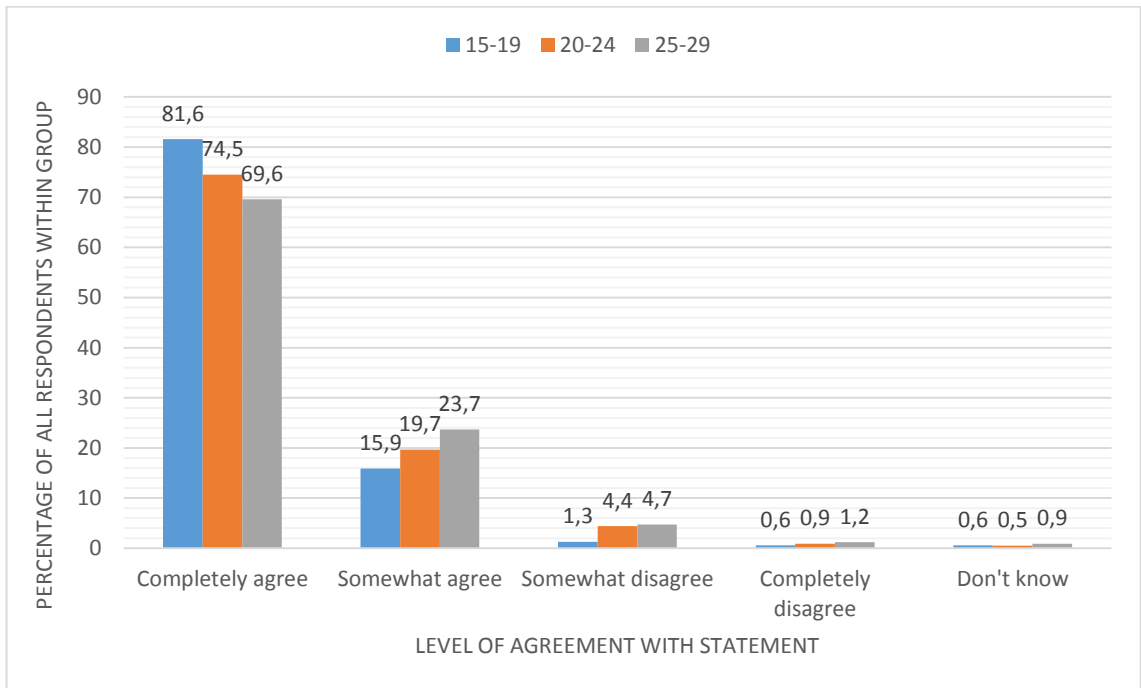


Figure 9: “Education significantly betters one's employability” by age group (2007)

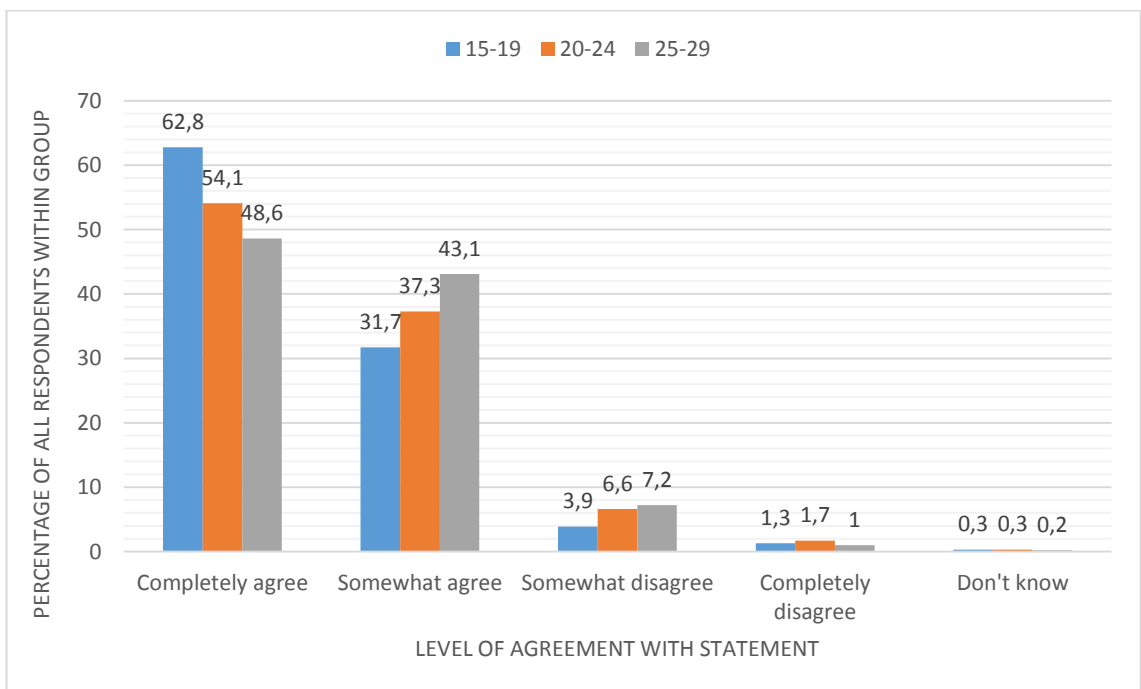
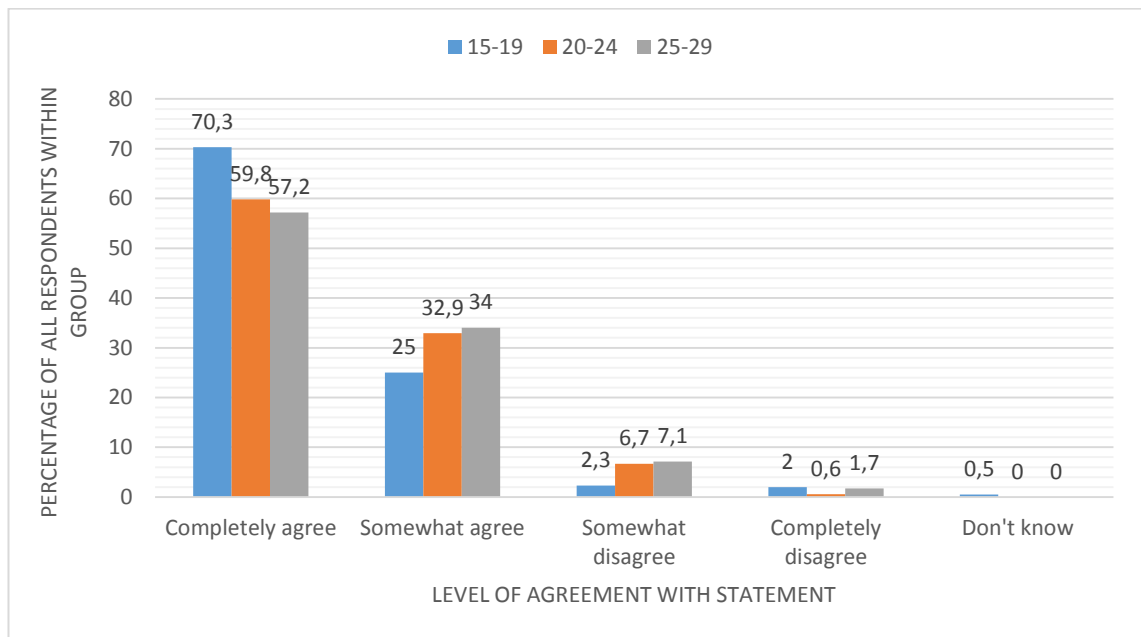
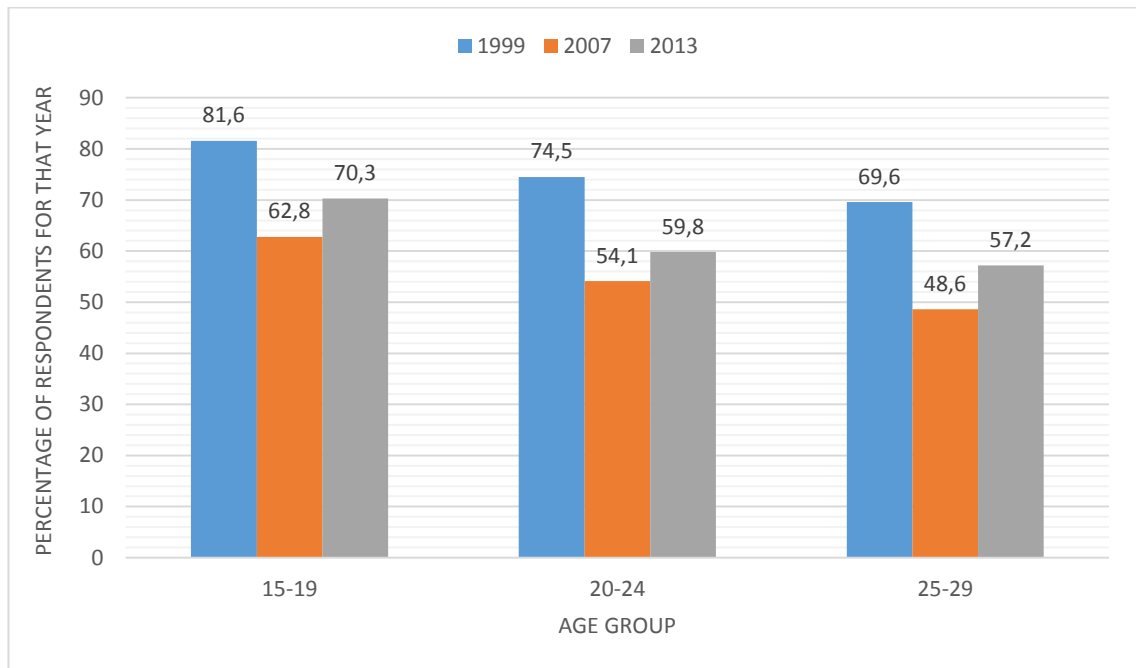


Figure 10: “Education significantly better one’s employability” by age group (2013)



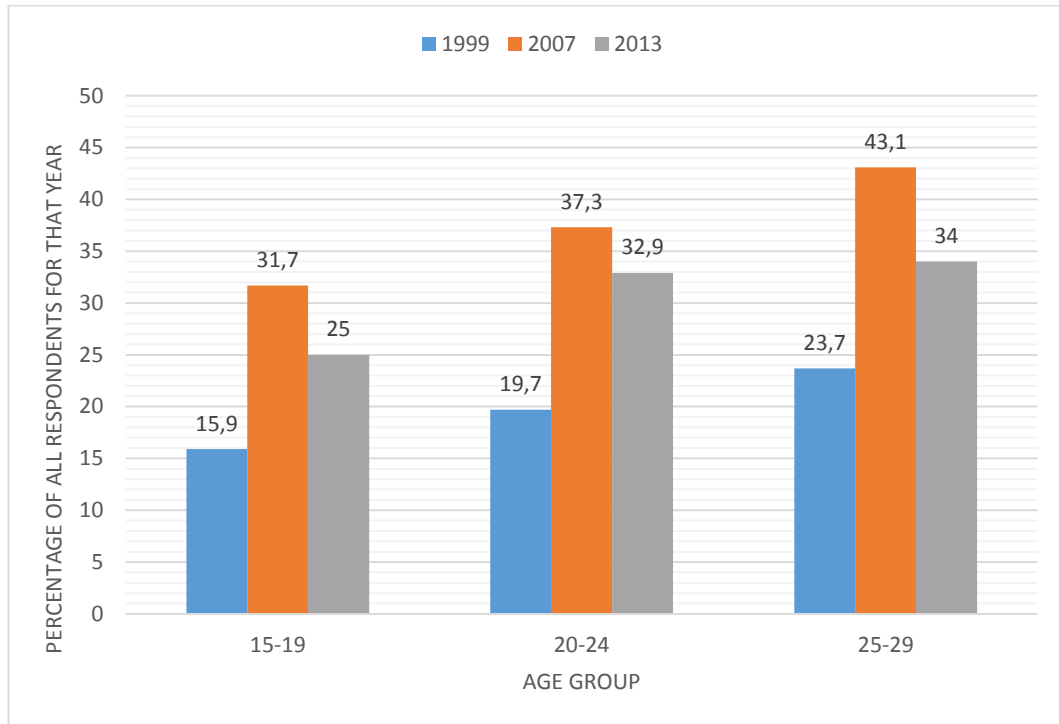
While figures 8, 9 and 10 give us a picture of how responses are distributed within a given year, they do not necessarily allow for a good comparison of how these responses have developed over time. Another descriptive statistic to compare for each year is how each response to the statement has developed over time; for example, what percentage of 15-19 year olds completely agree with the statement, and how has this percentage developed between 1999 and 2013. Sticking with the statement, “education significantly better one’s employability”, figures 11, 12, 13 and 14 show how the responses of each age group have developed over time.

Figure 11: “Education significantly better one’s employability”, completely agree with the statement (1999-2013)



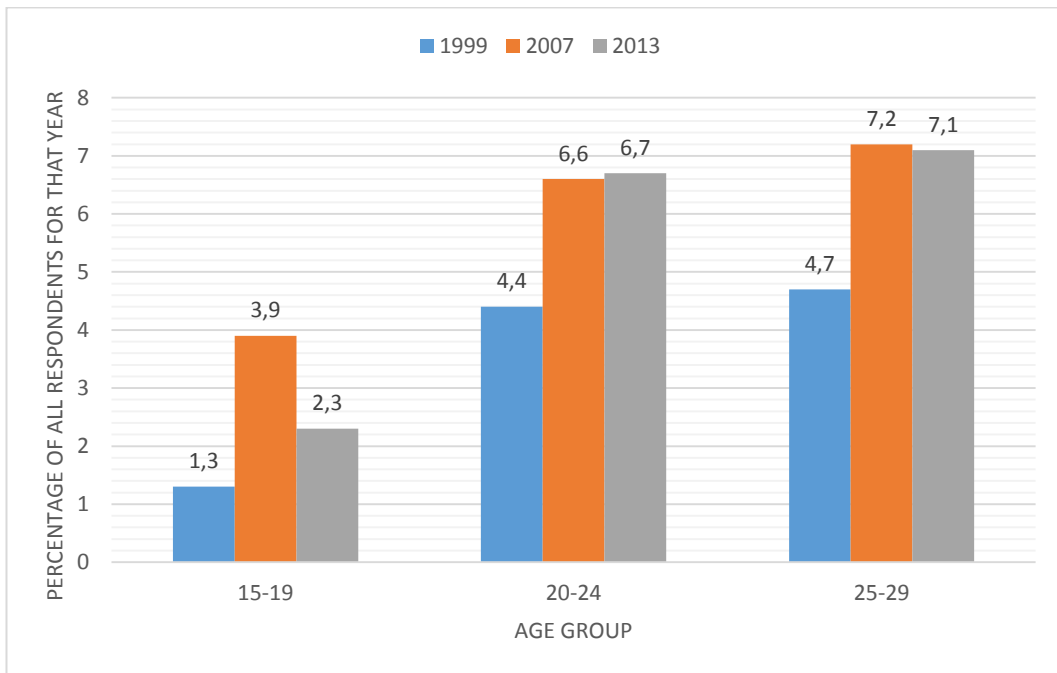
As can be seen in figure 11, the development of the percentage of individuals who completely agree with the statement has been very similar for all age groups. The percentage of individuals within the group who completely agree with the statement is at its highest in 1999, then drops in 2007 before slightly rising in 2013. This is similar to the pattern that was found when comparing all young people’s responses for a given year. The converse pattern can be observed for the percentage of individuals within each group who somewhat agree with the statement, though again the pattern is consistent with all age groups: the percentage of those who somewhat agree is at its lowest in 1999, rises in 2007 and then slightly drops again in 2013 (see figure 12).

Figure 12: “Education significantly betters one’s employability”, somewhat agree with the statement (1999-2013)



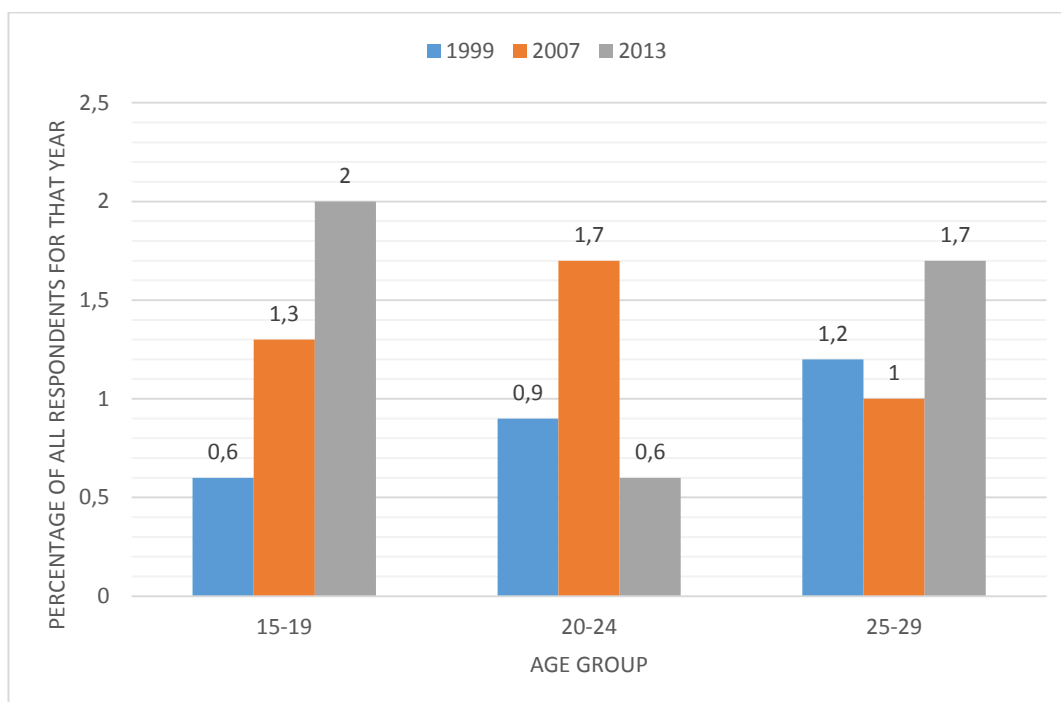
However, in the case of those who somewhat disagree and completely disagree with the statement, the patterns start to diverge between age groups. While the percentages for these responses are far lower, it is interesting that the percentage of individuals who somewhat disagree and completely disagree with the statement do not follow a similar development over time when looking at the different age groups. According to figure 13, in the case of 15-19 year olds, the percentage of those who somewhat disagree with the statement is at its lowest in 1999, rises in 2007 before slightly dropping in 2013. In contrast, for the age groups of 20-24 and 25-29, the percentage of those who somewhat disagree is at its lowest in 1999, rises in 2007 and then remains close to the same level in 2013.

Figure 13: “Education significantly better one's employability”, somewhat disagree with the statement (1999-2013)



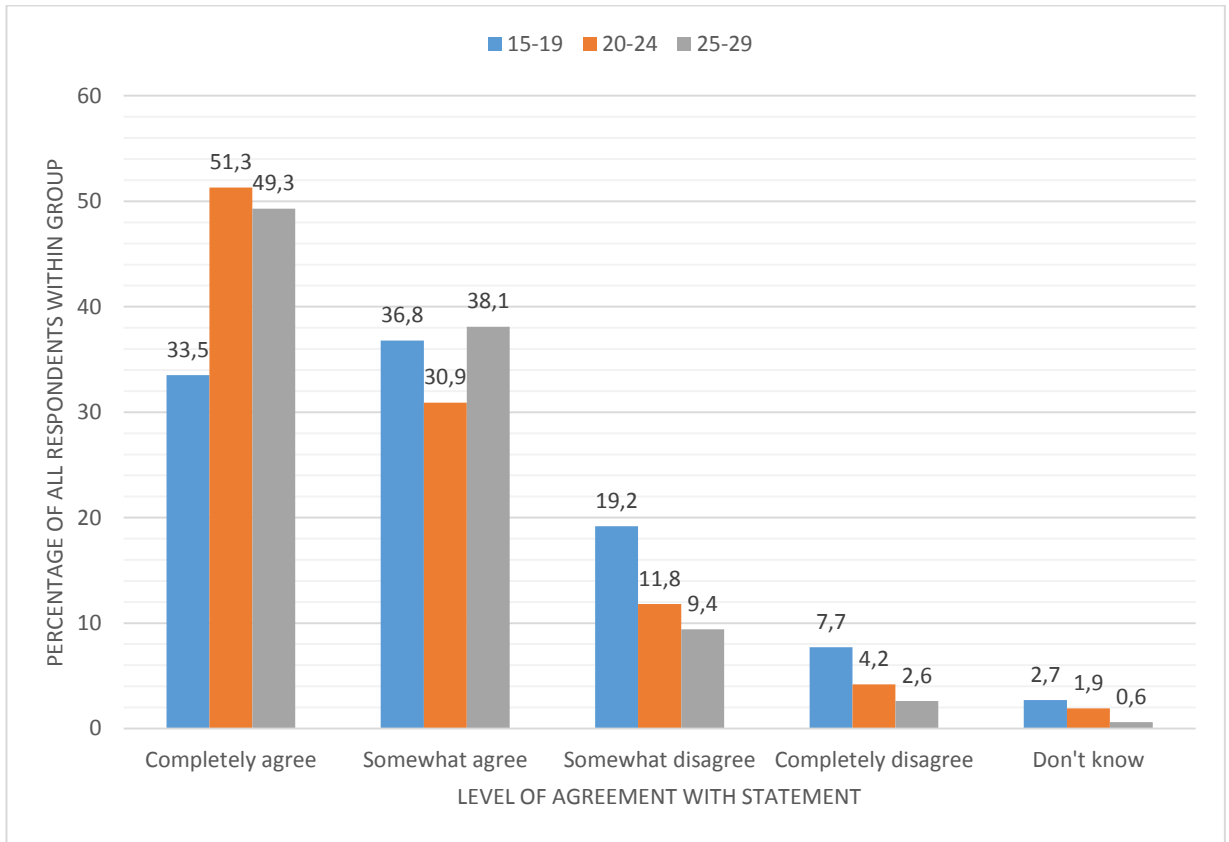
As for the case of those who completely disagree with the statement, the development patterns for each age group are very different (see figure 14). For the age group 15-19, the percentage of those who completely disagree has been consistently increasing since 1999. In contrast, for the age group 20-24, the percentage was low in 1999, higher in 2007 and again lower in 2013. For the age group 25-29, the pattern follows a higher percentage in 1999, slightly lower in 2007 and then higher again in 2013. However, it should be noted that as the percentages are far smaller for this response, the fluctuations in percentages are not as drastic as is the case for the more popular responses.

Figure 14: “Education significantly better one's employability”, completely disagree with the statement (1999-2013)



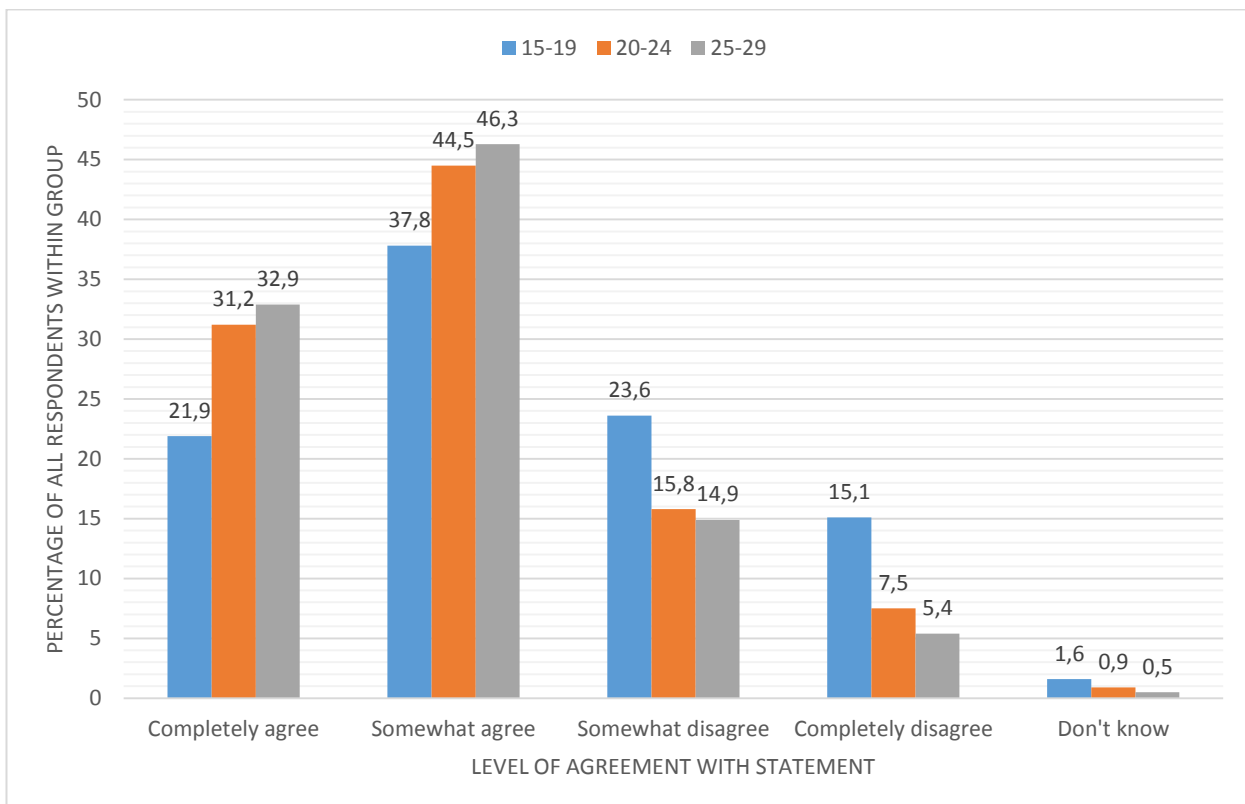
The same analysis of descriptive statistics can be done for the second statement as well, i.e. how the distribution of responses to the statement “continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market” look like for the three different age groups. Figures 15, 16 and 17 show this distribution for the three different years. In contrast to the first statement, the patterns for the different years are rather dissimilar. In 1999, the highest percentage of those who completely agree with the statement is among 20-24 year olds (51.3%), with a slightly lower percentage for 25-29 year olds (49.3%); the age group of 15-19 has a relatively lower percentage of individuals who completely agree with the statement (33.5%). In contrast, in 1999, the percentage of those who somewhat agree with the statement was lowest among 20-24 year olds and higher among the age groups 15-19 and 25-29. The percentage of those who somewhat disagree, completely disagree or even don't know goes down with age – percentages being higher among the youngest age group and lower among the oldest age group.

Figure 15: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market” by age group (1999)



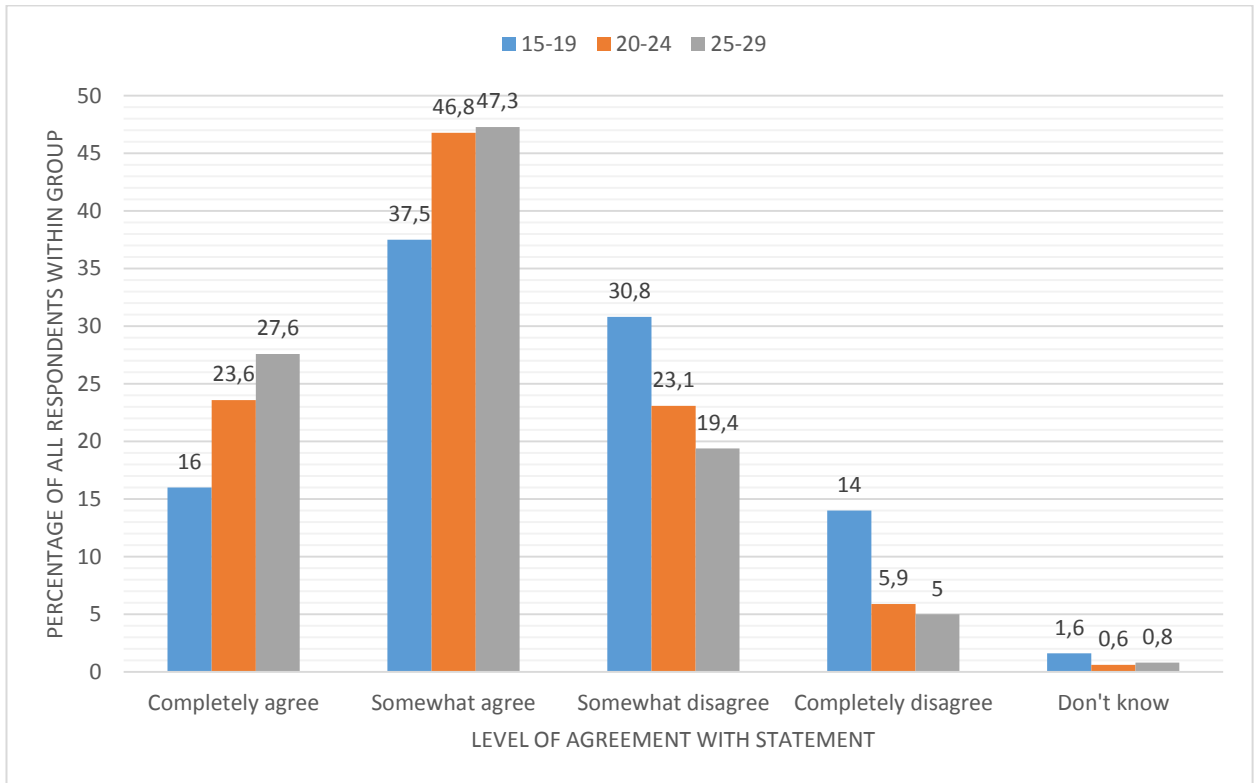
In contrast, in 2007 the percentages for those who completely agree or somewhat agree with the statement seem to go up with age (see figure 16). For example, while the percentage of those who completely agree with the statement is 21.9% of 15-19 year olds, the corresponding percentage for 25-29 year olds is 32.9%. The pattern is the opposite for the more negative responses, i.e. somewhat disagree or completely disagree: the highest percentage is for the age group 15-19, the lowest for 25-29 year olds.

Figure 16: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market” by age group (2007)



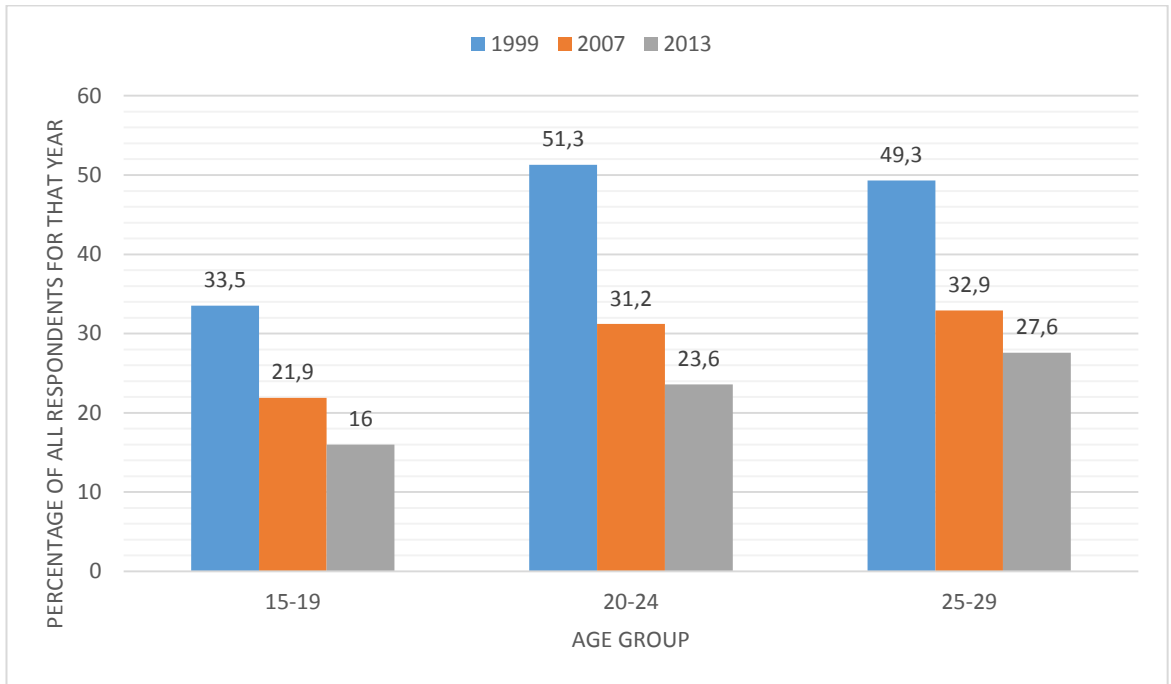
Lastly, in 2013 the patterns are quite similar as in 2007. The percentage of respondents within a group that completely agree or somewhat agree with the statement seems to go up with age. For example, the percentage of those who completely agree with the statement was lowest among the age group 15-19 (16%), higher with 20-24 year olds (23.6%) and highest with 25-29 year olds (27.6%). Similarly to the figures in 2007, the percentage of those with more negative responses (somewhat disagree and completely disagree) seems to decrease with age: for example, in 2013 the percentage of those who somewhat disagree with the statement was at its highest among 15-19 year olds (14%), and lowest in the age group 25-29 (5%).

Figure 17: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market” by age group (2013)



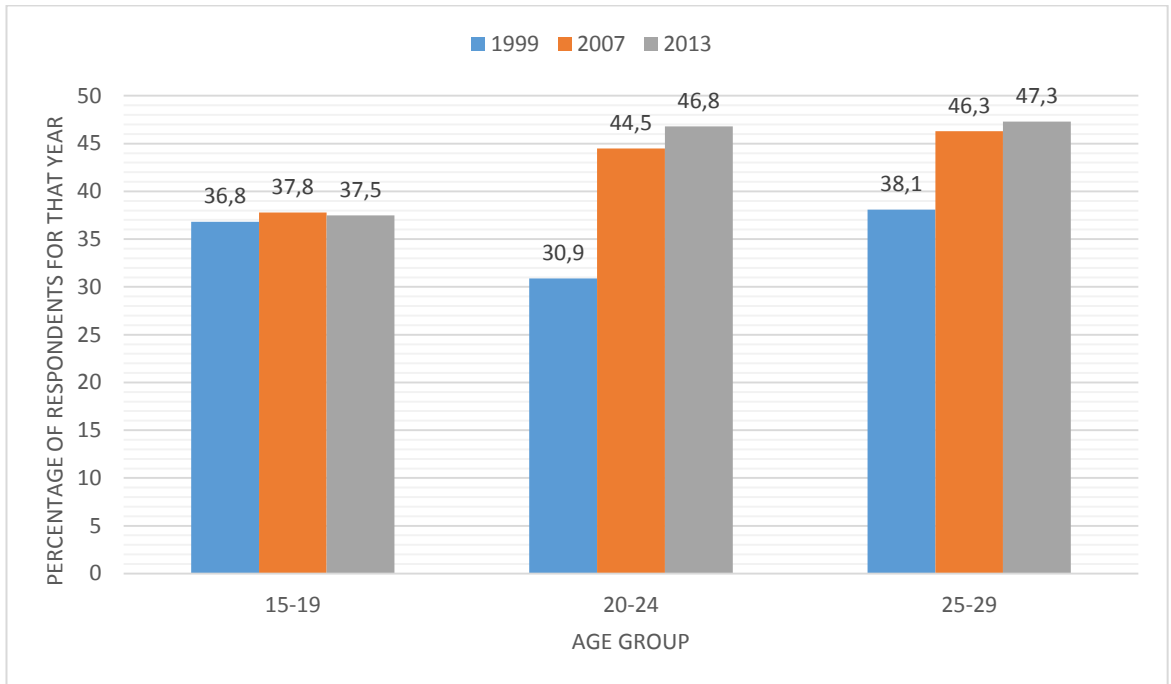
As was the case with the analysis of the first statement, figures 15, 16 and 17 showcase the patterns of how the responses of young people are distributed depending on age group for that given year. It does not, however allow for a good comparison of how these responses have developed over time. Figures 18, 19, 20 and 21 show how each of the responses (excluding the ‘don’t know’ option) have developed over time for each age group. In the case of the percentage of young people within an age group who completely agree with the statement, the patterns are quite similar for each age group (see figure 18). The percentage is at its highest in 1999, but drops in 2007 and 2013. However, all in all the pattern is the same for all age groups.

Figure 18: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, completely agree with the statement (1999-2013)



The patterns for somewhat agree on the other hand tend to differ slightly among age groups (see figure 19). For example, the differences between 1999, 2007 and 2013 for the age group 15-19 are almost non-existent. As for the age groups 20-24 and 25-29, the percentage of those who somewhat agree with the statement has been going up since 1999.

Figure 19: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, somewhat agree with the statement (1999-2013)



The patterns for the more negative responses (somewhat disagree and completely disagree) again follow more common lines regardless of the age group (see figure 20). For those who somewhat disagree, the percentage has been steadily increasing since 1999. For those who completely disagree, the percentage was at its lowest in 1999, rose in 2007, and then slightly dropped in 2013. All in all, the development of responses over time for the statement “continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market” follow relatively similar patterns regardless of the age group.

Figure 20: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, somewhat disagree with the statement (1999-2013)

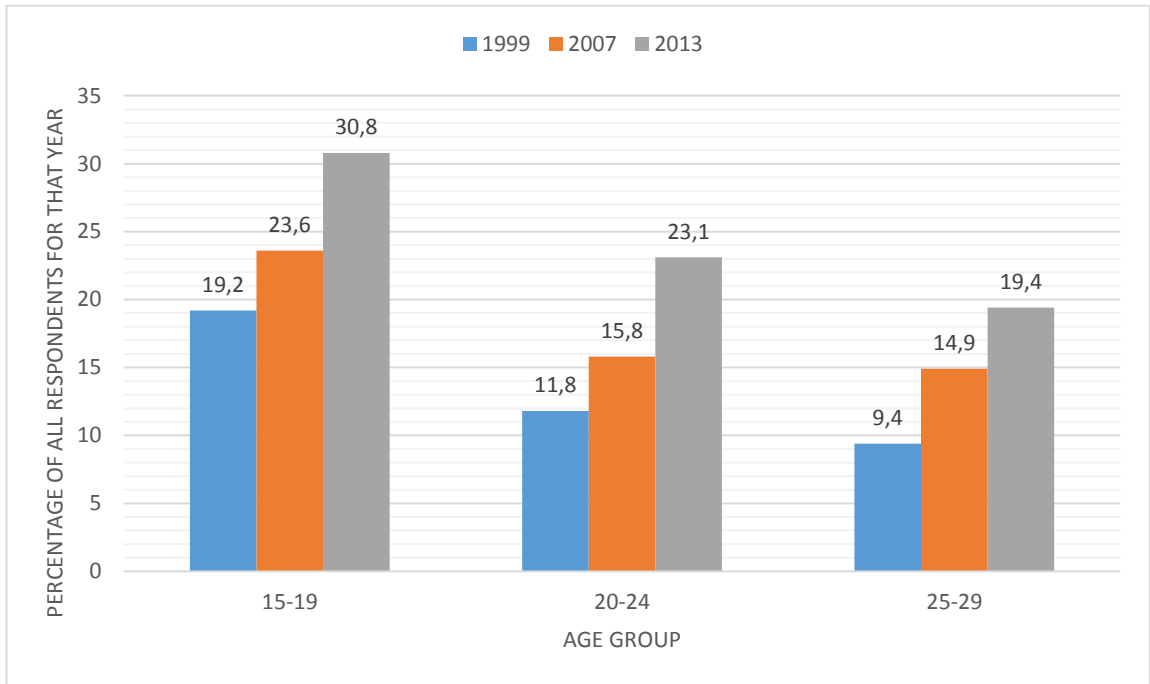
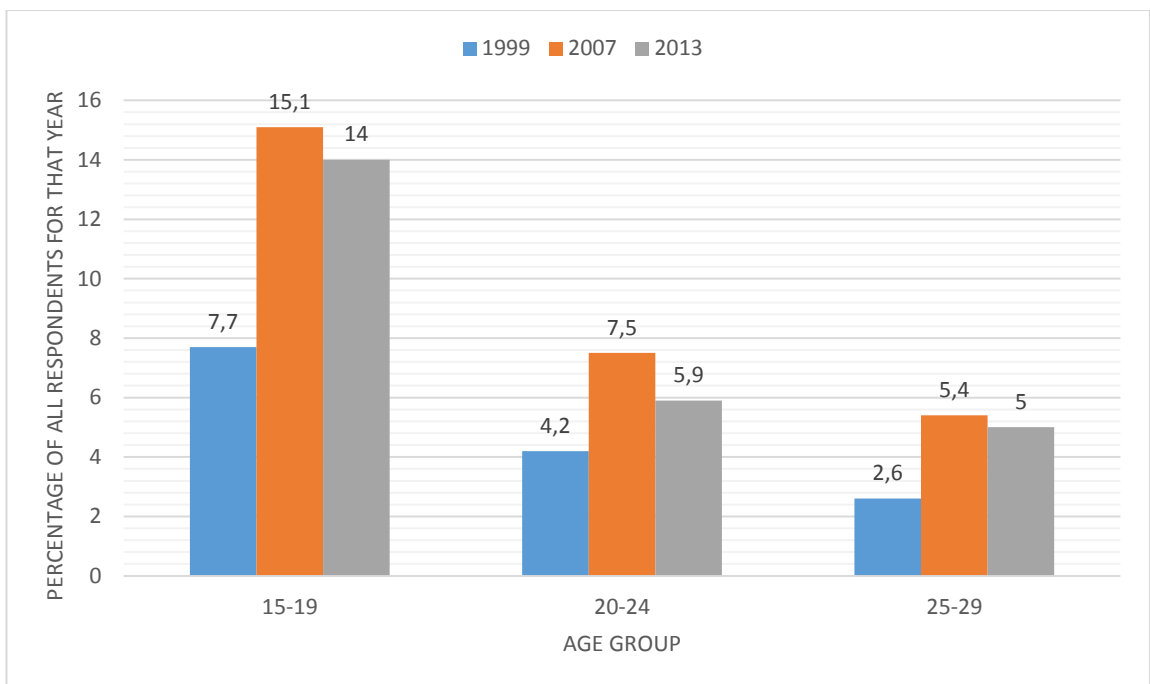


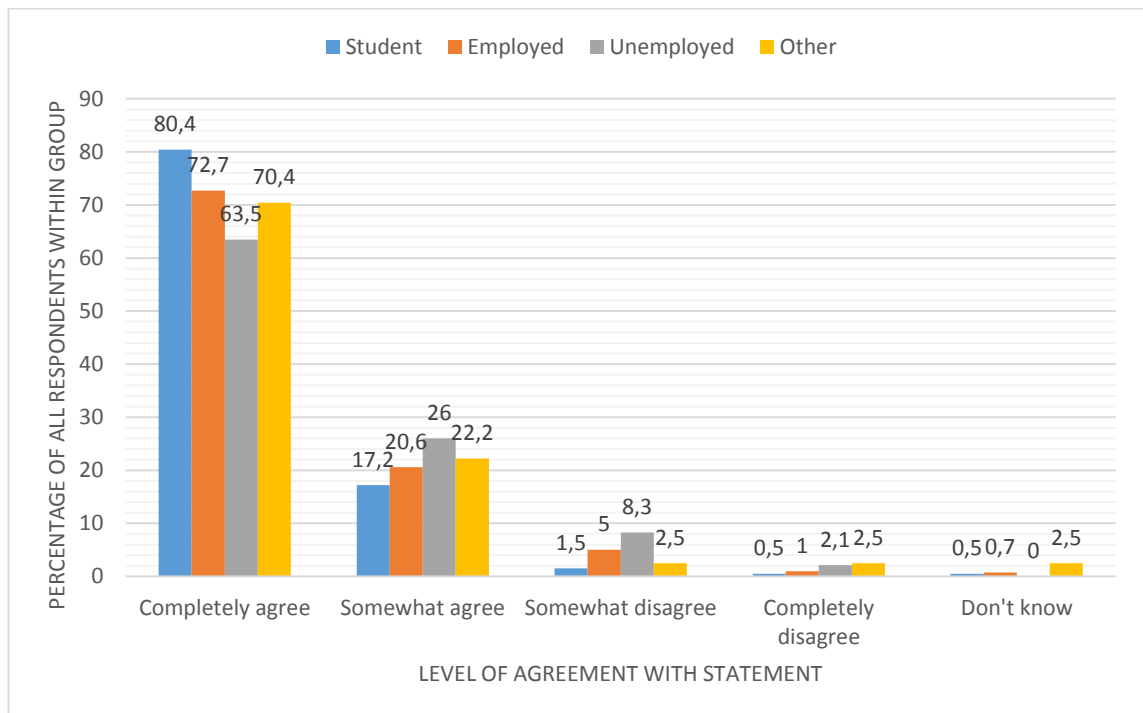
Figure 21: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, completely disagree with the statement (1999-2013)



6.2.2 Primary activity

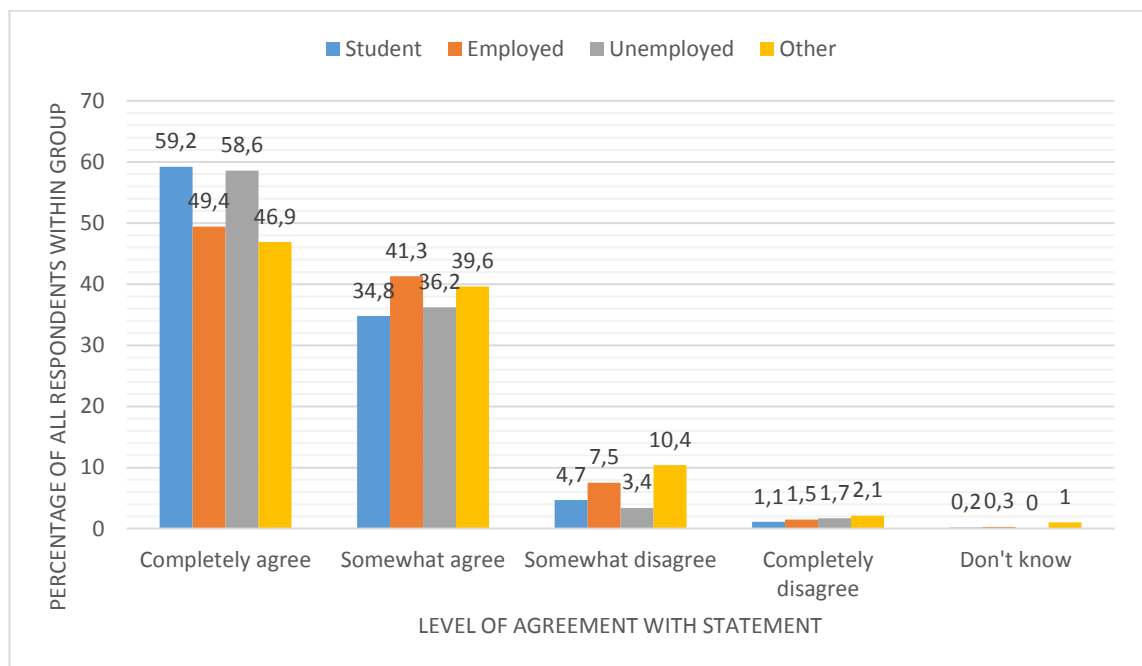
The other independent variable chosen is a young person's 'primary activity'. Unlike the different age groups, which are all well represented in the sample, most young people in the samples for the different years are either students or in employment. Nevertheless, it is interesting to see the results for those who are unemployed or in the 'other' group even though the sub sample sizes for these groups are far smaller. As in the case of age groups, the distribution of responses will be looked at for two different dependent variables, the first of which is the level of agreement with the statement: "education significantly better one's employability". Figure 22, 23 and 24 show the distribution of responses by primary activity for the three different years, i.e. 1999, 2007 and 2013. For 1999 (see figure 22), the group with highest percentage for the response 'completely agree' is students (80.4%), followed by those in employment (72.7%). The group with the lowest percentage is the unemployed (63.5%). However, confidence in education is still relatively high among all groups, with most of the youth in each group either completely agreeing or somewhat agreeing with the statement. The group with the highest percentage of disagreement is the unemployed, with 8.3% somewhat disagreeing with the statement, and 2.1% completely disagreeing with the statement.

Figure 22: "Education significantly better one's employability" by primary activity (1999)



In 2007 (see figure 23), the highest percentage of respondents completely agreeing with the statement is still among students (59.2%), closely followed by the unemployed (58.6%). Slightly lower and close to one another are those in employment (49.4%) and those in the ‘other’ group (46.9%). The percentages are also higher for the response ‘somewhat agree’ when compared to 1999: for example, in 1999 17.2% of students somewhat agreed with the statement, in 2007 the corresponding figure is 34.8%. Nevertheless the majority of all respondents, regardless of group, are on the positive side of the agreement scale. The highest percentage of individuals who somewhat disagree or completely disagree with the statement are among the ‘other’ group, with 10.4% only somewhat agreeing with the statement, and 2.1% completely disagreeing with the statement.

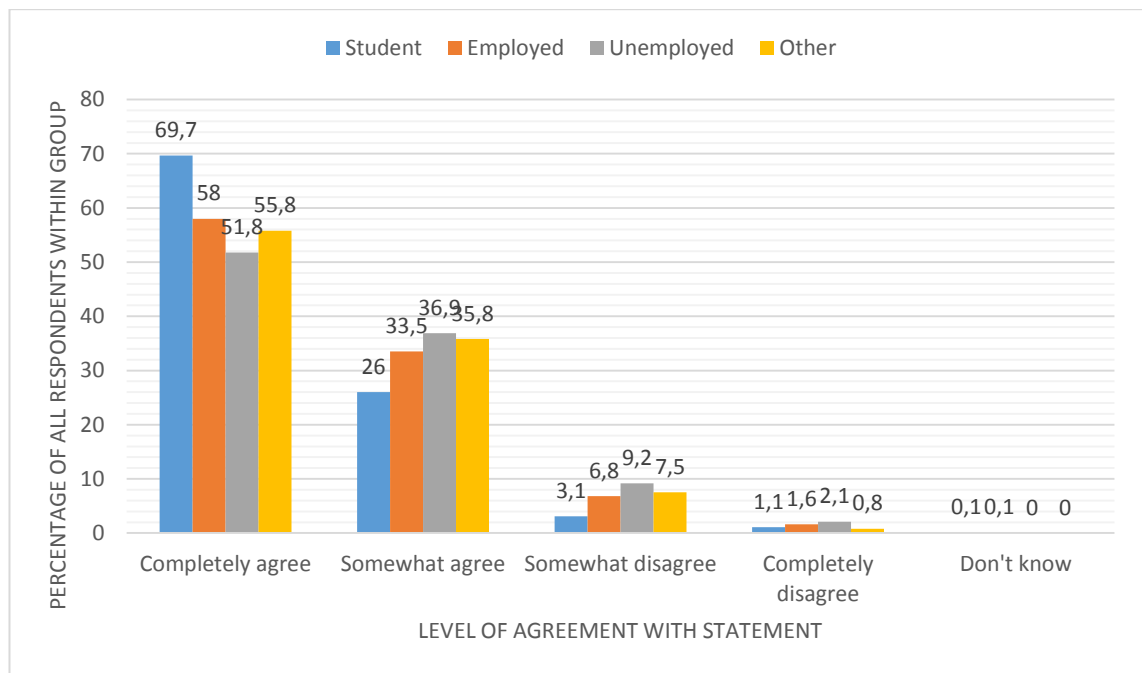
Figure 23: “Education significantly betters one’s employability” by primary activity (2007)



In 2013 (see figure 24), the highest percentage of young people who completely agree with the statement is among the students (69.7%). The other three groups are all closer to one another, with 58% of those employed completely agreeing with the statement, and the corresponding figures for the unemployed and other being 51.8% and 55.8%. Similarly these three groups are also close to one another when it comes to the percentages for ‘somewhat agree’, with 33.5% of those who are employed somewhat agreeing with the statement, and the respective figures for unemployed and other being 36.9% and 35.8%. At a slightly lower rate is the student population, of which 26%

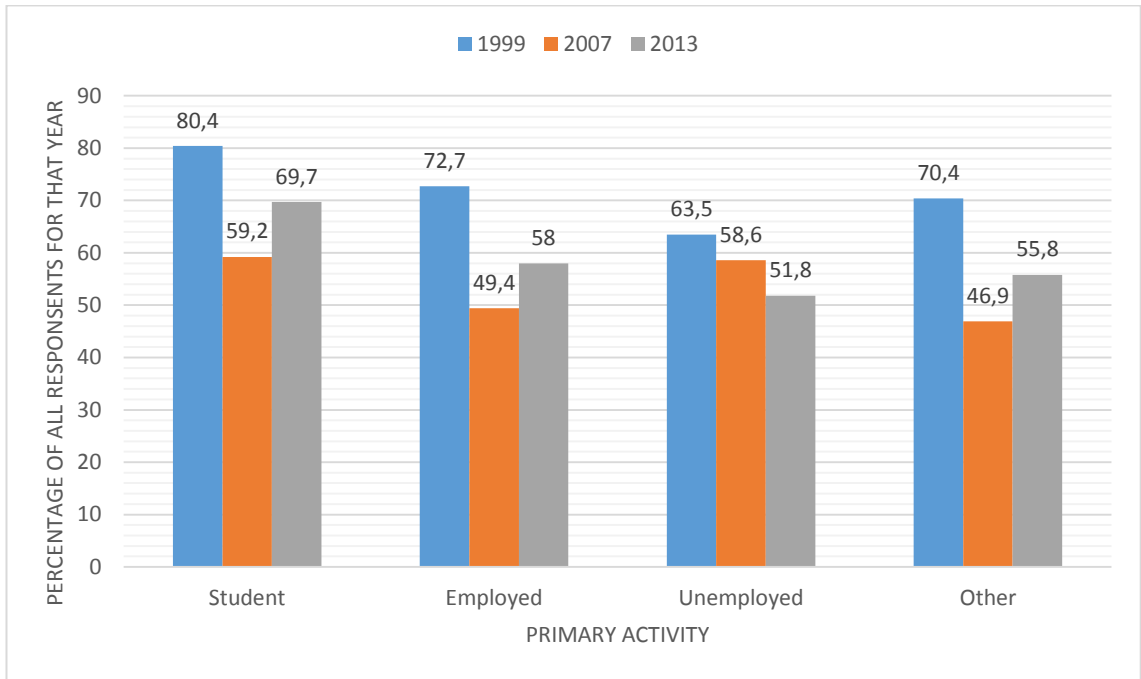
somewhat agree with the statement. However, once again most of the sample, regardless of group, is on the positive side of the agreement scale. The highest percentage of individuals within a group that disagree with the statement are amongst the unemployed, with 9.2% somewhat disagreeing with the statement and 2.1% completely disagreeing with the statement.

Figure 24: “Education significantly better one’s employability” by primary activity (2013)



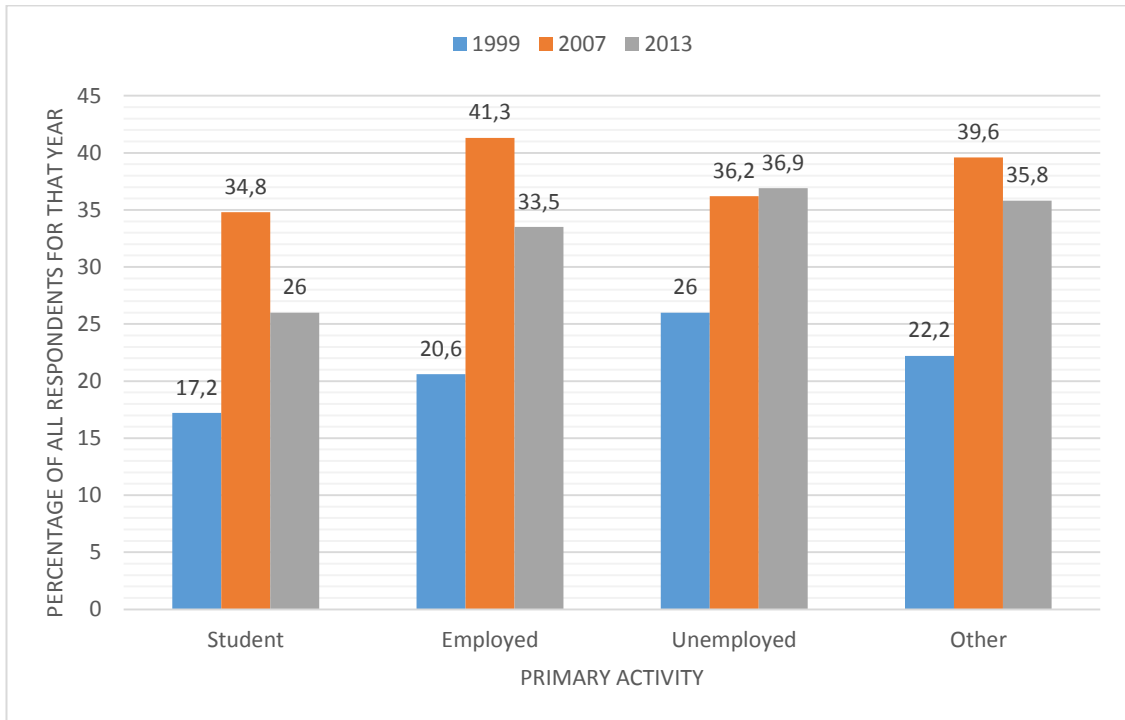
As was the case with the comparison between age groups, figures 22, 23 and 24 mainly give us a picture of differences between groups when looking at a specific year, and do not allow for an easy comparison of how the distribution of responses have changed over time. Therefore, it is worth looking at how each specific response has developed over time, at the same time comparing the different groups of primary activity – this is showcased in figures 25, 26, 27 and 28, excluding the development of the ‘don’t know response’. Firstly, figure 25 shows how the response ‘completely agree’ has developed between 1999 and 2013, comparing also the development between the primary activity groups. The developments for students, employed and other are quite similar, with confidence in education being at its highest in 1999, dropping in 2007, and then slightly increasing in 2013. In contrast, for the unemployed confidence in education has been slowly, but surely, going down since 1999, with the percentage of those who completely agree with the statement being 63.5% in 1999, 58.6% in 2007, and 51.8% in 2013.

Figure 25: “Education significantly betters one’s employability”, completely agree with the statement (1999-2013)



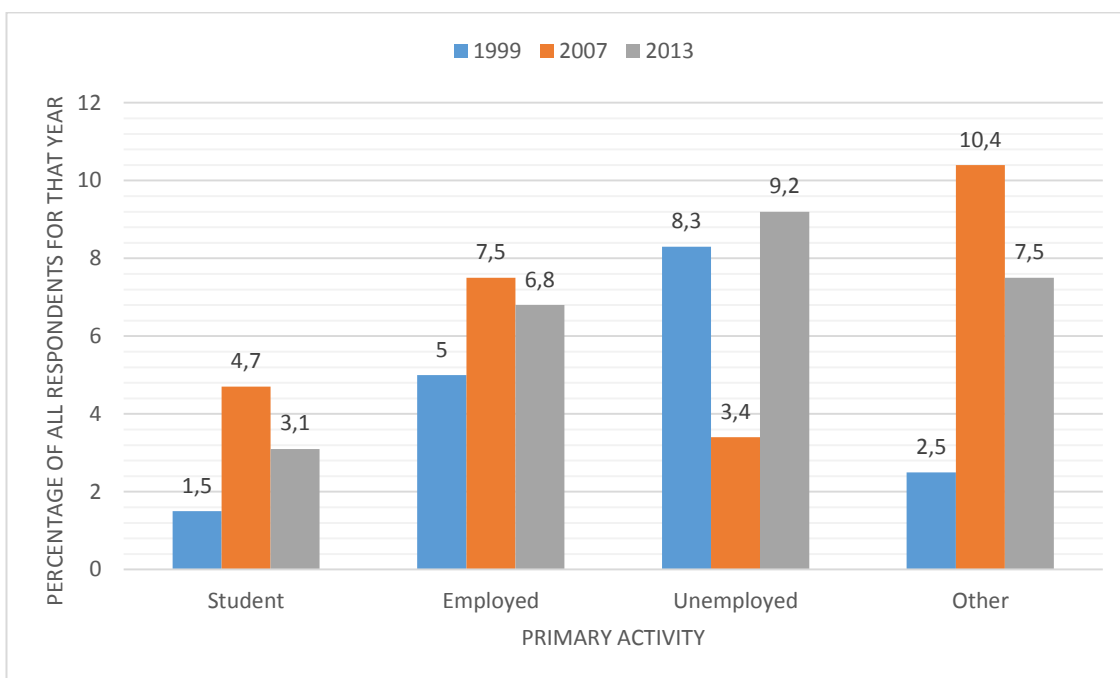
In the case of those who somewhat agree with the statement, it is once again students, the employed and other who follow a similar pattern, though an opposite pattern to those who completely agree (see figure 26). The percentage of individuals among these groups that somewhat agree with the statement was at its lowest in 1999, rose in 2007 and then dropped again in 2013. For the unemployed on the other hand, the percentage of those who somewhat agree with the statement has been going up since 1999, the percentage being 26% in 1999, 36.2% in 2007, and 36.9% in 2013.

Figure 26: “Education significantly better one’s employability”, somewhat agree with the statement (1999-2013)



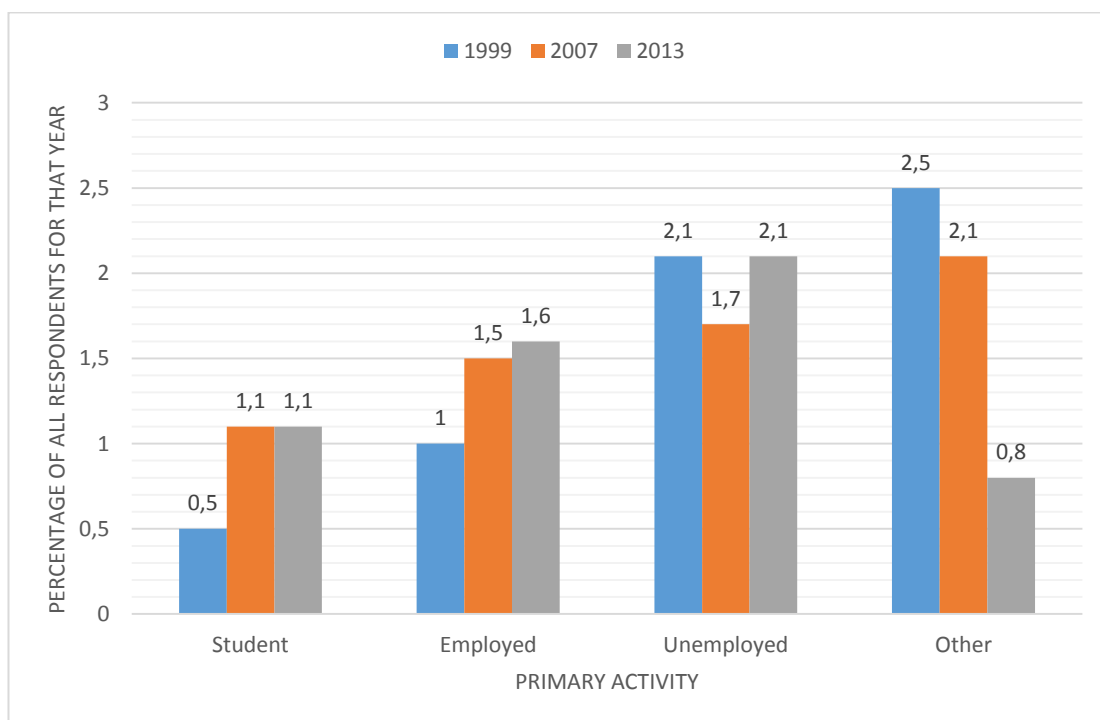
Similar to those who completely agree and somewhat agree with the statement, the development of the percentage within the group who somewhat disagree with the statement also follows similar patterns for students, employed, and other (see figure 27). The percentage of those within the group who somewhat disagree with the statement was at its lowest in 1999, rose in 2007 and then dropped in 2013. The pattern for the unemployed is the opposite, with 8.3% somewhat disagreeing with the statement in 1999, and the respective figures for 2007 and 2013 being 3.4% and 9.2%.

Figure 27: “Education significantly better one’s employability”, somewhat disagree with the statement (1999-2013)



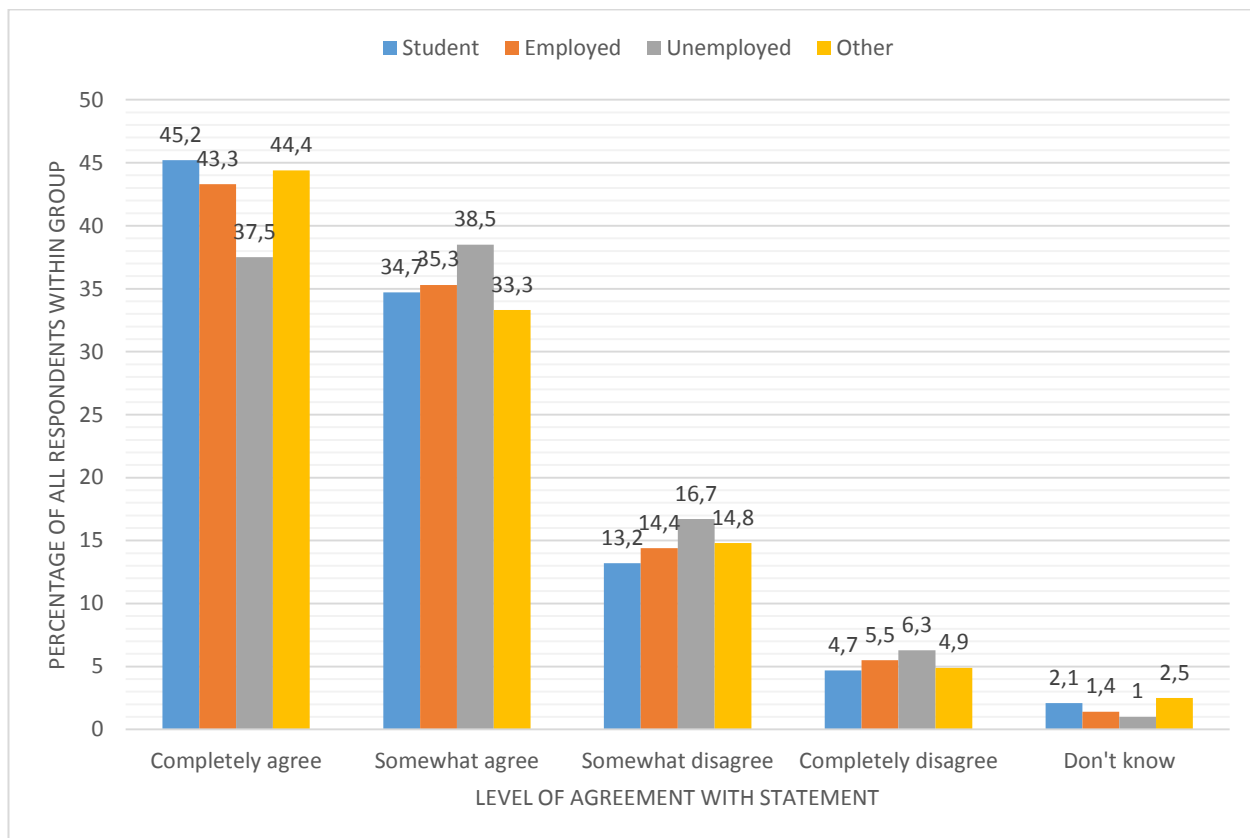
Finally, in the case of those within the group who completely disagree with the statement, the patterns for the different groups start to look more dissimilar (see figure 28). In the case of students, the percentage of those who completely disagree with the statement was at its lowest in 1999 at 0.5%, then rose to 1.1% in 2007 remaining at the same percentage in 2013. Those who are employed follow a relatively similar pattern with 1% of them completely disagreeing with the statement in 1999, 1.5% in 2007, and 1.6% in 2013. The unemployed and other groups follow a slightly different pattern. Amongst the unemployed 2.1% of respondents completely disagreed with the statement in 1999, with 1.7% doing so in 2007, returning to 2.1% in 2013. Amongst those in the ‘other’ category, the percentage of respondents who completely disagree with the statement was at its highest in 1999 (2.5%), dropping in 2007 and 2013 (2.1% and 0.8%).

Figure 28: “Education significantly better one’s employability”, completely disagree with the statement (1999-2013)



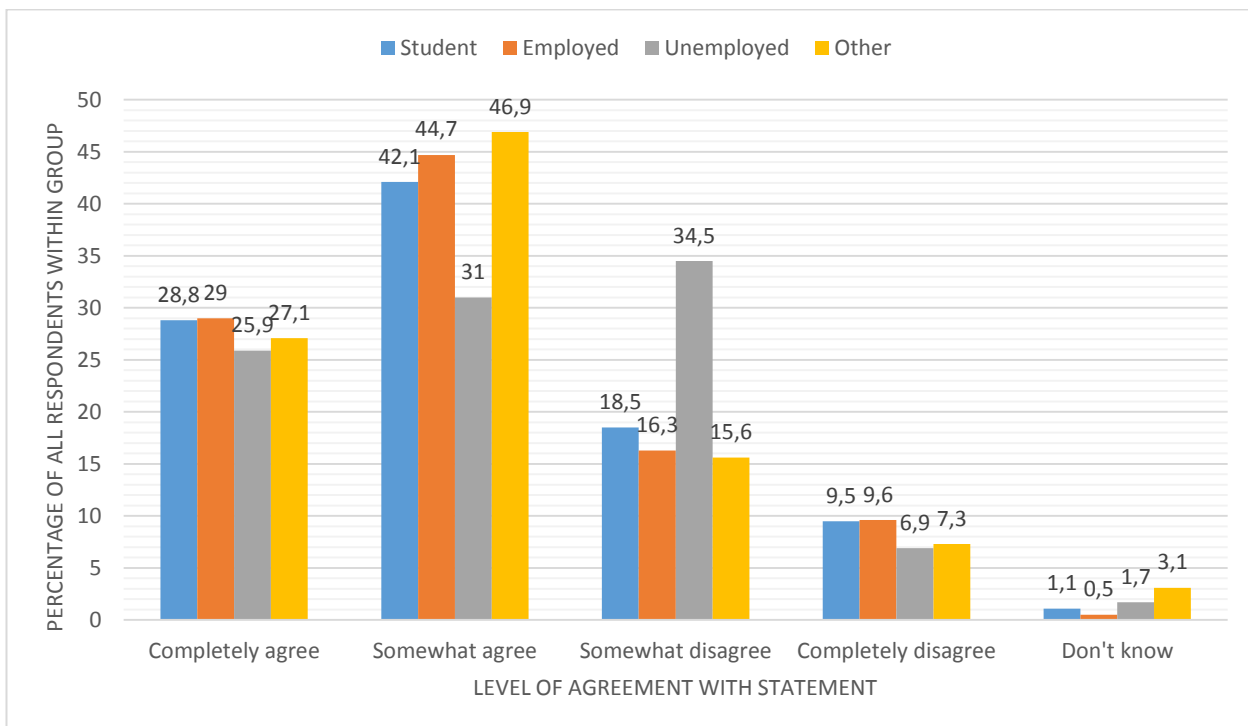
Again, a similar description of the distribution of responses over time and between primary activity groups can also be done for the second statement: “continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”. Figures 29, 30 and 31 show the differences between groups for the three different years. Firstly, in 1999 there doesn’t seem to be too much of a difference between groups – the only group that slightly differs from the rest is the unemployed (see figure 29). Nevertheless, the percentage within the group who completely agree with the statement was 45.2% for students, 43.3% for the employed, 37.5% for the unemployed, and 44.4% for the others. Similarly the percentages for those who somewhat agree with the statement are very close to one another for the different groups, the percentage being slightly higher for the unemployed. Nevertheless, the majority of respondents are once again on the positive end of the agreement scale. The highest percentage within a group for the negative responses is among the unemployed, of which 16.7% somewhat disagree with the statement and 6.3% completely disagree with the statement. However, the differences between groups on the negative end of the scale are also relatively small.

Figure 29: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market” by primary activity (1999)



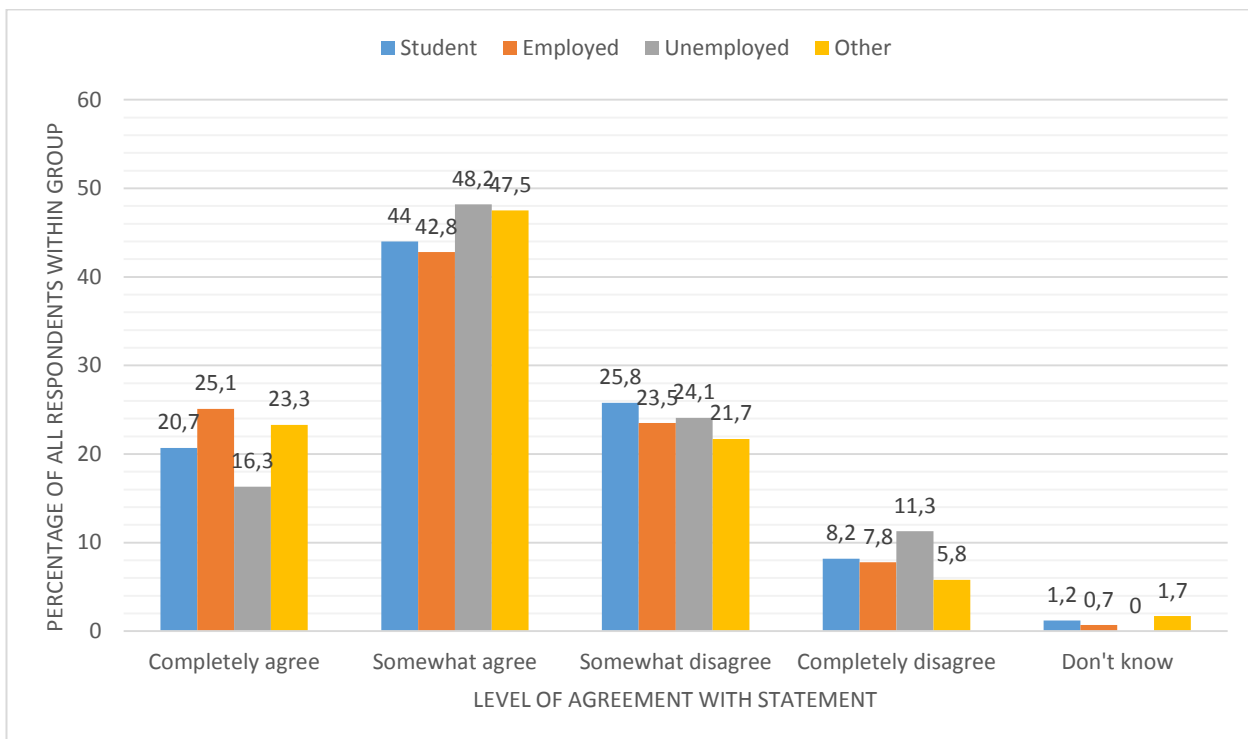
In 2007 (see figure 30), the percentages for each response are once again very close to each other with the exception of the unemployed. While the unemployed are almost on share a similar pattern to the other groups in regards to those who completely agree and completely disagree with the statement, in the case of those who somewhat agree and somewhat disagree there is quite a difference. For example, 31% of the unemployed somewhat agree with the statement, compared to over 40% within the other groups. In the case of those who somewhat disagree, 34.5% of the unemployed somewhat disagree, compared to less than 20% within the other groups. What is also interesting to note is that the percentage of those who somewhat agree with the statement are higher than those who completely agree with the statement, regardless of which group they belong to.

Figure 30: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market” by primary activity (2007)



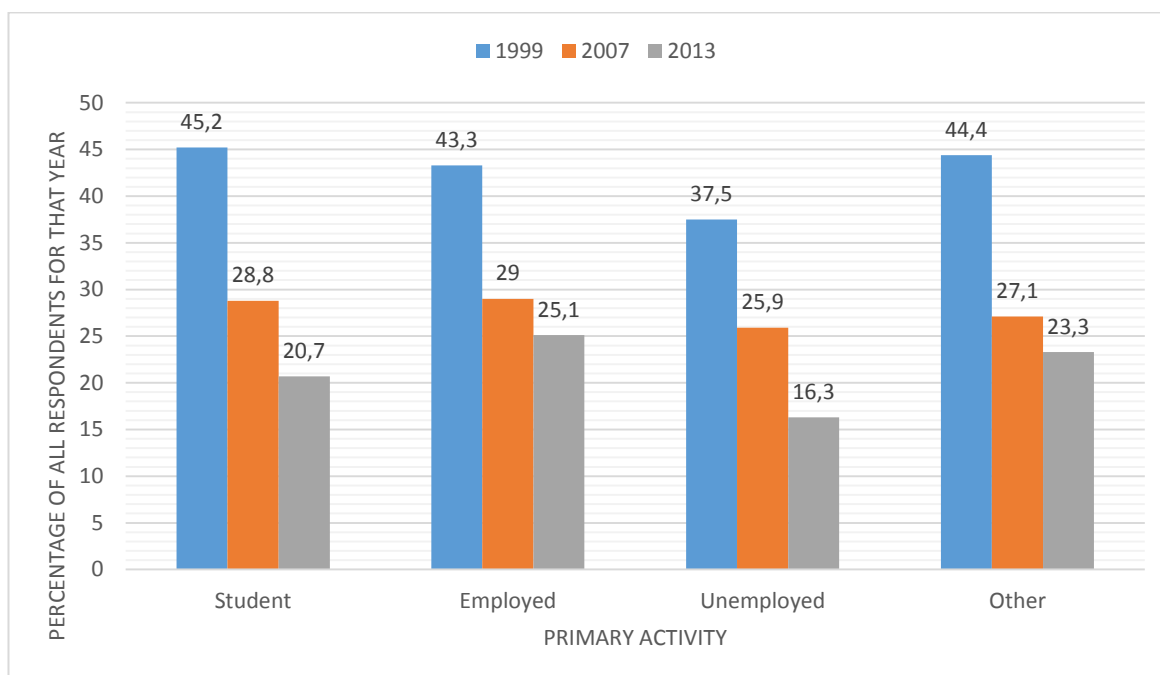
In 2013 (see figure 31), the differences between groups are once again minimal. However, similar to 2007, the percentage of respondents within all groups who somewhat agree with the statement is higher than the percentage of those who completely agree with the statement. Also interesting to note is that within the groups ‘students’ and ‘unemployed’ the percentage of those somewhat disagree with the statement is also higher than the percentage of those who completely agree with the statement. For example, among students 20.7% completely agree with the statement, while 25.8% of them somewhat disagree with the statement. For the other two groups, the ‘employed’ and ‘others’, the percentages within the group who completely agree or somewhat disagree with the statement are very close to one another. All in all however, there are no huge differences between groups.

Figure 31: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market” by primary activity (2013)



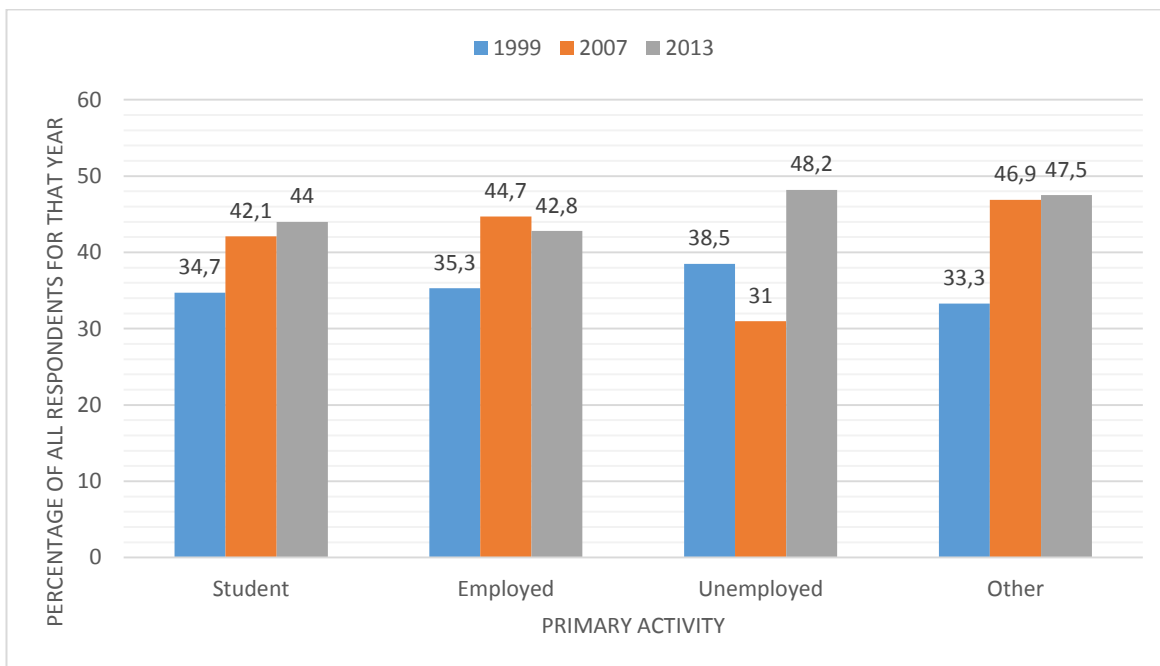
However, as stated before, the above figures do not necessarily represent the development of the distribution of responses over time – instead they show if there are differences between groups. Figures 32, 33, 34 and 35 show the development of each response between 1999 and 2013, also by category of primary activity. Figure 32 shows that for the percentage of respondents who completely agree with the statement the development is very similar: confidence in education is at its highest in 1999, drops in 2007, and further drops in 2013. For example, among students 45.2% of them completely agreed with the statement in 1999, the respective figures being 28.8% and 20.7% for 2007 and 2013.

Figure 32: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, completely agree with the statement (1999-2013)



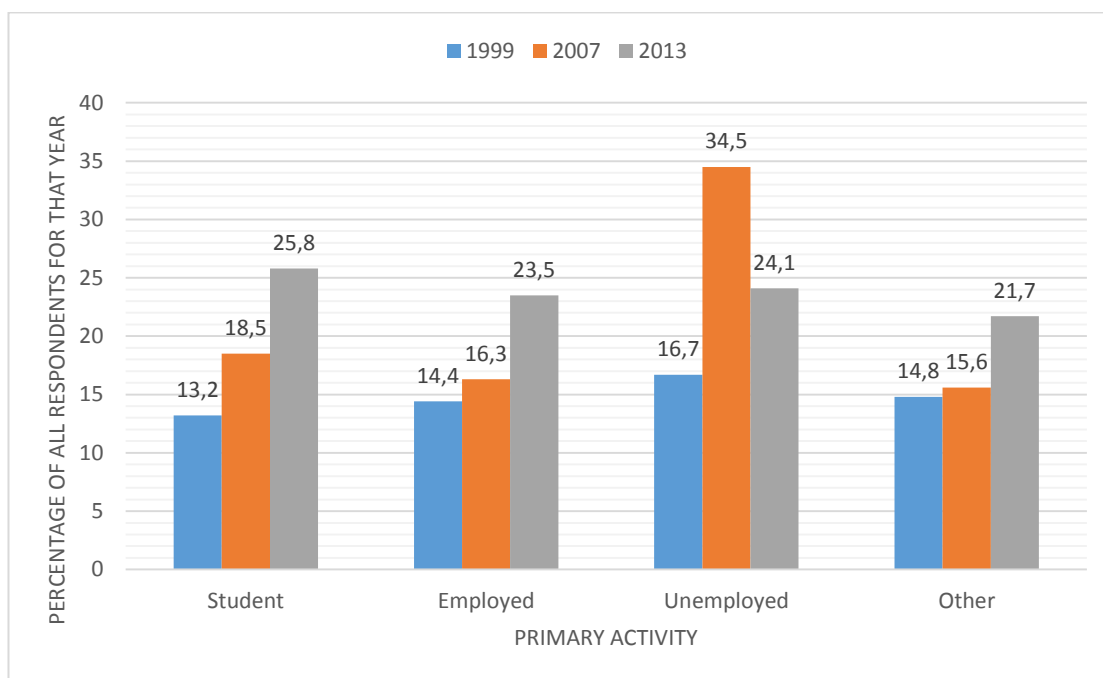
The patterns are slightly dissimilar for the response ‘somewhat agree’ as can be seen in figure 33. For students the development has been positive, with a higher and higher percentage of students somewhat agreeing with the statement since 1999: in 1999 34.7% somewhat agreed with the statement, in 2007 42.1%, and in 2013 44%. For the employed youth, the percentage was at its lowest in 1999 (35.3%), rose in 2007 (44.7%), and dropped slightly in 2013 (42.8%). For the unemployed, 38.5% somewhat agreed with the statement in 1999, 31% in 2007, and 48.2% in 2013. For the others, 33.3% of them somewhat agree with the statement in 1999, rising to 46.9% in 2007 and slightly rising again in 2013 to 47.5%.

Figure 33: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, somewhat agree with the statement (1999-2013)



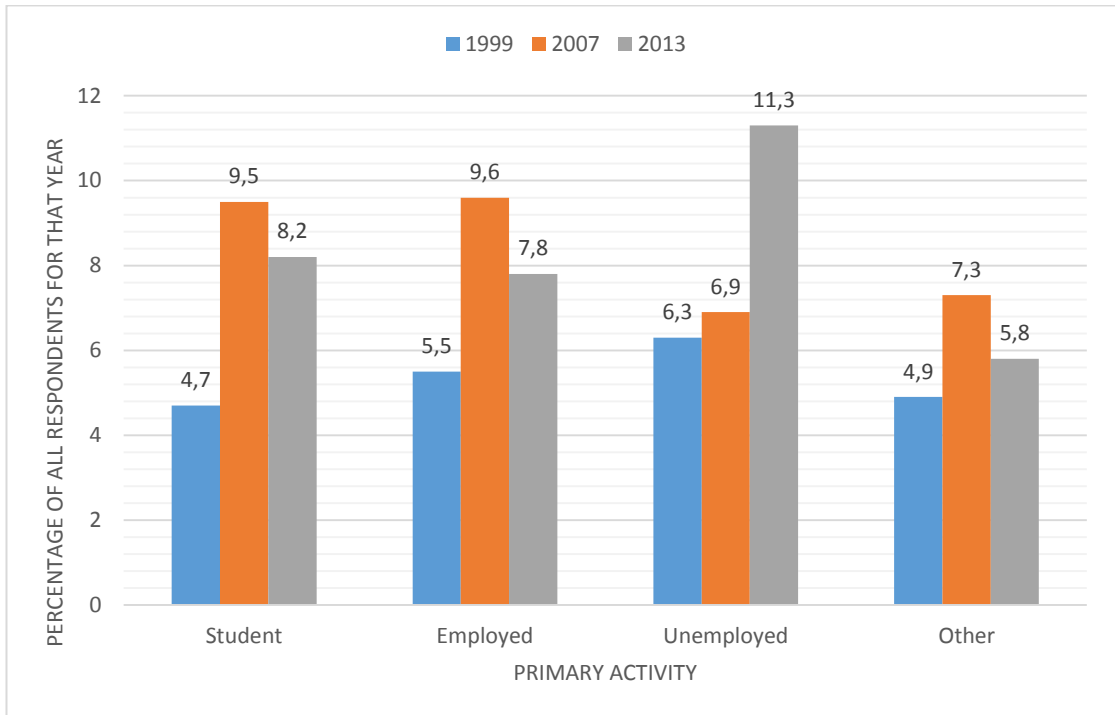
For the response of ‘somewhat disagree’ more dissimilar patterns start to emerge (see figure 34). For students, the employed, and others the percentage of those somewhat disagreeing with the statement has been increasing since 1999, with the larger increase occurring between 2007 and 2013. For the unemployed on the other hand, the percentage of those who somewhat disagree with the statement was at its lowest in 1999 (16.7%), rose quite a bit in 2007 (34.5%) and then dropped again in 2013 (24.1%).

Figure 34: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, somewhat disagree with the statement (1999-2013)



Finally, for those who completely disagree with the statement, the development of responses has been similar for students, the employed and others (see figure 35). The percentage within these groups that completely disagree with the statement was at its lowest in 1999, then rose in 2007 before dropping slightly in 2013. For the unemployed on the other hand, the percentage has been going up since 1999: in 1999 6.3% completely disagreed with the statement, in 2007 the respective figure was 6.9%, but then in 2013 the percentage rose to 11.3%. Similar to a lot of the other graphs and figures discussed thus far, the unemployed seem to follow a different pattern to the other groups. However, it is hard to say how valid these figures are, as the number of unemployed individuals in the sample is far lower than for example the number of students or youth in employment. The next step then is to see if there is statistical evidence to support the observed or unobserved differences between groups.

Figure 35: “Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, completely disagree with the statement (1999-2013)



6.2.3 Kruskal-Wallis test for ‘age group’ and ‘primary activity’

This section will look more closely at whether there is any statistical evidence to support the descriptive statistics described thus far. In contrast to section 6.1, where the analysis concentrated on young people as a whole, the Kruskal-Wallis test will be used to see if there is any statistical evidence to suggest differences between age groups or primary activities. However, in the case of comparing age groups and categories of primary activity, the test will be run for the different years in question, i.e. 1999, 2007 and 2013.

1999

Table 8 shows the Kruskal-Wallis test statistics computed for the dependent variable “education significantly better one’s employability”, having the age groups as the grouping variable. According to table 8, the significance level for this computation is 0.000. As the significance level value is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis, and can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in the continuous variable across the three groups. It should also be noted that the significance level is below 0.01. This means that we now have statistical evidence to support what was observed in the descriptive statistics: that there are differences between young people’s

level of agreement with the statement in 1999, depending on which age group they belong to.

Table 8: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "education significantly betters one's employability", grouping variable 'age group', 1999

Test Statistics^{a,b}

Education
significantly
betters one's
employability

Chi-Square	17,551
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	,000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Age group

Table 9 then gives more insight into which group has the highest overall ranking, which then corresponds to the highest score on the continuous variable. According to table 9, the highest ranking is for the age group 25-29. This means that young people in this age group have the highest score. In the case of the dependent variable "education significantly betters one's employability", the higher the score the less they agree with the statement. This goes together with what is shown in the descriptive statistics: the level of confidence in education is lower for those in the older age groups.

Table 9: Mean ranks for "education significantly betters one's employability", grouping variable 'age group', 1999

	Ranks		
	Age group	N	Mean Rank
Education significantly betters one's employability	15-19	475	584,41
	20-24	429	632,74
	25-29	339	661,08
	Total	1243	

A similar computation was also performed for the grouping variable 'primary activity'. Table 10 shows the Kruskal-Wallis test statistics computed for the dependent variable "education significantly betters one's employability", having the different primary activity categories as the grouping variable. The significance level for this computation is 0.000. As the significance level value is less than 0.05, we once again reject the null

hypothesis, and can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between groups. The significance level is also below 0.01. This means that we now have statistical evidence to support what was observed in the descriptive statistics: in 1999, there were differences between young people in the different primary activity categories when it comes to their level of agreement with the statement.

Table 10: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "education significantly betters one's employability", grouping variable 'primary activity', 1999

Test Statistics^{a,b}	
Education significantly betters one's employability	
Chi-Square	21,397
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	,000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Primary activity

Table 11 shows which group has the highest overall ranking, which then corresponds to the highest score on the continuous variable. According to table 11, the highest ranking is for the group 'unemployed', meaning this group has the highest score. In the case of the dependent variable "education significantly betters one's employability", the higher the score the less they agree with the statement. This goes together with what is observable in the descriptive statistics: the level of confidence in education, or agreement with the statement, was lower for those young people who were unemployed in 1999.

Table 11: Mean ranks for "education significantly betters one's employability", grouping variable 'primary activity', 1999

	Ranks		
	Primary activity	N	Mean Rank
Education significantly betters one's employability	Student	654	592,66
	Employed	414	643,46
	Unemployed	96	707,39
	Other	79	648,66
	Total	1243	

Now let us perform the same statistical analysis for the second statement: “continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”. Table 12 shows the Kruskal-Wallis test statistics computed for the dependent variable “continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, having ‘age group’ as the grouping variable. As can be seen in table 12, the significance level for this computation is 0.000. As the significance level value is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis, and can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the three groups. It should also be noted that the significance level is below 0.01. This means that we now have statistical evidence to support what was observed in the descriptive statistics: in 1999, there were differences between young people’s level of agreement with the statement depending on the age group they belonged to.

Table 12: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for ”continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, grouping variable ‘age group’, 1999

Test Statistics^{a,b}

Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market	
Chi-Square	43,966
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	,000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Age group

Table 13 then shows which group has the highest overall ranking, which then corresponds to the highest score on the continuous variable. According to table 13, the highest ranking is for the age group 15-19. This means that young people in this age group have the highest score. In the case of the dependent variable “continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, the higher the score the less they agree with the statement. This again matches what was already observed in the descriptive statistics: the level of confidence in education was lower for those in the younger age group.

Table 13: Mean ranks for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'age group', 1999

	Ranks		
	Age group	N	Mean Rank
Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market	15-19	465	693,70
	20-24	423	566,07
	25-29	339	564,49
	Total	1227	

Next, table 14 shows the Kruskal-Wallis test statistics computed for the dependent variable "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", now turning its attention to 'primary activity' as the grouping variable. According to table 14, the significance level for this computation is 0.422. Since the significance level value is above 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, and cannot conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the different groups' responses. However, this result was also visible in the descriptive statistics: in 1999, there were very small percentage differences between the different groups. Table 15 shows the mean ranks, which are all very close to one another in value. The fact that the mean rank for the unemployed is the highest among the groups also goes together with the descriptive statistics, as this group had the lowest level of confidence in education when compared to the other groups – even though the actual differences between the groups were relatively small.

Table 14: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'primary activity', 1999

Test Statistics ^{a,b}	
Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market	
Chi-Square	2,810
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	,422

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Primary activity

Table 15: Mean ranks for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'primary activity', 1999

	Ranks		
	Primary activity	N	Mean Rank
Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market	Student	643	602,92
	Employed	410	620,97
	Unemployed	95	660,44
	Other	79	612,11
	Total	1227	

2007

The above statistics were computed for the year 1999; in this section, the same statistics will be computed for the year 2007. Table 16 shows the Kruskal-Wallis test statistics computed for the dependent variable "education significantly better one's employability", having age group as the grouping variable. As can be seen in table 16, the significance level is 0.000. As the significance level value is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis, and can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in the continuous variable across the three groups. In addition, the significance level is also below 0.01. This means that we now have statistical evidence to support what was observed in the descriptive statistics: that there are differences between young people's level of agreement with the statement in 2007, depending on which age group they belong to.

Table 16: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "education significantly better one's employability", grouping variable 'age group', 2007

Test Statistics ^{a,b}	
Education significantly better one's employability	
Chi-Square	26,463
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	,000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Age group

Table 17 gives us a better idea of which group has the highest overall ranking, which then corresponds to the highest score on the continuous variable. According to table 17, the highest ranking is for the age group 25-29. This means that young people in this age group have the highest score. In the case of the dependent variable “education significantly betters one’s employability”, the higher the score the less they agree with the statement. This goes together with what was already visible in the descriptive statistics: the level of confidence in education, or agreement with the statement, was lower for those in the older age groups.

Table 17: Mean ranks for “education significantly betters one’s employability”, grouping variable ‘age group’, 2007

Ranks			
	Age group	N	Mean Rank
Education significantly betters one's employability	15-19	633	873,10
	20-24	636	963,58
	25-29	628	1010,74
	Total	1897	

As previously, a similar computation was also performed for the grouping variable ‘primary activity’. Table 18 shows the Kruskal-Wallis test statistics computed for the dependent variable “education significantly betters one’s employability”, having the different primary activity categories as the grouping variable. According to table 18, the significance level for this computation is 0.000. The significance level value is less than 0.05, therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between groups’ responses. Furthermore, the significance level is also below 0.01. This means that we now have statistical evidence to support what was already described earlier: in 2007, there were differences between young people in the different primary activity categories when it comes to their level of agreement with the statement.

Table 18: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "education significantly betters one's employability", grouping variable 'primary activity', 2007

Test Statistics^{a,b}

Education
significantly
betters one's
employability

Chi-Square	22,113
df	4
Asymp. Sig.	,000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Primary activity

Table 19 on the other hand gives more insight into which group has the highest overall ranking. According to table 19, the highest rankings were for the groups 'other' and 'employed'. This means that young people who belong to these groups have the highest scores; the higher the score, the less they agree with the statement. This goes together with what was shown in the descriptive statistics: the level of confidence in education, or agreement with the statement, was lower for these young people when compared to students and the unemployed.

Table 19: Mean ranks for "education significantly betters one's employability", grouping variable 'primary activity', 2007

	Ranks		
	Primary activity	N	Mean Rank
Education significantly betters one's employability	Student	1089	908,01
	Employed	654	1007,66
	Unemployed	58	912,08
	Other	95	1042,02
	No response	1	525,50
	Total	1897	

Now let us perform the same statistical analysis for the second statement: "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market". Table 20 shows the Kruskal-Wallis test statistics computed for the dependent variable "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", now having 'age group' as the grouping variable. The significance level for this computation is 0.000; as

the significance level value is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis, and can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in the continuous variable across the three groups. It should also be noted that the significance level is below 0.01. This means that we now have statistical evidence to support what was already observed in the descriptive statistics: in 2007, there were differences between young people's level of agreement with the statement when looking at which age group they belong to.

Table 20: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'age group', 2007

Test Statistics^{a,b}	
Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market	
Chi-Square	60,040
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	,000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Age group

Table 21 on the other shows which group has the highest overall ranking. According to table 21, the highest ranking is for the age group 15-19. This means that young people in this age group have the highest score and the higher the score, the less they agree with the statement. This goes together with what is shown in the descriptive statistics: the level of confidence in education, or agreement with the statement, was lower for those in the younger age group.

Table 21: Mean ranks for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'age group', 2007

	Ranks		
	Age group	N	Mean Rank
Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market	15-19	625	1070,22
	20-24	632	895,49
	25-29	626	860,94
	Total	1883	

Finally, table 22 shows the Kruskal-Wallis test statistics computed for the dependent variable “continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, having ‘primary activity’ as the grouping variable. According to table 22, the significance level for this computation is 0.488. As the significance level value is above 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, and cannot conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the different groups’ responses. However, this result was also visible in the descriptive statistics: in 2007, there were very small percentage differences between the different groups. Table 23 shows the mean ranks, which are all very close to one another in value. The fact that the mean rank for the unemployed is the highest among the groups also goes together with the descriptive statistics, as this group had the lowest level of confidence in education compared to the other groups; even if the differences between groups were relatively small.

Table 22: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for “continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, grouping variable ‘primary activity’, 2007

Test Statistics^{a,b}

Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market	
Chi-Square	2,432
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	,488

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Primary activity

Table 23: Mean ranks for “continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, grouping variable ‘primary activity’, 2007

		Ranks	
		Primary activity	Mean Rank
Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market	Student	1079	944,61
	Employed	653	931,19
	Unemployed	57	1036,37
	Other	93	919,62
	Total	1882	

2013⁵

Finally, let us compute the same statistics for the year 2013. Table 24 shows the Kruskal-Wallis test statistics computed for the dependent variable “education significantly betters one’s employability”, having the age groups as the grouping variable. As can be seen in table 24, the significance level for this computation is 0.000, which is below 0.05; therefore, we reject the null hypothesis, and can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in the continuous variable across the three groups. It should also be noted that the significance level is below 0.01. Therefore, there is statistical evidence to support what was already observed in the descriptive statistics: that there are differences between young people’s level of agreement with the statement in 2013, depending on which age group they belong to.

Table 24: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for “education significantly betters one’s employability”, grouping variable ‘age group’, 2013

Test Statistics ^{a,b}	
Education significantly betters one's employability	
Chi-Square	28,455
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	,000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Age group

Next, table 25 shows which group has the highest overall ranking, which then corresponds to the highest score on the continuous variable. According to table 25, the highest ranking is for the age group 25-29. This means that young people in this age group have the highest score. In essence, the higher the score, the less they agree with the statement. This goes together with what is shown in the descriptive statistics: the level of confidence in education, or agreement with the statement, was lower for those in the older age groups.

⁵ For 2013, non-responses were excluded from the analysis. In 1999 and 2007 non-responses were not included in the original data set.

Table 25: Mean ranks for "education significantly betters one's employability", grouping variable 'age group', 2013

	Ranks		
	Age group	N	Mean Rank
Education significantly betters one's employability	15-19	608	865,64
	20-24	642	971,42
	25-29	643	999,55
	Total	1893	

As was done for age groups, a similar computation was also performed for the grouping variable 'primary activity'. Table 26 shows the Kruskal-Wallis test statistics computed for the dependent variable "education significantly betters one's employability", having the different primary activity categories as the grouping variable. According to table 26, the significance level for this computation is 0.000. Since the significance level value is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis, and can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in the responses of the three groups. Once again, the significance level is also below 0.01. Therefore, we now have statistical evidence to support what was visible in the descriptive statistics as well: in 2013, there were differences between young people in the different primary activity categories when it comes to their level of agreement with the statement.

Table 26: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "education significantly betters one's employability", grouping variable 'primary activity', 2013

Test Statistics^{a,b}

Education significantly betters one's employability	
Chi-Square	37,444
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	,000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Primary activity

Table 27 on the other hand gives a better understanding on which group has the highest overall ranking. According to table 27, the highest rankings were for the groups 'unemployed' and 'other', with the 'employed' not being far behind. This means that

young people who belong to these groups have the highest score, and the higher the score, the less they agree with the statement. This again corresponds well to what was observed previously in the descriptive statistics section: the level of confidence in education, or agreement with the statement, was lower for those who were employed, unemployed or ‘other’ when compared to students.

Table 27: Mean ranks for "education significantly betters one's employability", grouping variable 'primary activity', 2013

	Ranks		
	Primary activity	N	Mean Rank
Education significantly betters one's employability	Student	804	873,28
	Employed	828	990,68
	Unemployed	141	1057,10
	Other	120	1010,13
	Total	1893	

Now let us perform the same statistical analysis for the second statement: “continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”. Table 28 shows the Kruskal-Wallis test statistics computed for the dependent variable “continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, having ‘age group’ as the grouping variable. According to table 28, the significance level for this computation is 0.000, which is less than 0.05; we therefore reject the null hypothesis, and can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in the continuous variable across the groups. It should also be noted that the significance level is also below 0.01. This means statistical evidence corresponds to what was observed in the descriptives: in 2013, there were differences between young people’s level of agreement with the statement depending on the age group they belonged to.

Table 28: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'age group', 2013

Test Statistics^{a,b}

Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market	
Chi-Square	74,866
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	,000

- a. Kruskal Wallis Test
- b. Grouping Variable: Age group

Table 29 on the other hand gives more insight into which group has the highest overall ranking. According to table 29, the highest ranking is for the age group 15-19. This means that young people in this age group have the highest score. In the case of the dependent variable “continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, the higher the score the less they agree with the statement. Once again, this goes well with what was already observed in the descriptives: confidence in education was lower for those in the younger age group.

Table 29: Mean ranks for “continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, grouping variable ‘age group’, 2013

	Ranks		
	Age group	N	Mean Rank
Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market	15-19	600	1083,10
	20-24	638	901,35
	25-29	639	841,29
	Total	1877	

Finally, table 30 shows the Kruskal-Wallis test statistics computed for the dependent variable “continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market”, having ‘primary activity’ as the grouping variable. According to table 30, the significance level for this computation is 0.079. As the significance level value is above 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, and cannot conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the different groups’ responses. However, this result was also observed in the descriptive statistics: in 2013, there were very small percentage differences between the different groups. Table 31 shows the mean ranks, which are all very close to one another in value. Again, the mean rank for the unemployed is the highest among the groups, which goes together with the descriptive statistics: this group had the lowest level of confidence in education compared to the other groups – even though the actual differences between the groups were relatively small.

Table 30: Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'primary activity', 2013

Test Statistics^{a,b}

Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market	
Chi-Square	6,787
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	,079

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Primary activity

Table 31: Mean ranks for "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market", grouping variable 'primary activity', 2013

	Ranks		
	Primary activity	N	Mean Rank
Continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market	Student	795	960,28
	Employed	823	913,52
	Unemployed	141	1005,71
	Other	118	893,67
	Total	1877	

7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Economic instability and youth transitions

7.1.1 Confidence in education in times of economic booms and busts

Both the descriptive and statistical analysis of the data show that Finnish young people's confidence in education follows the development of the economy: in times of economic busts young people's confidence in education increases; in times of economic booms their level of confidence in education decreases. This can be seen by the shifts in the percentage of young people who completely agree with the two statements: "education significantly better one's employability" and "continuously educating oneself is important for staying in the labour market".

In 1999, the percentage of young people completely agreeing with both statements was at its highest. These young people had grown up in the aftermath of the 1990s economic depression, and the economy was only slowly starting to pick up. With high unemployment, especially among youth, the economic downturn became a time to invest in oneself, hoping the future would turn things around. This could explain why for example the percentage of those completely agreeing with the statement was higher in 1999 than it was in 1994. The visible effects of education providing better chances on the labour market could well explain why confidence in education was higher in 1999 than it was in 1994: these effects would have been far more visible in 1999 than in 1994 when Finland was still not out of the recession.

But ever since the late 1990s and early 2000s, things started to look better; by 2007 Finland had experienced an unprecedented period of growth. Unemployment went down and employers were in desperate need of workers. During such good times, education, or at least a very high level of it, was no longer necessary to make sure you became employed. While certain levels of education were still demanded, the need to fill the jobs became more important, as people could also learn on the job. While a higher level of education may have put you in a better position when competing for higher status and higher paid jobs, educational credentials were not necessary in getting a job. However, it should be noted that one of the reasons Finland was able to grow so fast was the fact that it could tap into an already existing educated workforce. The investments made in the tough times of the 1990s paid out in the first decade of the 2000s. The fact that higher educational credentials were not a necessity is also evident

in the results of this thesis: the percentage of those completely agreeing with the statement that education enhances your employability decreased in 2007.

But then, in late 2007 and early 2008 another economic crisis hit the globe, including Finland. While the first victims of this recession in Europe were Portugal, Ireland, Greece and Spain (PIGS), it soon became clear that this recession would impact Europe as a whole. While Finland, along with Germany, seemed to be relatively resilient to the recession, Finnish growth began to decrease and unemployment began to increase. By 2013 Finland had slowly started becoming the next sick man of Europe. From the results of this research, we can also see that confidence in education began to rise again, and the percentage of those completely agreeing with the two statements was higher than in 2007 – but had not returned to the all-time high of 1999. Therefore, as competition on the labour market began to increase, education, once again, became the way to better position oneself in the competitive labour market.

One explanation for this development over time is how valuable a degree is during booms versus busts. During economic downturns, the supply of labour often outweighs the demand, resulting in increased unemployment. Therefore, it is during such periods of over-supply that educational credentials become even more important for one's employability. As discussed by the job competition model, degrees are one way through which a candidate can better position themselves when compared to other applicants (Aro, 2003; 2014). But while those with a degree are at an advantage to those without, the type of degree has also become increasingly important. When employers have a wide selection of qualified candidates, the relevance of the major subject for the job becomes more important. Indeed, this line of thinking could explain why confidence in education did not return to its all-time high 1999 level in 2013. Both the requirements of employers and the supply of potential employees have changed. The increase in average educational level among the population means that education alone is no longer a distinguishing factor on the labour market. Education alone is becoming less and less relevant in improving one's position the labour market. Other things such as social skills, networks, extracurricular activities, work experience, and job specific skills have become important add-ons that help a candidate distinguish themselves from others with similar educational backgrounds.

The economic crisis has also resulted in a “culture of waiting” (Moore, 2011). Instead of life ‘moving forward’, more and more young people are faced with spells of unemployment and excess time. While education can be a way to pass the time while making oneself more employable, time spent in education does not necessarily allow a young person to transition to adulthood through the acquirement of employment. As stated previously, probably the most important factor in the transition to adulthood is economic independence, which is most often acquired through income from employment. If even educational credentials no longer guarantee an income, let alone a stable one, the transition to adulthood is prolonged – at least until society begins to define adulthood in a different way.

However, it should also be noted that while there are some shifts in confidence in education, the level has still been high for all three years in question. This speaks to the fact that education does not lose its significance, even with educational expansion. Instead, education becomes increasingly important – and having a certain level of education becomes a necessity. Furthermore, the persistence of high confidence in education could also point to the success of the Finnish educational system, or even society as a whole, in stressing the importance of education. In addition, as time passes more and more young people will come from families whose parents have a higher educational background than their own parents. The increasing level of education provides a basis of forwarding confidence in education from one generation to the next. Parents, generation after generation, will convince their children that education is the way to ensure their future is provided for. On the other hand, who is to say that such confidence will persist if educational credentials are becoming less and less relevant in the transition from school to work. If other aspects beyond education become more important for becoming employable, it is possible that young people will turn away from educational institutions, at least if they are unable to keep up with labour market needs.

Another interesting point to consider is the difference in responses for the two dependent variables; the first one essentially describing the relationship between education and employability, and the second one the relationship between lifelong learning and staying in the labour market. The results signal that young people have a stronger level of agreement with the first statement, i.e. that education is important for being employable – they are less convinced that lifelong learning, i.e. continuously

educating oneself, is important for staying in the labour market. The fact that the percentage of those completely agreeing with the second statement has been going down since 1999 could speak to the fact that education is merely an entrance ticket into the labour market, but that other factors are important for staying there. Maybe educational credentials only signal whether you are *potentially* a good employee or not, and the actually relevant skills are only learned on the job. In the Finnish context, Puhakka et al. (2010) found that the most important skills expected of Finnish graduates are: problem-solving skills, teamwork and social skills, communication skills in Finnish, information acquisition skills, and organisation and cooperation skills. While some of these are inadvertently learned in educational institutions as well, e.g. through group work, they are often only perfected at the workplace, and perfected in a way that they fit the specific working environment in question. Nevertheless, confidence in education, as measured by this second dependent variable is also mostly in the positive end of the agreement spectrum, strengthening the perception that young Finns do indeed have a high level of confidence in education.

7.1.2 Transition to adulthood and confidence in education

In addition to the overall development of confidence in education among young people, there are also observable differences between different age groups within the category of 'youth'. Confidence in education has the tendency to decrease with age – the youngest age group having the highest level of confidence and the oldest having the lowest level. The same is true when comparing the primary activity of young people: those young people who are still studying tend to have a higher level of confidence than those who are either employed or unemployed. It seems that for example the unemployed, as well as those in employment, have less belief in the value of educational credentials than those who are still in the process of acquiring them. This could signal the fact that the reality of matching one's educational background to the needs of the labour market is different from what we are taught to expect. Indeed, the results for primary activity and age group could be seen to signal the same thing: that as one moves closer to 'adulthood', the closer one gets to the labour market; but once in the labour market education is no longer the only thing that matters. Parents, teachers, and society as a whole stress the importance of acquiring an education and in the past promises of education providing employment were not too far off from reality. But today, more and more young people are faced with a much harsher reality:

unemployment spells, precarious work, jobs for which they are overeducated. Those in the older age groups are faced with more and more friends, family and acquaintances who have educated themselves, but still can't find employment. Indeed, looking at the results it seems that those young people who are in employment, and the age groups who most likely already have employment experience, have less confidence in education than their younger counterparts. This also fits in well with discussion on one's 'transition to adulthood'. Transitions are increasingly fragmented, and less smooth than they were in the past.

However, it should be noted that while there are statistically significant differences between groups, the overall level of confidence in education is still relatively high. Once again this suggests that while the reality of the labour market may impact young people's confidence in education, most of them still realise the necessity of acquiring educational credentials. This can be seen in the fact that the movement tends to be from those who completely agree with the statement, to those who somewhat agree with it. The percentage of young people who somewhat disagree or completely disagree are still relatively low – even during 2007 when confidence in education was observed to be at its lowest level. The persistent confidence in education of Finnish youth can partially be explained by the fact that while the economic crisis has taken its toll on the employment prospects of Finnish youth, the situation has not reached 'catastrophic' levels as it did for example in Spain and Greece.

On the other hand, while the sample size is large, this data can hardly be used to say much about those young people who disagree with the statement. The number of unemployed youth in the samples for all years are very low, and there is also the possibility that the most marginalised youth are not even covered by the random sampling: they may be off the grid, hard to reach, or in some way 'unavailable' for research purposes. The interviews were done by phone, meaning that the young people have to have a phone, and they need to answer it as well. According to Myllyniemi (2016), the Finnish Youth Barometers do not necessarily cover a truly random sample of the youth population, as it can leave out marginalised youth who wouldn't answer the phone to begin with. However, it should be noted that in comparison to many other countries, pretty much every Finn has a phone: according to Statistics Finland (2007), by the year 2007 all households had a phone, whether a landline or a mobile phone; though by 2007 over half of households only had a mobile phone. Future Youth

Barometers also have to consider how the data is collected and not just the survey design: not only do questions have to remain relevant for the lives of young people, the data should be collected where young people actually are. Discussion has turned to other possible ways to collect the data to ensure a better representation of the youth population (Myllyniemi, 2016). On the other hand, one of the reasons survey interviews have been made by phone have been the fact that web surveys tend to have poor response rates, and depending on how it is distributed are more prone to self-selection bias (Wright, 2006). But perhaps attention shouldn't turn away from phones but how the research is marketed: informing youth workers, having a social media campaign and passing the information word of mouth about the upcoming data collection could result in young people being more aware of a potential call coming their way. While some of these 'campaigns' already exist, more attention could be given to this possibility (Myllyniemi, 2016).

7.2 Policy implications and further research

7.2.1 Education and labour market policy in Finland

The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture has set a target that by 2020 Finland is among the top countries in the following OECD rankings: high level of skills among both youth and adults; low number of early school leavers; and having a high percentage of youth and working age people with a tertiary degree (The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, 2012). The main justification for this is the expected skills needs of the future, as well as research that shows education is one way to prevent the exclusion of young people from society (The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, 2012). The exclusion of young people from the labour market, and consequently rising youth unemployment, goes against the needs of the state: to maintain the current welfare state, policy needs to target the prolongation of careers and make sure that an ageing society has as many tax payers as possible. While policy has also turned to prolonging careers from the end, for example through the raise in retirement age, the Finnish government also realises the importance of prolonging careers from the beginning. This results in quite the dilemma: at the same time employers today expect a certain level of skills from their employees even before they enter the labour market, while the state wants young people to transition into the labour market as soon as possible so that they can contribute more into the welfare system. Simultaneously the state is stressing the importance of education for Finland's future,

and pushing young people out of education as quickly as possible (Gretschel et al., 2014). Cuts to education and student allowance, and time restrictions on how fast young people should graduate from their programmes can be seen as measures to push young people out of education and into the labour market. Nevertheless, if the wishes of the state and society is to have a well-educated workforce, they will also have to work on maintaining a high level of confidence in education: it is important for making sure young people do in fact educate themselves. As outlined by Bormann & John (2014), a certain level of trust is also necessary for taking action. Therefore, diminishing trust in education could result in young people not wanting to invest their time, money and efforts in education. Furthermore, if the perceived value of education on the labour market diminishes, this could potentially impact the educational decisions young people make, and therefore also the skills that will be available in the future. Indeed, in December 2015, all speakers at the OECD conference on trust and education highlighted trust as one of the key challenges for future education policy (OECD, 2015b).

However, policy should go beyond how the government tries to influence the actions of future taxpayers. Focusing solely on what the individual can do to make themselves more employable will not solve the problem on its own – for what is the point of being employable if there is no possibility of being employed? As stated before, becoming employed does not necessary follow from becoming employable: someone who is employable can be employed, unemployed or underemployed (Wilton, 2011 in Tymon, 2013: 843) This is one of the arguments against policies such as the Youth Guarantee: instead of focusing on the supply side of the labour market by forcing young people mainly into education and training, more pressure should be put on the demand side, i.e. employers and their ‘skill requirements’. Public discussion tends to focus on the unemployed themselves, and what they can do to either find employment or make themselves more employable. However, the other side of the coin is whether there are opportunities for employment in the first place. While there are arguments for having a well-educated labour force for its own sake, focusing policy efforts on the individuals themselves only impacts the supply of well-educated employees, but not the demand. Will there be sufficient demand for the amount of highly educated individuals we are producing? Will the skills they acquire be needed? And most relevant in the case of young people: will they be given the opportunity to demonstrate the skills they have

acquired? In essence, focus should not only turn to how much education a young person needs to be employable, but also to what kind of education is relevant in the future. Technological change is also changing the world of work, and even employers have a hard time keeping up with what skills they actually need. For example, the uptake of game-changing technologies⁶ will depend on the existing skillsets of the population, how those skill levels are maintained, and how they will be developed; such technologies in turn will be important for creating and maintaining competitive advantage (Clark, Bryson, & Vanchan, 2015). Also, as was discussed previously, more and more of the skill development responsibility has been pushed on educational institutions. However, for a future that is uncertain, where technology we cannot even think of today may completely alter the labour market tomorrow, should some of the responsibility for educating the workforce be returned to the employer? Policy needs to better target youth transitions into the labour market, which also involves changing how we see education: non-formal education as well as on-the-job learning are increasingly becoming viable alternatives to formal educational credentials.

How strongly young people believe in education and the importance of credentials can have vital effects on the labour market, and therefore the economy as well. The sort of skills that are taught and learned in educational institutions, will have consequences for the labour market: if there are and will be skills gaps. But is it credentials young people believe in, or education as a concept in itself? Further research in Finland should try to also find out whether non-formal forms of learning are coming to replace how we traditionally see education. The recent cuts to education in Finland have once again heated the debated on what the purpose of education actually is: is it to provide information and research that benefits society as a whole; to transfer societal values that make good citizens; or to provide skills relevant for the labour market – or in fact a combination of all of these? Whatever the purpose of education may be, and whatever form that education may be in, it seems clear that education is important for the functioning of society. The development of educational attainment in Finland along with the Finnish economy is no coincidence. The challenge is to make sure that education remains relevant for the society we live in today, as well as the one we will face tomorrow.

⁶ These include for example: nanotechnology, 3D-printing, the internet of things.

7.2.2 The next steps for research on confidence in education

In the future, it will be interesting to follow how confidence in education develops in Finland. Planned changes to the educational system, developments in technology and the economy, and consequent changes in the labour market will all have their effect on the level of confidence in education among young people. Mostly relevant to the results of this thesis will be to monitor how the level of confidence in education will develop if and when the economy recovers. This will require that the Finnish Youth Barometer questions analysed in this thesis will continue to be asked in future years – not necessarily annually, but from time to time regardless. Furthermore, a more longitudinal perspective is needed in the collection of the data, making sure that the different years are comparable. This point has also been made by Myllyniemi (2014). With this longitudinal perspective the comparison of between group similarities and differences will also become easier. For example, if the question design takes a more longitudinal perspective, it will be possible to examine how a young persons' own educational background, as well as their parents' educational background, impacts their level of confidence in education. Furthermore, as the Finnish population becomes more multicultural, the question of whether the young person is of immigrant background will become increasingly relevant, allowing future analysis of whether there are differences between young people with and without an immigrant background. At the moment these kinds of analysis have been difficult, as the ways in which these questions have been asked have differed quite considerably, and in some cases they have not been asked at all. Lastly, the way the sample is drawn at present does not allow for an equal comparison between some groups; for example, the number of unemployed youth in the sample is very low compared to those who are in education. Quota sampling in some years could allow for a better comparison between such groups.

Another interesting comparison would be how confidence in education compares across Europe. At the moment there is no data that would allow for this sort of cross-country comparison, but collecting and analysing such data would allow for observing how different economic, cultural and institutional factors impact the level of confidence in education. This thesis has largely concentrated on the Finnish context, but a cross-country comparison would allow us to better investigate how this specific context impacts the results. Especially interesting would be to see how a country's educational system impacts the level of confidence in education among young people. As discussed

earlier, previous research has found that there are significant differences between youth transitions in Europe – it is therefore not a stretch to imagine differences in how much young people believe in the power of education. How for example, would countries with strong apprenticeship systems that provide job specific skills, such as Germany and Austria, compare to systems like the UK, where a degree itself is of value and not necessarily the specific field you studied. In contrast how do countries with high levels of youth unemployment such as Greece and Spain compare to those with far lower levels such as Germany and the Nordic countries? To answer these questions a European wide data set that would cover similar questions would be useful; for example, adding such a question to the European Social Survey⁷ would be one possible solution.

Further research in the field should also turn to more qualitative studies that can give deeper insight into why confidence in education has developed in the way it has, and why differences and/or similarities between groups exist. It would be interesting to see what young people think education actually is – and what kind of education is valuable. When young people have high confidence in education, do they have higher confidence for example in formal versus non-formal education, or secondary versus tertiary education? While basic numeracy and literacy are no doubt important for everyone, how do young people specifically value higher educational credentials? Another interesting point would be to follow the same young people throughout their youth to see how their level of educational belief develops; this could involve both quantitative survey studies as well as qualitative interviews. In this case longitudinal qualitative interviews could give a better picture of what kind of life events impact the level of confidence in education that a young person possesses. Furthermore, more analysis into where confidence in education itself comes from would be needed for better targeted policy; this information would also be helpful for the further analysis as to why confidence in education has developed in the direction that it has. It can also provide insight into where confidence in education is going: for example, if a person's personal experience of the labour market is found to impact their confidence in education, and youth unemployment is constantly rising, we could imagine the average level of confidence in education to decrease. Lastly, the potential effects of reduced confidence in the decisions made by young people should also be studied: for example, how is confidence

⁷ <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/>

in education related to educational attainment? If confidence in education and educational attainment are connected, this connection will also have consequences for the labour market.

7.3 Reflexivity, research ethics, and critical analysis of the research process

Reflexive thinking of the research process has become increasingly popular among some social research circles; however, it is something that is still most often associated with qualitative rather than quantitative research (Ryan & Golden, 2006). Reflexive thinking involves the researcher taking a critical and thoughtful view of the research process in order to determine if there are any underlying biases that could impact the way the study was conducted or how the results were interpreted. According to Ryan & Golden (2006: 1192):

“Reflexivity involves honesty and openness about how, where and by whom the data were collected and locates the researcher as a participant in the dynamic interrelationship of the research process.”

While this is a more common way of thinking in qualitative research studies, where the researcher is in close contact with the participant, there is no reason why reflexive thinking could not be applied to quantitative research as well. One original justification for turning to reflexivity was to make sure sociology, or the social sciences more generally, would come to be seen as ‘real’ sciences: “social sciences are sciences like others, except that they encounter particular difficulty in being sciences like others” (Bourdieu, 2004: 85). Indeed, due to the mere nature of the subjects under study, i.e. individuals and the institutions they have created, social research will always find it more difficult to justify the validity of its results, when compared to the natural sciences. Reflexivity is seen as one potential answer: being aware of the history of the subject, not to mention one’s own existing experiences, and putting them out in the open is far better than hiding them. According to Bourdieu (1990), as sociology entails the critical study of institutions and the institutional structures of society, sociologists must also be critical of sociology and themselves. According to Ryan & Golden (2006), these considerations are often taken into account by researchers doing qualitative, rather than quantitative studies. Perhaps the fact that quantitative social research methods seem closer to the methods of ‘natural sciences’ makes researchers forget its relevance and importance for the entire research process. The idea of a ‘neutral researcher’, only

because one uses ‘positivist’ research methods is amplified by the fact that such methods use computer programmes for data analysis, as if that somehow makes the research process less prone to bias (Ryan & Golden, 2006).

The idea that reflexivity also belongs to quantitative research also holds true for research ethics. According to Jones (2000), while ethical considerations are the norm in text books about mostly qualitative research methods, i.e. where the researcher is in direct contact with the participant, the same cannot be said for text books on statistical methods. Even if the researcher is in no direct contact with their participants, the researcher should be aware of the power dynamics of the research process. The difficulty, yet importance, of reflexive and ethical considerations become even clearer when the researcher uses secondary data, as is the case in this thesis. While there may be limitations as to how well the data collection process has been described by the original data collector, a ‘secondary researcher’ can take into consideration the way in which that data is used. In this thesis, I wanted to make sure that the way I used the data did not distort the actual responses of the survey participants. That is why for example I left out some interesting independent variables, as I felt they were not reliable enough to give a picture of how these young people’s confidence in education has developed over time. While this is also good practice from a validity point of view, it is also important for making sure that what the young people have responded is accurately depicted in the results. A researcher has the responsibility of making sure it is young people’s voices that are heard, not what the researcher wants them to say. Furthermore, in the description of the results it is important to use language that does not direct the reader in any particular direction. The results section is only for stating ‘the facts’ – the discussion section for interpreting them.

One of the main reflexive considerations I want to bring out in this section is the choice of the thesis topic, as well as the related research questions. It should be noted that the choice of research question and topic did not come out of nowhere: as a soon to be graduate, I have come to see the conflict between what I’ve been told and what happens in reality when it comes to the relationship between educational credentials and the labour market. While I have been exposed to the importance of education for my future from a very early age, my belief in its power is being questioned by the current situation of the Finnish and global economy, as well as the experiences of highly qualified friends who have faced both short and long periods of unemployment, as well as

difficulty finding jobs that match their credentials. Nevertheless, my privileged background as a soon-to-be graduate from a good university, with a Master's degree, as well as with relevant employment experience puts me in a very different position to those young people who are entering the labour market with lower qualifications. While my personal experiences and points of interest may have guided the choice of research topic and eventually research questions, as a researcher I need to provide evidence that my biases have not affected the results themselves. The main thing a researcher can do is to write down the research process in as much detail as possible, as this would allow for another research to replicate the results. In addition, writing down the potential pitfalls and biases that could affect the results opens the work to critical analysis from other researchers with different perspectives. I'm also fully aware that this piece of research is the last where the topic is completely of my own choosing. The funding of research, whether it be by government or industry, can impact the things we research. The discussion about research serving some sort of economic purpose is becoming ever more evident. Furthermore, strict deadlines put pressure on the research process as well. This is also stressed by Ryan & Golden (2006), who feel that contract research is also putting time pressure on researcher's ability to be reflexive.

As for the research process itself, there are many things that impact the results including the guiding research questions, the variables and methods chosen, and the quality of the data itself. Even *when* the data is collected can also influence the results. When working with repeated cross-sectional data the data only really gives a snapshot of the given year (Rafferty, 2011). Furthermore, Rafferty (2011: 10) would argue that: "cross-sectional data does not allow age, cohort, and period effects to be easily distinguished." However, repeated cross-sectional data can overcome some of these obstacles. Nevertheless, it can be difficult to determine whether differences are due to cohort effects or age effects. But when one observes differences between e.g. the same age group in different years, i.e. different cohorts, it can be easier to distinguish if there is indeed a cohort or an age effect. But how could these pitfalls be combatted? I spent quite a bit of time working with the data set that I had not myself collected – would collecting my own data have solved these problems? First of all, an analysis of development over time would not have been possible if I would have had to collect the data myself: I was only 3 years old when the data for the first Finnish Youth Barometer report was collected. Furthermore, I would not have had the resources to get such large sample sizes of over 1000 young

people for each year under study. Therefore, while these data sets had their own issues, this research would not have been possible without it.

Finally, another key point brought forward by Bourdieu (1990, 2004) is the autonomy of sciences from external powers such as industry, government, or even academia itself. Social sciences, if taken to be ‘true’ like the natural sciences, risk the danger of having detrimental consequences for society (Bourdieu, 2004). Therefore, reflexivity opens research to criticism that brings academic research closer to the actual truth, as many voices come closer to the truth than one. As stated by (Rosnow & Rosenthal, 2011: 54):

“Once upon a time, it was thought that science was “morally neutral” by its very nature because the moment that science starts sorting facts into “good ones” and “bad ones” it is no longer science. How curious that illusion now seems. Nowadays, every aspect of human endeavor, including science, is viewed not as morally neutral, but as fed by a wellspring of values, biases, motives, and goals, which in turn are infused with illusions and self-delusions.”

However, the researcher must avoid taking reflexivity to the extreme, where the researcher’s narcissistic evaluations of their own work trump over the research itself. For reflexivity is not something that is done by the researcher alone – but by their peers, society, whomever (Bourdieu, 2004). I therefore give the floor to you.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aarresaari. (2016). Uraseuranta. Retrieved August 9, 2016, from <http://www.aarresaari.net/uraseuranta>
- Ahola, S., & Hoffman, D. M. (2012). *Higher education research in Finland: Emerging structures and contemporary issues*. Finnish Institute for Educational Research, University of Jyväskylä
- Ahtonen, T. (2012). "Seitsemäs tutkinto menossa..." *Pohjois-Karjalan ammattikorkeakoulun tutkintotavoitteisten aikuisopiskelijoiden koulutususkko*. University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu Campus, Master's thesis
- Alasuutari, P. (1996). *Toinen tasavalta – Suomi 1946-1994*. Vastapaino.
- Albaek, K., Asplund, R., Barth, E., Lindahl, L., von Simson, K., & Vanhala, P. (2015). *Youth unemployment and inactivity: A comparison of school-to-work transitions and labour market outcomes in four Nordic countries*. Nordic Council of Ministers: Denmark.
- Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist*, 55(5), 469–480. <http://doi.org/10.1037//0003-066X.55.5.469>
- Arnett, J. J. (2004). *Emerging adulthood: the winding road from the late teens through the twenties*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Arnett, J. J. (2007). Emerging Adulthood : What Is It , and What Is It Good For ? *Child Development Perspectives*, 1(2), 68–73. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1750-8606.2007.00016.x>
- Aro, M. (2003). PITÄÄKÖ KOULUTUS LUPAUKSENSA ? *Sosiologia*, (4), 313–328.
- Aro, M. (2014). *KOULUTUSINFLAATIO Koulutusekspansio ja koulutuksen arvo Suomessa 1970 – 2008*. University of Turku, Suomen Yliopistopaino Oy – Juvenes Print, Turku 2014.
- Aro, M., Rinne, R., Lahti, K., & Olkinuora, E. (2005). Education or learning on the job? Generational differences of opinions in Finland. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 24(6), 459–474. <http://doi.org/10.1080/02601370500279928>
- Asplund, R., & Maliranta, M. (2006). *Koulutuksen taloudelliset vaikutukset*. Sitra: Helsinki.
- Baciu, L. (2013). Recent Trends and Patterns of Youth Transition from Education to Employment in Europe. *Revista de Asistenta Sociala*, 1(1), 11–28.
- Beck, U. (1992). *Risk society: towards a new modernity*. London: Sage.
- Becker, G. S. (1964). *Human Capital: A theoretical and empirical analysis, with special refernce to education*. New York: National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Billari, F. C. (2004). Becoming an adult in Europe: A macro(/micro)-demographic perspective. *Demographic Research*, 10(SUPPL. 3), 15–44. <http://doi.org/10.4054/DemRes.2004.S3.2>

- Billari, F. C., & Liefbroer, A. C. (2010). Towards a new pattern of transition to adulthood? *Advances in Life Course Research*, 15(2–3), 59–75.
<http://doi.org/10.1016/j.alcr.2010.10.003>
- Bormann, I., & John, R. (2014). Trust in the education system – thoughts on a fragile bridge into the future. *European Journal of Futures Research*, 2(1), 35.
<http://doi.org/10.1007/s40309-013-0035-0>
- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1990). *In Other Words: Essays Towards a Reflexive Sociology*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (2004). *Science of Science and Reflexivity*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Brannen, J. (2015). Young People’s Time Perspectives: From Youth to Adulthood. *Sociology* 36(3), 513–537.
- Breen, R., & Buchmann, M. (2002). Institutional Variation and the Position of Young People: A Comparative Perspective. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 580, 288–305.
<http://doi.org/10.1177/000271620258000112>
- Broecke, S. (2015). Experience and the returns to education and skill in OECD countries : Evidence of employer learning ? *OECD Journals: Economic Studies*, volume 2015/1, 123-147.
- Buchmann, M. C., & Kriesi, I. (2011). Transition to Adulthood in Europe. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 37(1), 481–503. <http://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-081309-150212>
- Bynner, J. (2005). Rethinking the Youth Phase of the Life-course: The Case for Emerging Adulthood? *Journal of Youth Studies*, 8(4), 367–384.
<http://doi.org/10.1080/13676260500431628>
- Cedefop. (2015a). Finland: Skills supply and demand up to 2025, 17(Figure 1), 1–7. Retrieved from <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/united-kingdom-skills-forecasts-2025>
- Cedefop. (2015b). *Skill shortages and gaps in European enterprises*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Clark, J., Bryson, J. R., & Vanchan, V. (2015). Conclusion : regeneration economies : manufacturing as the next industrial revolution. In Clark, J., Bryson, J. R., and Vanchan, V. (eds.), *Handbook of manufacturing industries in the world economy*, Edward Elgar Publishing, pp.491–502.
- Cohen, B. H., & Lea, R. B. (2004). *Essentials of Statistics for the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Collins, R. (1979). *The Credential Society – An historical sociology of education and stratification*. Academic Press Inc., Orlando, Florida, USA.
- Collins, R. (2000). Comparative and historical patterns of education. *Handbook of the Sociology of Education*, 213–239. Retrieved from http://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/0-387-36424-2_10.pdf

- Danziger, S. H., & Ratner, D. (2010). Labor market outcomes and the transition to adulthood. *Future of Children*, 20(1), 133–158. <http://doi.org/10.1353/foc.0.0041>
- Desjardins, R., & Rubenson, K. (2011). An Analysis of Skill Mismatch Using Direct Measures of Skills. *OECD Education Working Papers*, (63), 88. <http://doi.org/10.1787/19939019>
- Doogan, K. (2009). *New Capitalism?: The transformation of work*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Eduskunta. (2014). Nuorisotakuu. Retrieved 25 September, 2016, from https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/tietoaeduskunnasta/kirjasto/aineistot/kotimainen_oikeus/LATI/Sivut/nuorisotakuu.aspx
- Eurofound. (2010). Industrial Relations Dictionary. Retrieved May 5, 2016, from <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/eurwork/industrial-relations-dictionary/employability>
- Eurofound. (2014). *Mapping youth transitions in Europe*. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.
- European Commission. (2015). EU Youth Guarantee: Questions and Answers. Retrieved 25 August, 2016, from http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-4102_en.htm
- European Commission. (2016). EU Youth Strategy. Retrieved August 7, 2016, from http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth_strategy/index_en.htm
- Eurostat. (2015). Archive:School-to-work transition statistics. Retrieved August 7, 2016, from http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Archive:School-to-work_transition_statistics
- Eurostat. (2016a). Statistics on young people neither in employment nor in education or training. Retrieved 25 September, 2016, from http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics_on_young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_or_training
- Eurostat. (2016b). Unemployment Statistics. Retrieved September 17, 2016, from http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics
- Eurydice. (2014). *Modernisation of Higher Education in Europe*. Eurydice Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Freese, J. (2007). Replication Standards for Quantitative Social Science: Why Not Sociology? *Sociological Methods & Research*, 36(2), 153–172. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0049124107306659>
- Garrouste, C. (2011). *Towards a Benchmark on the Contribution of Education and Training to Employability: Methodological Note*. Retrieved 21 March, 2016, from http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/11111111/22533/1/eur_methodological_note_sept2011.pdf
- Garrouste, C., & Rodrigues, M. (2012). *The employability of young graduates in Europe*. Joint Research Centre: Ispra, Italy. <http://doi.org/10.2788/69842>
- Gauthier, A. H. (2007). Becoming a young adult: An International perspective on the transitions to adulthood. *European Journal of Population*, 23(3–4), 217–223.

<http://doi.org/10.1007/s10680-007-9130-x>

- Gauthier, A. H., & Furstenberg, F. F. (2002). The Transition to Adulthood: A Time Use Perspective. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 580, 153–171. <http://doi.org/10.1177/000271620258000107>
- Gedye, S., Fender, E., & Chalkley, B. (2004). Students' Undergraduate Expectations and Post-graduation Experiences of the Value of a Degree. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 28(3), 381–396. <http://doi.org/10.1080/0309826042000286956>
- Granter, E. (2009). *Critical Social Theory and the End of Work*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Green, A., Hoyos, M. De, Barnes, S., Owen, D., Baldauf, B., & Behle, H. (2013). *Literature Review on Employability, Inclusion and ICT, Report 1: The Concept of Employability with a Specific Focus on Young People, Older Workers and Migrants*. Joint Research Centre: Seville, Spain. <http://doi.org/10.2791/7536>
- Gretschel, A., Paakkunainen, K., Souto, A.-M., & Suurpää, L. (2014). *Nuorisotakuun arki ja politiikka*. Finnish Youth Research Society/Network. Retrieved 18 September, 2016, from http://linda.linneanet.fi/F/?func=direct&doc_number=006660302&local_base=fin01\nhttp://www.nuorisotutkimusseura.fi/julkaisuja/nuorisotakuun_arki_ja_politiikka.pdf
- Hammer, T. (2007). Labour market integration of unemployed youth from a life course perspective: The case of Norway. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 16(3), 249–257. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2397.2006.00467.x>
- Harvey, L. (2000). New realities: The relationship between higher education and employment. *Tertiary Education and Management*, 6(1), 3–17. <http://doi.org/10.1080/13583883.2000.9967007>
- Humburg, M., Van der Velden, R., & Verhagen, A. (2013). *Final report The Employability of Higher Education Graduates: The Employers' Perspective*. Research Centre for Education and the Labour Market: Maastricht, The Netherlands. European Union. <http://doi.org/10.2766/54258>
- ILO. (2014). *Skills mismatch in Europe*. International Labour Office, Department of Statistics. ILO: Geneva, Switzerland.
- Jones, K. (2000). A Regrettable Oversight or a Significant Omission? Ethical considerations in quantitative research in education. *Situated Ethics in Educational Research*, 147–161. <http://doi.org/10.1002/sce.20030>
- Järvinen, T., & Vanttaja, M. (2001). Young People, Education and Work: Trends and Changes in Finland in the 1990s, *Journal of Youth Studies*, 4(2), 195-207. <http://doi.org/10.1080/1367626012005698>
- Järvinen, T., & Vanttaja, M. (2005). *NUORET KOULUTUS- JA TYÖMARKKINOILLA*. Ministry of Education and Culture. Retrieved 28 November, 2015, from http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Nuoriso/nuorisoasiain_neuvottelukunta/julkaisut/muut_tutkimukset/Nuoret_koulutus_ja_tyomarkkinoilla.pdf
- Kalleberg, A. L. (2009). Precarious Work, Insecure Workers: Employment Relations in Transition. *American Sociological Review*, 74, 1–22.

- Kivinen, O., Hedman, J., & Kaipainen, P. (2007). From Elite University to Mass Higher Education: Educational Expansion, Equality of Opportunity and Returns to University Education. *Acta Sociologica*, 50(3), 231–247. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0001699307080929>
- La Porta, R., Lopez-de-Silanes, F., Shleifer, A., & Vishny, R. W. (1996). TRUST IN LARGE ORGANIZATIONS. *NBER WORKING PAPER SERIES, Working Paper 5864*.
- Lampinen, O. (1998). *Suomen koulutusjärjestelmän kehitys*. Vastapaino.
- Leventhal, T., Graber, J. A., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2001). Adolescent Transitions to Young Adulthood: Antecedents, Correlates, and Consequences of Adolescent Employment. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 11(3), 297–323. <http://doi.org/10.1111/1532-7795.00014>
- Lindberg, M. (2008). *Diverse Routes from School, via Higher Education, to Employment*. Research Unit for the Sociology of Education, University of Turku. UNIPRINT: Turku, Finland.
- Lindberg, M. (2009). Student and early career mobility patterns among highly educated people in Germany, Finland, Italy, and the United Kingdom. *Higher Education*, 58(3), 339–358. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-009-9198-9>
- Mary, A. (2012). *The Illusion of the Prolongation of Youth: Transition to Adulthood among Finnish and French Female University Students*. Tampere University Press.
- Mason, G., Williams, G., & Cranmer, S. (2009). Employability skills initiatives in higher education: what effects do they have on graduate labour market outcomes? *Education Economics*, 17(1), 1–30. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09645290802028315>
- McArthur, J. (2011). Reconsidering the social and economic purposes of higher education. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 30(6), 737–749. <http://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2010.539596>
- Moore (eds), K. (2011). Young lives in transition: From school to adulthood? *European Journal of Development Research*, 23(5), 669–678. <http://doi.org/10.1057/ejdr.2011.45>
- Moreau, M.-P., & Leathwood, C. (2006). Graduates' employment and the discourse of employability: a critical analysis. *Journal of Education & Work*, 19 (4), 305–324. <http://doi.org/10.1080/13639080600867083>
- Morgan, S. L., Leenman, T. S., Todd, J. J., & Weeden, K. A. (2013). Occupational Plans, Beliefs about Educational Requirements, and Patterns of College Entry. *Sociology of Education*, 86(3), 197–217. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0038040712456559>
- Murphy, K. a, Blustein, D. L., Bohlig, A. J., & Platt, M. G. (2010). The college-to-career transition: An exploration of emerging adulthood. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 88, 174–181. <http://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2010.tb00006.x>
- Myllyniemi, S. (2007). *Perusarvot Puntarissa: Nuorisobarometri 2007*. Yliopistopaino: Helsinki.
- Myllyniemi, S. (2014). *Vaikuttava osa. Nuorisobarometri 2013*. Hakapaino: Helsinki.

- Myllyniemi, S. (2016). *Arjen jäljillä. Nuorisobarometri 2015*. Grano Multiprint Oy.
- Nuorisotutkimusseura. (2016). Nuorisobarometri. Retrieved 2 October, 2016, from <http://www.nuorisotutkimusseura.fi/tutkimus/nuorisobarometri>
- OECD. (2015). *Education at a Glance 2015: OECD indicators*. OECD Publishing. <http://doi.org/10.1787/eag-2015-en>
- OECD. (2016). *Education at a Glance 2016*. OECD Publishing.
- OECD Data. (2013). Education spending. Retrieved 24 September, 2016, from http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2016_eag-2016-en
- Oliver, D. (2011). University Student Employment and Expectations of the Graduate Labour Market. *Journal of Industrial Relations*, 53(1), 123–131. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0022185610390301>
- Pallant, J. (2002). *SPSS SURVIVAL MANUAL: A step by step guide to data analysis using SPSS for Windows (Version 12)* (2005 edition). Crows Nest, NSW, Australia: Allen & Unwin.
- Plug, W., & du Bois-Raymond, M. (2005). Young people and their contemporary labour market values. In H. Bradley & J. van Hoof (Eds.), *Young people in Europe: labour markets and citizenship*. Bristol: Policy.
- Popova-Koskarova, R. (2011). Društvena dimenzija ciljeva obrazovanja: Social Dimension Of The Purpose Of Education. *FACTA UNIVERSITATIS, Series Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology and History*, issue: 02 / 2011, 167-171.
- Population Register Centre. (2016). Population Information System. Retrieved May 7, 2016, from <http://www.vrk.fi/default.aspx?id=39>
- Puhakka, A., Rautopuro, J., & Tuominen, V. (2010). Employability and Finnish University Graduates. *European Educational Research Journal*, 9(1), 45–55. <http://doi.org/10.2304/eerj.2010.9.1.45>
- Rafferty, A. (2011). *Analysing change over time : A guide to ESDS microdata resources*. Economic and Social Data Service, UK Data Service.
- Raybould, J., & Sheedy, V. (2005). Are graduates equipped with the right skills in the employability stakes? *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 37(5), 259–263. <http://doi.org/10.1108/00197850510609694>
- Rice, P. (1999). The impact of local labour markets on investment in further education: Evidence from the England and Wales youth cohort studies. *Journal of Population Economics*, 12(2), 287–312. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s001480050100>
- Riley, M. W. (1987). ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF AGE IN SOCIOLOGY * American Sociological Association , 1986 Presidential Address, 52, 1–14.
- Rooney, P., Kneale, P., Gambini, B., Keiffer, A., Vandrasek, B., & Gedye, S. (2006). Variations in International Understandings of Employability for Geography. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 30(1), 133–145. <http://doi.org/10.1080/03098260500499766>
- Rosnow, R. L., & Rosenthal, R. (2011). Ethical Principles in Data Analysis: An Overview. In A. T. Panter & S. K. Sterba (Eds.), *Handbook of Ethics in*

- Quantitative Methodology* (Vol. 1, pp. 37–58). New York, London: Routledge, Taylor Francis Group. <http://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>
- Ryan, L., & Golden, A. (2006). “Tick the box please”: A reflexive approach to doing Quantitative Social Research. *Sociology*, 40(6), 1191–1200. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0038038506072287>
- Saarela, P. (1999). *Nuorisobarometri 1/1999*. NYKYPAINO OY: Helsinki.
- Salminen, H. (2013). *Haluttu työntekijä: henkilöstön rekrytointi ja työnhakijaan kohdistuneet odotukset työpaikkailmoituksissa 1970-luvulta 2010-luvulle*. University of Eastern Finland, Master's thesis.
- Scherer, S. (2005). Patterns of Labour Market Entry – Long Wait or Career Instability? An Empirical Comparison of Italy, Great Britain and West Germany. *European Sociological Review*, 21(5), 427–440. <http://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jci029>
- Scott, J., & Marshall, G. (2009). *A Dictionary of Sociology* (3rd rev.). Oxford University Press. Retrieved 5 May, 2016, from <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199533008.001.0001/acref-9780199533008-e-687>
- Silvennoinen, H., & Klas, K. (1996). Kestääkö koulutususko pitkittyvän työttömyyden? *Kasvatus*, 27(1), 62–71.
- Smeeding, T. M., & Phillips, K. R. (2002). Cross-National Differences in Employment and Economic Sufficiency. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 580, 103–133. <http://doi.org/10.1177/000271620258000105>
- Smyth, E., & McCoy, S. (2011). The dynamics of credentialism: Ireland from bust to boom (and back again). *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 29(1), 91–106. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.rssm.2011.01.002>
- Speder, Z., Murinko, L., & Settersten, R. A. (2014). Are conceptions of adulthood universal and unisex? Ages and social markers in 25 european countries. *Social Forces*, 92(3), 873–898. <http://doi.org/10.1093/sf/sot100>
- Stasio, V. Di. (2016). Why Does Education Matter to Employers in Different Institutional Contexts? A Vignette Study in England and the Netherlands, *Social Forces* 00(00), 1–30. <http://doi.org/10.1093/sf/sow027>
- Statistics Finland. (2007). Sentraalisantroista kännykkäkansaan - televiestinnän historia Suomessa tilastojen valossa. Retrieved September 17, 2016, from <http://www.stat.fi/tup/suomi90/syyskuu.html>
- Statistics Finland. (2016). Työttömyysaste (%), vuosikeskiarvo, sukupuolet yhteensä, 15-24 vuotiaat. Retrieved September 17, 2016, from http://pxnet2.stat.fi/PXWeb/pxweb/fi/StatFin/StatFin__tym__tyti/010_tyti_tau_102.px/table/tableViewLayout1/?rxid=8873d125-809f-4384-b320-45dce2ae1728
- Tampereen yliopisto. (2016). Valmistuneiden sijoittumis- ja uraseuranta. Retrieved August 7, 2016, from <http://www.uta.fi/opiskelu/tyoelama/seurannat/index.html>
- Taalu, H. (2016). *Tilastoja korkeasti koulutettujen työttömyydestä*. Akava. Retrieved September 10, 2016, from http://www.akava.fi/files/12516/01_Tilastoja_korkeasti_koulutettujen_tyottomyyd

esta_yleisimmat_asteet.pdf

- Taylor, A. (2005). What employers look for: the skills debate and the fit with youth perceptions. *Journal of Education and Work*, 18(2), 201–218.
<http://doi.org/10.1080/13639080500085984>
- Teichler, U. (2002). Graduate employment and work in Europe: Diverse situations and common perceptions. *Tertiary Education and Management*, 8, 199–216.
<http://doi.org/10.1080/13583883.2002.9967079>
- The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture. (2012). *Koulutus ja tutkimus vuosina 2011-2016 (English: Education and research in 2011-2016)*. Retrieved March 21, 2016, from
<http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Julkaisut/2012/liitteet/okm01.pdf?lang=fi>
- The World Bank. (2016). World DataBank. Retrieved July 16, 2016, from
<http://databank.worldbank.org/data/home.aspx>
- Tomlinson, M. (2007). Graduate employability and student attitudes and orientations to the labour market. *Journal of Education and Work*, 20(4), 285–304.
<http://doi.org/10.1080/13639080701650164>
- Tomlinson, M. (2008). “The degree is not enough ”: students’ perceptions of the role of higher education credentials for graduate work and employability. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 29(1), 49–61.
<http://doi.org/10.1080/01425690701737457>
- Tomlinson, M. (2012). Graduate Employability: A Review of Conceptual and Empirical Themes. *Higher Education Policy*, 25(4), 407–431.
<http://doi.org/10.1057/hep.2011.26>
- Tuominen, V., Rautopuro, J., & Puhakka, A. (2011). Maistereiden työllistymisvaikeudet. *Työpoliittinen Aikakausikirja*, 3, 5–21.
- Tymon, A. (2013). The student perspective on employability. *Studies in Higher Education*, 38(6), 841–856. <http://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2011.604408>
- töissä.fi. (2016). Mikä on töissä.fi? Retrieved August 9, 2016, from
<http://www.toissa.fi/tietoa-palvelusta/>
- University of California. (2007). *Annotated Bibliography: Guidelines for Translating Surveys in Cross-Cultural Research*. San Francisco.
- Vaisey, S. (2002). Overeducation and Its Consequences , 1972-2002. Department of Sociology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
- Valentine, G. (2003). Boundary Crossings : Transitions from Childhood to Adulthood. *Children’s Geographies*, 1(1), 37–52.
<http://doi.org/10.1080/1473328022000041652>
- Valtion nuorisosiain neuvottelukunta. (2016). Nuorisobarometri. Retrieved July 16, 2016, from <https://tietoanuorista.fi/nuorisobarometri/>
- Wasserstein, R. L., & Lazar, N. A. (2016). The ASA’s statement on p-values : context , process , and purpose, *The American Statistician*.
<http://doi.org/10.1080/00031305.2016.1154108>

- Weng, L., & Cheng, C. (2000). Effects of response order on likert-type scales. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 60*(6), 908–924.
- Werfhorst, H. G. Van De, & Andersen, R. (2005). Social background, credential inflation and educational strategies. *Acta Sociologica, 48*(4), 321–340. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0001699305059945>
- White, R., & Wyn, J. (2008). *Youth and Society: exploring the social dynamics of youth experience*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wolbers, M. H. J. (2007). Patterns of Labour Market Entry: A Comparative Perspective on School-to-Work Transitions in 11 European Countries. *Acta Sociologica, 50*(3), 189–210. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0001699307080924>
- Wolf, A. (2002). *Does Education Matter? Myths about education and economic growth*. Penguin Group.
- Wright, K. B. (2006). Researching Internet-Based Populations: Advantages and Disadvantages of Online Survey Research, Online Questionnaire Authoring Software Packages, and Web Survey Services. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 10*(3), 00–00. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2005.tb00259.x>

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: Original survey questions (in Finnish)

1999 (Saarela, 1999)

K4 Mikä seuraavista kuvaa parhaiten nykyistä tilannettasi. Oletko:

- 1 palkansaaja
- 2 yrittäjä tai avustava perheenjäsen yrityksessä
- 3 työtön tai lomautettu
- 4 koululainen tai opiskelija
- 5 varusmies
- 6 sairaus-, työkyvyttömyys- tms. eläkkeellä
- 7 kotityötä tekevä
- 8 vai teetkö jotain muuta

Oletko samaa mieltä vai eri mieltä seuraavien väitteiden kanssa?

K9_02 (M) Koulutus parantaa olennaisesti työnsaantimahdollisuuksia?

K9_05 (M) Työelämässä pysyminen edellyttää jatkuvaa kouluttautumista?

- 1 Täysin samaa mieltä
- 2 Jokseenkin samaa mieltä
- 3 Jokseenkin eri mieltä
- 4 Täysin eri mieltä
- 5 Ei osaa sanoa

2007 (Myllyniemi, 2007)

2) Mikä on ikäsi?

14) Mikä on pääasiallinen toimintasi? Oletko ...

- Koululainen tai opiskelija
- Palkkatyössä
- Yrittäjä
- Työtön tai lomautettu
- Joku muu
- Ei vastausta

24) Missä määrin samaa mieltä tai eri mieltä seuraavien väitteiden kanssa? (täysin samaa mieltä, jokseenkin samaa mieltä, jokseenkin eri mieltä, täysin eri mieltä, ei osaa sanoa)

- Koulutus parantaa olennaisesti työnsaanti- mahdollisuuksia

- Työelämässä pysyminen edellyttää jatkuvaa kouluttautumista

2013 (Myllyniemi, 2014)

T2: Minkä ikäinen olet?

T18: Mikä on tällä hetkellä pääasiallinen toimintasi? Oletko...

Koululainen tai opiskelija

Palkkatyössä

Yrittäjä

Työtön

Vanhempainvapaalla

Työpajassa, ammattistartissa, työharjoittelussa tai työkokeilussa

Jokin muu, mikä?

Ei vastausta

K12 Missä määrin samaa mieltä tai eri mieltä olet seuraavien väitteiden kanssa? (4= Täysin samaa mieltä, 3 = Jokseenkin samaa mieltä, 2=Jokseenkin eri mieltä, 1 = Täysin eri mieltä, 99= ei osaa sanoa)

1) Koulutus parantaa olennaisesti työnsaantimahdollisuuksia.

5) Työelämässä pysyminen edellyttää jatkuvaa kouluttautumista.