

## Research Project

### Social disparities and regional differences in school-to-work transitions in Bulgaria

#### Third-party funded project

**Project title** Social disparities and regional differences in school-to-work transitions in Bulgaria

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**Organisation / Research unit**

Departement Gesellschaftswissenschaften / Sozialforschung und Methodologie (Bergman)

Departement Gesellschaftswissenschaften / Bildungssoziologie (Imdorf)

**Department**

**Project Website** <http://www.schooltowork.bg>

**Project start** 01.11.2012

**Probable end** 31.10.2015

**Status** Completed

The transformation of the Bulgarian labour market from state socialism to market capitalism has had a strong impact on the school-to-work transition of young adults. Young people's passages from education to employment have become uncertain. Today, many graduates risk not gaining ground in the labour market and facing social exclusion in Bulgaria.

A large percentage of unemployed people belong to minority ethnic groups, especially the Roma whose education and job qualification levels have remained very low and Bulgarian Turks, who live predominantly in rural areas. There are indeed important regional differences in terms of successful school-to-work transitions. The educational level of the rural population continues to lag substantially in comparison to urban residents. When it comes to gender disparities, Bulgaria may serve as an international role model. It seems to achieve higher gender equality in education and employment opportunities than many other countries.

However, little is known how regional labour and educational opportunities impact ethnic and gender disparities in school-to-work transitions. The research project aims at better understanding the mechanisms behind educational (un)success and school-to-work transition in contemporary Bulgaria, including social and ethnic inequalities as well as the relatively low gender segregation of these transitions. Conceptually, the project uses one central argument to understand school-to-work transitions. It investigates the role of the Bulgarian education system in creating social, ethnic and regional disparities in school-to-work transitions by while maintaining a relatively low level of gender segregation on the labour market.

A nationally representative school-leaver survey for Bulgaria will provide detailed data about pathways that lead young women and men from different social and ethnic backgrounds along different educational tracks to different positions in the labour market. Embedded in this survey, regional case studies of three distinct Bulgarian regions (the remote North Western region, the Blagoevgrad district in the South Western region, and the metropolitan Sofia district) will be used to analyse the consequences of differing educational offers on individual school-to-work transitions. Finally, international comparative analysis of the Bulgarian survey data with Switzerland and other European countries serves to diagnose both the strengths and shortcomings of the Bulgarian transition system.

The research project will have broader implications for Bulgarian and Swiss policy makers. On the one hand, it will reveal mechanisms to produce a more integrative education system in Bulgaria, to enable smoother school-to-work transitions, and to more effectively restructure education systems in remote

areas, such as in the North Western planning region. On the other hand, Swiss policy makers will be able to learn from the Bulgarian education system, which is unique in terms of producing only little gender segregation.

For a full list of project-related publications please consult [the database P3 of the Swiss Science National Foundation](#).

To obtain the scientific use file of the Bulgarian School Leaver Survey 2014 (BSLS 2014) please consult [our project resources at the Swiss Centre of Expertise in the Social Sciences \(FORSbase\)](#).

**Keywords** Bulgaria and Switzerland, school-to-work transition, education system, social disparities, ethnic inequalities, gender segregation, regional differences, social inclusion, school leavers survey

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Swiss Government (Research Cooperations)

**Follow-up project of** [550761 Educational Systems and Gendered Transitions from School into Vocational Training and Work \(ESGT\)](#)

**Add publication**

**Published results**

3356043, Bieri, Franziska; Imdorf, Christian; Stoilova, Ruminana; Boyadjieva, Pepka, The Bulgarian Educational System and Gender Segregation in the Labour Market, 1461-6696, European Societies, Publication: JournalArticle (Originalarbeit in einer wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift)

4488001, Heiniger, Melina; Imdorf, Christian, The role of vocational education in the transmission of gender segregation from education to employment: Switzerland and Bulgaria compared, 2510-5019 ; 2510-5027, Journal for Labour Market Research, Publication: JournalArticle (Originalarbeit in einer wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift)

4488002, Imdorf, Christian; Bieri, Franziska; Heiniger, Melina, Gender segregation in education and employment. The role of educational systems in Bulgaria and Switzerland, 978-619-01-0188-8, Inequalities and social (dis)integration: in search of togetherness. Jubilee Collection in Honour of Professor Rumiana Stoilova, Publication: Book Item (Buchkap., Lexikonartikel, jur. Kommentierung, Beiträge in Sammelbänden etc.)

**Add documents**

**Specify cooperation partners**

ID	Kreditinhaber	Kooperationspartner	Institution	Laufzeit - von	Laufzeit - bis
1380266	Imdorf, Christian	Stoilova, Rumiana, Director	Institute for the Study of Societies and Knowledge, Bulgarian Academy of Science	01.11.2012	31.10.2015