

THE PRECARIAT

CERTAINTY IN QUESTION.

THE SPANISH CASE



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Abstract

Spanish society witnesses deep transformations in the social and labour sphere, what it is creating difficulties in wide parts of population. Changes in the production model along with political reforms from the government in order to get out of the economic crisis are deregulating the labour market and eroding social rights. Within this framework it is debated whether the Precariat as subjectivity is a class in itself or a group product of the current unstable situation.

Through a case study research, the aim of the project is to shed light on the nature of precariat, collecting a diverse range of data, mainly statistics and legislation about the reform processes, the state of welfare policies, labour market and labour conditions and about social classes in Spain. Information from the Spanish Statistics Institute along with information obtained from civil society organizations are the main sources for analyzing the phenomenon.

The theoretical framework underlies in categories and notions from diverse authors opposed to Neoliberalism, as main frame to understand current economic and political dynamics, along with Postfordism as theory taking into account the most recent changes in production and labour model. Finally different aspects about the social class concept are utilized as guidelines for studying the precariat.

Based on the variables provided by the different theoretical backgrounds, the analysis is divided in the creation of “denizens”, the labour conditions and the class structure in Spain. The “denizens” concept is remarkably linked to welfare state transformation within the neoliberal thought. Labour conditions section focus on both material and immaterial aspects as possible base for a precariat class identity, while the class part is centred on the increasing inequality and current transformations in society in terms of wealth.

As a result of the analysis, it is found that precarity in terms of labour conditions is increasing and widespread. Also it can be suggested a kind of precarity in terms not merely of labour conditions but in life conditions, strongly related to social policies limitation. Objective and subjective conditions lead to the political organization of people but not according to class; however it is affirmed that if deprivation situations are stable, people who suffer precarity in life could organize themselves as a class.

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1. Introduction

What made me start to write and research about the topic that we will discuss during the next pages came from the “experience sphere”. Each of us is product of our time and context, so it is likely to get concern about the problems and phenomena of the current moment. In this way, to understand those facts, to achieve a feasible explanation about them is the leitmotiv of a researcher, as well as the engine of social sciences.

Through the daily life observation I have found an issue that could be extremely abnormal to foreign observers, but that it slowly becomes very usual in my environment: to work for free. Apparently it is a contradiction by itself, although more and more people are getting engaged in this kind of relation between themselves and an employer (private and public, for a company and for a government body).

This can be the pragmatic starting point of the whole project which goal is to develop it in an academic way. A trend that hits not just Spain, but other developed economies. A situation emerged from several changes in society, economy and politics during the last decades and holding onto the economic and financial crisis triggered on 2008.

In order to tackle this phenomenon, we will focus on the subjects that embody this relation. Starting from the consideration that these people form a social group differentiated from others, **the precariat**, a new group embedded in the new conditions that the labour market offers. Consequently the whole scenario and the dynamics will be drawn through the theories that could fit the best in order to shed light on the fact.

One of the cornerstone to understand what is happening now is the **social class** concept as one of the main theoretical tools that has been used during the last 150 years for explaining social divisions and differences, and that still remain vividly in our vocabulary. Along with that we will centre our attention on the last decades and current situation of society from the political-economic point of view, that is, the emergence and consolidation of **Neoliberalism** as world ideology encouraged by several national governments as well as by international organizations. Delinking states from its citizens, and the supremacy of the market form against public and autonomous ways of managing has a lot to do with our phenomenon.

Globalization process is another important aspect, understanding it as the appearance of new technologies that has compressed time and space along with its impact in trade, and social organizational aspects. It is interwoven with the neoliberal thought, and this connection is what leads us to the other large paradigm through which the precariat phenomena will be studied, the transition from Fordism to **Postfordism** or biocapitalism.

The sphere of labour has changed during the last decades, on the one hand due to the Tertiarization of developed economies and the incorporation of new technologies; on the other hand because of the changes in the concept of labour itself, and the prevalence of immaterial inputs and outputs in the economic process.

All the theoretical background mixes notions and concepts from different disciplines such as economy, politics, sociology and psychology. That is due to the existence of this group, the precariat, has these different faces. However, it is not clear yet the boundaries between this group and others groups as well as its role within the society.

Nowadays, demonstration and social discontent are shown frequently against a worsened of social and labour conditions, degraded quickly from the point of view of the workers. Consequently it is important to identify and to be able to understand how these mobilizations and the social circumstances can evolve, therefore our research question focuses on this fact:

“To what extent the precariat in developed economies forms a new social class within the society or it is merely a consolidated group due to the current crisis situation? The Spanish case.”

In order to answer, different aspects of the Spanish society will be tackled in the analysis part, especially those linked to the labour market, the policies implemented and its impact on the civil society. Always expecting and seeking for a better understanding of the social environment and the nature of the precariat.

2. Methodology

In this section the thread and pillars of the project are exposed. Firstly, it will be developed a brief dissertation about the ontological and epistemological assumptions underlying the whole project. Secondly, different aspects about the research design along with the content justification are detailed. Finally, the methodological limitations in terms of theories, analytical tools and data collection are explained.

2.1 Scientific considerations

The leitmotiv of a researcher is to offer explanations or at least to help the scientific community to find those explanations. However those explanations are merely a consensual pattern of methods emanated from a common and shared vision of the reality and the fact of categorizing it.

What we can label as reality, as an external fact (external in opposition to the internal world of human ideas and thoughts not materialized), is a shared vision. In our field of study, social science, it is patent that the nature and substance about “what it is outside” is strongly linked to the collective perception, and within the range of this perception, to the perception of each individual. What I want to say is that reality is a matter of consensus rather than a truth, and that individuals can not be understood as a separate entity from the group.

As a matter of this fact, knowledge it is built in order to categorize in the most consensual and accepted way this reality previously agreed. What we know about the knowledge construction is that the categories and concepts utilize are the most accurate for that specific historical and social period. That it is a paradigm, which can be corroborated or refuted in a later historical stage. Related to that, we have to be aware of the data collection process through both quantitative and qualitative methods grasps a part of the reality, showing a partial image of it. Even though does not delegitimize the consequences of its analysis due to those are considered as unique paths to gain access to knowledge.

This project does not put into question the nature of the world but discusses an alternative view within a common agreed debate. It does not discuss the nature of the world because the theories selected are well recognized in the literature and common to

certain extent as well as the analytical aspects. However it offers a minority view about society, the labour world and the relations between human beings that I think is more accurate than the mainstream one.

2.2 Research design

The project is developed following the case study model, being Spain as a country with its specificities in terms of society and economy the selected case to research about the nature of the precariat. A first approach made me assume that Spain as a country is a proper candidate to study precarity dynamics due to the changes that the country and its people are witnessing during the last years.

Moreover, the project pursues to answer or to shed light on the problem formulation, in order to produce additional knowledge that allow us to understand in a greater extent the nature of the precariat through a specific country example. However the goal of the project is not to establish an unmovable explanation, neither universalize the results due to those are strongly influenced by the specificities of the country.

In order to achieve the goal, a set of theoretical elements have been chosen: Neoliberalism views, theory of Postfordism and Social class concept. Firstly, the employ of Neoliberalism as a theory but also as a period delimiting time and space is used from the perspective of its detractors. In that way those have generated a narrative of the current economic and political dynamics of the world, also creating a wide range of categories and concepts useful for our purposes, the Spanish case, in which we contemplate a change of the economic and social models. It is a general framework form understanding present social dynamics.

Concerning Postfordism, the usefulness of the theory underlies in the description that it makes of the transition from one labour model to another. It takes into account the changes that befall for instance on technology, managing of time and labour relations. It is a necessary condition in order to give explanations about the precariat, because it exposes a change of scenario in which the precariat is immersed. However it does not give sufficient explanations by itself, as it can be seen regarding other countries in which Postfordist principles take place but without deriving into precarity, due to the lack of neoliberal policies.

Thirdly, the social class concept is a tool, a category to explain the society through it. The relevancy of the social class is clear since the problem formulation tackles it directly, and due to its validity and common acceptance between scholars for explaining the reality. It is one of the most common concepts for categorizing human groups and consequently understanding the dynamics between them.

Besides, the analytical part is done according to the theoretical aspects and its concepts. The data is collected from secondary sources, mainly statistics from official institutions as the INE (Spanish Statistical Office), along with reports from NGOs, social movements and other actors from the civil society.

The first section shows the evolution of 3 main aspects of the welfare state: health care, housing and education. All of them are studied from the “denizen” point of view, a category used by G. Standing in order to explain how the government through the enforcement of the neoliberal precepts rooted on the Washington Consensus is lessening public services creating at the same time a group of citizens without certain social rights. In that way recent legislation and indicators about questions related to social exclusion are observed along the section.

In the second section the purpose is to present evidences of the changes in the labour market produced by the deregulation within the neoliberal framework, along with a change on the working conditions as a consequence of the transition from Fordism to Postfordism, both phenomena leading to labour precarity. For that intention statistics about material and immaterial labour aspects and conditions are offered, along with examples of current Postfordist organization of labour in Spain in order to show the model. This section and the section 4.3 tend especially to show the situation of youth, inclined to those in purpose due to the importance of young people as one of the main groups under precarious conditions. In that way in the last part of the section it is tackled the “intern” issue that especially falls into young workers as one of the best examples of labour precarity.

Finally, in the third section, an approach to current class structure in Spain tries to be made. Initially through the evolution of inequality level, and then showing statistics related to living conditions in order to present objective and subjective evidences for the

formation of a specific class consciousness, the one of the precariat. To finish, in the last part is shown the materialization of the subjectivity of the precariat as political and social group, and how other trends and movements can oppose them as hegemonic subjectivities and identities.

2.3 Validity and methodological limitations

Every research has to fulfil certain requirements that assure the consistency of the project in order to have a common framework to validate a research. Those are the ecological, the internal, the external and the statistical validity.

The ecological validity refers to degree of “reality” of the study, that is, if the means and methods are close to the real fact that is under scrutiny. In our case the project is relevant because it studies a current issue and through real data.

Regarding to the external validity, to what extent the project can be extrapolated to other cases, both the theories and the analysis can be used as tools for other countries or contexts, following the same methodology. Adding to that, the internal validity, that is the appropriateness between variables and results shows certain correlations between facts situating few as causes and others as consequences, even it can not be established causal relations. Finally, the statistical validity refers to the quality of the data, what is assured since the data collection has been mainly done from institutional sources, what a priori implies a great degree of accuracy. However some considerations have to be made about data, showing the limitations of the project.

When looking for specific variables and issues, I found some relevant information that could not be included due to INE did not carry out studies and data during the last years, therefore even the variables were useful, they were not updated, especially in variables about standard of living and living conditions. Another problem found was related to the social class concept: the INE does not use social class concept as variable, existing statistics about social class in their website but from different sources and institutions.

It draws attention that there are more studies about precarity produced before the crisis than during and after the crisis and those are produced in a very limited number by official and institutional organizations. Also it is difficult to find statistics about

precarity itself or about the intern phenomenon, even its relevancy; along with statistics about some of the impacts of the reforms, since these are very recent.

Concerning the choice of theories, as in every social research, these will leave apart some categories and ways of explaining the fact, that alternative or competing theories would explain. Also variables and the analytic aspects based on the topics developed in the theoretical part suffer from this. However this is implied and consubstantial to a social sciences research and the process of obtention of knowledge.

3. Theory

3.1. Neoliberalism. Market economy enthroned. A critical review

The official definition of Neoliberalism that can be found in dictionaries, the maximal homogenizers of concepts in a specific word, describes a theoretical or political orientation which main purpose is to reduce the size and capacities of the state and to encourage economic growth. Also by Neoliberalism it can be identified the period when this theoretical or political orientation is implemented. Nowadays we are in this period.

The concept itself is normally used by its detractors, and rarely by its supporters who label themselves as supply side economist, seeking for fostering growth and economic stability (Bilbao, et al., 2000). Therefore the starting point of this theoretical dissertation about Neoliberalism is the array of theories and researches that use the term in a critical way. A deep portrait of Neoliberalism is going to be depicted during the next pages through collecting and gathering ideas from different authors and perspectives, in order to complete the big jigsaw puzzle that the concept offers, with the purpose of reaching a feasible explanation about the reality of our time.

3.1.1 Political and economic foundation

To begin with, the 1980s is the decade when Neoliberalism begins. Different factors intervene in the emergence of this orientation as the main ideological trend for governments and policymakers worldwide. The called “Washington Consensus” represented the institutionalization of these principles. Its main exponents and defences are found during the governments of Ronald Reagan, President of the United States from 1981 to 1989, and Margaret Thatcher, Primer Minister of United Kingdom from 1979 to 1990. Both influenced the main international organizations as the International Monetary Found and the World Bank, amongst others.

The cornerstone of their policies in the economic sphere sticks to the monetarist economy of the Chicago school of economics with its main proponent Milton Friedman. Defending that a state should intervene the least possible in the economy, leaving the market to self-regulate through the rational expectations and choices of individuals. Therefore the more efficient economic system would be the one that allows their integrants interact between them without barriers.

Besides, these ideas have a reflection in tangible policies, producing great changes in the way of conceiving the state since the WWII. The Decalogue of J. Williamson¹, a set of guidelines in order to achieve macroeconomic stability and economic growth, has been implemented worldwide during the last two decades. Sustained in the “Trickle down” dynamic through which economies would grow and poor countries would develop if economy generates greater savings with the purpose of investing those to increase the competitiveness of the whole economic system (Gorz, 1998). In this way it is assumed that the concentration of wealth in specific sectors produces profits, which leak to other economic activities and to different social groups. In that way to implement the policies stated on the Decalogue is supposed as the shortest manner to produce the Trickle down effect. The political instrument used for implementing the majority of policies of the Decalogue is the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), a set of policies normally proposed by the IMF or other international institutions in order to create the macroeconomic stability environment in crisis-hit countries, or in countries in which the economic situation does not fit to the international standards of those institutions. National governments, in a weaker bargain position, have to accept these SAPs due to the dependency they have to loans and liquidity from the international financial institutions.

When putting into practice, **privatization** and the called **deregulation** strategies are some of the most important processes in terms of social effects. Both British and American economies suffered these, and in a later stage other world economies. Both processes and the whole list of policies proposed by the neoliberals are a consequence, an answer to a systemic dynamic: the crisis due to an overaccumulation of capital (Boyer & Durand, 1993). The capitalist system needs from activities and markets in which to invest the gains of present activities in order to continue with its functioning and do not collapse. However the earnings rates of these specific profitable activities decrease until a point in which the investment is not profitable anymore, producing exceeding capital. Consequently, in order to avoid this moment in which capital can not be invested but having lower profitability than in previous investments, there is a

¹ *What Washington Means by Policy Reform* (1990): 1. Fiscal policy discipline; 2. Limitation of public spending; 3. Tax reform; 4. Interest rates market determined; 5. Competitive exchange rates; 6. Trade liberalization; 7. Liberalization of inward foreign direct investment; 8. Privatization; 9. Deregulation; 10. Legal security for property rights.

reorientation of the flows of capital finding geographical and functional solutions through which the process keeps its pace (Harvey, 2007). Within these solutions can be understood both privatization and deregulation processes as mechanism to enhance capital accumulation.

Firstly, regarding the privatization of public companies, the legitimatization of the fact is found in the efficiency of the private sector in comparison to the public. It is often argued that the public structure incurs in losses due to the own nature of the organization in which budget and employees enjoy of less restrictive limits that the one of the private companies. However economic activities are strongly wide in its nature and a generalization about the property of them can not be made, rather the focus should be put into the management style and accountability, witnessing those days a type of management focused on financial and speculative functions, leaving to employees the responsibility of the proper running of the company (Fumagalli, 2013).

The logic underlying privatization is the functional expansion, meaning by that to open new spaces in which capital accumulation can be carried out. The traditionally public services represent these: from the health service, pensions, education, social care sector to justice or other public goods that until the moment were implement by public institutions (Standing, 2011). Thus the commoditisation of activities previously out of the market-logic make those fall into the business perspective, changing its fundamentals. The privatization phenomenon has been especially intense in developing economies, however in recent years is appearing in mainland Europe, cradle of the welfare state system.

Secondly, the other solution to capital accumulation, the geographical expansion, it is remarkably linked to the globalization process and this one is related to the neoliberal ideology (Harvey, 2007). The opening of new markets and the creation of a middle class in the emerging economies allow generating profits in areas where capital accumulation was not that intense. Also the International Division of Labour has lead to the proletarianization of millions (Bremen, 2013), originated in the delocalization of economic activities from the developed countries to developing ones, with the consequent decrease on costs for companies. In that way world countries are divided in those that produce high value added products and keep high living conditions, and those that produce low value added products and the standard of living is minimal. What it

means is that production and labour model are formed as a consequence of the dynamics of capital flows. In I.Wallerstein words through his World-System theory, there is a division of the world between Core, Semiperiphery and Periphery countries.

The opening of borders has been especially patent in the financial sector, leading to the **financialization** of the economy as a trend in which financial activities produce greater wealth and capital accumulation. The deregulation of the trade of financial assets has generated a multimillionaire activity independent to state control. Hence capital has become sovereign since it does not depend on a specific territory (Gorz, 1998),unattached to the burdens and responsibilities that individuals or other types of organizations have in regard to national laws and tax systems, lessening the control ability of states and other groups of the civil society over them.

On the one hand, technology and internet has allowed the development of the sector, which has a great component of speculation, related to the time-space compression being strongly delinked from the productive activity, that is, to economic activities which goal is to produce a commodity and to make profits through its trade. What it is called the financialization of the economy indicates that the principle of the sector is to accumulate capital, investing in the most profitable financial instruments, independently of the social value of the operation itself. That has a great impact on the national economies in terms that an investment can be deviated from productive economy to the financial sector, undermining financing of real activities. It has to be considered that authors as Fumagalli considers that both realms have to be understood together, in the way that financial sphere is a condition of biocapitalism, and not solely a sector gaining importance against a benign “real” productive sphere (Fumagalli, 2013).

On the other hand, politics has encouraged the development of financialization. The supranational institutions have allowed the appearance of a global network of territories and countries, in which this intangible sector turns in real, in material money. Those are the “tax havens”, defined by OECD as territories that do not fulfil bilateral agreements regarding cooperation and exchange of information².One of the main effects of tax havens, along with the difficulties when tracking financial operations and flows of money, is the draining of resources from national tax systems, weakening tax collection.

² Source: Webpage Attac Spain. Hernández, J. (2013) “Los paraísos fiscales, plataformas de los mercados financieros” <http://www.attac.es/2013/10/05/los-paraisos-fiscales-plataformas-de-los-mercados-financieros/>

Finally, internet is the other great sphere in which the logic of capital accumulation has appeared. Linked to some of the concepts that we will be discussed in the section 3.2 regarding Postfordism, the internet represents unlimited connections between people and their capacities (Berardi, 2003). A sphere or space in which social dynamics can take place in the same way as those in real world, therefore those can be subsumed into the capital logic.

3.1.2 Impact on labour market and society

The Neoliberal ideology has its impact in labour relations along with the rest of spheres of society too. Those have been put in service of capital accumulation and the market forces through different mechanism, mainly with modifications in labour laws with the purpose to deregulate labour market and to change social policies in order to decrease social expenditure.

The discourse of competitiveness is used to support a one way strategy for reducing costs mainly through the decrease of wages, lessening the purchasing power of workers, and leaving apart other forms for reducing costs related to charging profits with taxes, or other policies with similar nature. In that way the decline of the unit labour cost³ shows the trend of the current moment: the share of national income of workers is decreasing in opposition to the growing share of national income that remains into capital⁴. This means that the factorial distribution of a state wealth shows that a part of it is moving from retribution to worker activities through salaries, to retribution to capital activities, what also shows the presence of the financialization.

Another important trend identified is **informality** and **dualism**, in words of U. Beck, the “brazilianization” of the labour market (Beck, 2000). The concept refers to the transformation of the labour markets of developed countries into labour markets with developing economies’ features. Traditionally, developing economies, mainly as a product of the colonial past and nowadays dynamics, have a labour market in which there are well differentiated strata depending on the country. Generally, there is an upper and a less numerous layer of high qualified professionals with high salaries and good labour conditions, along with a lower part of workers earning modest wages. Also

³ Source: ILO webpage. Definition: “the average cost of labour per unit of output.”

⁴ Source: Todaro M. (2006) ‘Poverty, Inequality and Development’, in *Economic Development*

informality is a key feature of labour markets in developing economies, in which self-employment and a range of low income activities out of the state control and protection are present, reaching in some countries up to 90% as in India⁵.

The hypothesis states that developed economies could be suffering a transformation of their labour markets, increasing wage dispersion and rising disparity of working conditions, along with an appearance of higher levels of informality and shadow economy (Standing, 2011).

Consequently both facts, changes on rent shares and labour market dualism affect to the rent distribution, becoming polarized, with the consequent impact on inequality levels, raising those.

Furthermore, not solely modification in laws are seeking for the well-known flexibility, but also policies itself look for it, specially the labour ones. After the WWII during welfarism period, seven forms of labour-related securities were identified by G. Standing mainly thinking on the British system, as it follows (Standing, 2011):

- Labour market security: The state promoted policies seeking for the full employment scenario.
- Employment security: labour legislation covered and defended workers rights.
- Job security: there was a clear codification of positions along with the possibilities of promoting and going upward.
- Work security: policies in order to prevent health and other types of risk while working.
- Skill reproduction security: the existence of plans for maintaining and improving workers skills.
- Income security: minimum salary policies along with progressive tax system and other kinds of social benefits implemented by governments.
- Representation security: the legal defence of rights to associate in trade unions, the right to strike, etc.

However, as it will be seen in the next section, labour turned from scarce to exceeding; trade unions have lost their bargain power and the state, embedded in the neoliberal

⁵ Source: Reserve Bank of India “Informality: Causes, Consequences and Policy Responses”
<http://rbi.org.in/scripts/PublicationsView.aspx?id=15764>

thought, changed its focus from full employment society to macroeconomic stability and competitiveness improvement as leitmotiv since workers did not represent a threat to political stability.

As a result, a number of labour aspects have been modified. Firstly, there is a greater level of labour insecurity due to vulnerabilities in terms of mechanism to fire, when there are problems within the company or local markets, etc. Secondly, the insufficiency of wages that leads to the phenomenon of the working poor, the workers who does not earn enough money to face basic necessities. Third, the degradation of working conditions due to a lower individual and collective ability to control the working environment. Fourth, a reduction of social protection, as the change from passive labour market policies, that is, subsidies and benefits, to active labour market policies that underlie in the classical liberal idea about the voluntary character of unemployment (Bilbao, et al., 2000). Currently and more often, social benefits are linked to certain conditionality in terms of behaviour of the recipients according to behavioural economics through which governments have to induce people to make “better” decisions in the interest of society (Standing, 2011).

All these changes have lead to precarity, defining it as insecurity and lack of social and labour rights when accessing to a job and which main features are segmentation of labour market, subcontracting and temporality (Bilbao, et al., 2000). In the next section we will see the changes on the mode of production, to have a great understanding of labour changes and the current situation.

3.2 Postfordism. The XXI Century labour dynamic

The relations of production as well as the production model are ones of the foundations and determinate the social, labour and political dynamics within the society. In that way to understand which ones are those dynamics is essential in order to recognize the processes that happen in our environment. In this section we will see those processes along with its impacts in both individuals and society as a system.

Historically, there has been a transition from one production model, Fordism, to another, Postfordism. By **Postfordism**, the current trend, is understood the mode of production in which the means of production are knowledge, signs, language and the

wide range of immaterial skills and abilities that are inherent to the human being (Virno, 2003). The concept itself in its denomination shows a transition, a notion that is not still defined but different to a previous moment. As we have said, **Fordism** is this earlier moment, a production model in which classical means of production as labour, capital and land played the main role.

In the case of Fordism, the post-war period of World War II is the time scenario. The main engines of society in that time were industrial capitalism as economic model and Keynesianism as ideology leading the policies of Western governments, materialized in the development of the Welfare State (Giorgi, 2006). Those elements established an equilibrium that produced a long-term economic growth period in which also social conditions were taken into account. The base of this stability was due to the redistributive capacity of the Welfare State, through which the production, distribution and consumption processes were led by the state. The virtuous circle produced by an increasing demand of products due to a solvent purchasing power of the majority of the society boosted the industrial production of manufactured goods to a stable level (Giorgi, 2006). The standard of living of the society gradually rose as an effect of the regulation of the world of labour through negotiation between trade unions and workers parties, companies and the state. In that way specified and codified rules for the working environment were settled, including the regulation of the working day, tasks, positions and other aspects of labour relations. Along with the provision of benefits and the development of social policies, this period was known as the “*Trente Glorieuses*” (The Glorious Thirty), a period when labour and workers were scarce (ibid.).

The period ended up in the 1970s due to different facts: the economic crisis related to the petrol crisis, the end of the Bretton Wood system, the appearance of new technologies related to tertiary jobs and economic actors that were leading to a complete new scenario. Adding to the fall of productivity gains, the lessening of demand and the increase of financialization (Boyer & Durand, 1993).

Regarding the organization of labour, in Fordism the factory is the materialization of its principles. The main features of this one are: hierarchy, centralization and the division of tasks. The production system is extremely well defined; each department or division of the factory follows orders from the immediate upper scale, what makes a concentration of the decision power in the hands of the managers. The workers do not

have any control over its work. While with the division of tasks rooted on the Taylorism, the scientific management of labour looks for increases in productivity through the fragmentation of the operations needed on the production. It develops a specific pattern of movements for each assignment with the purpose of implementing this in the shortest period of time. Each worker requires a minimal knowledge about his position, solely knowing a limited number of movements (ibid.). To work implies to carry out a monotonous and alienating mission.

During the following decades, Fordism evolved into Toyotism, a subsequent model of labour organization in which mass production becomes “differentiated” and more adapted to the demand, implementing the Just In Time (JIT) principle through which stocks are avoided. Therefore the factory reflect this change turning to a more flexible model, in which workers gain autonomy, performing a wider range of tasks, while hierarchy gets laxer; although the principles of Fordism chain production remains intact (ibid.).

3.2.1 Tertiariization of the economy

During the last three decades we have seen the growth of tertiary sector in both percentage of GDP and in employment terms in the developed economies. This growth took place in great part due to the new technologies and the internet, new tools that have allowed unprecedented increases in productivity along with the appearance of hundreds of new services and activities, the most of them commoditised through the logic of market economy. Also new ways of doing, that is, new organizational and structural models have been implemented. Postfordism is the paradigm through which we try to categorize those changes and new phenomena.

To begin with, **knowledge** can be considered as the raw material present along the explanation of what Postfordism is because of its interrelation to other features. It has diverse faces: information, codified knowledge, tacit knowledge and culture (Fumagalli, 2013). Information and codified knowledge are the ones more directly related to the production process itself, representing the basic and the specialized capacities respectively. While tacit knowledge comes from personal inventive and inventions, and culture embodies the critical and alternative ideas (Fumagalli, 2013).

Other of the main features perceived in the service economy are the **net** and **node** notions. More and more social processes, as the functioning of the internet with the Peer to peer (P2P) platforms as example, give us a predisposition to see those facts as a dispersion of fragments connected between them without an apparent central point. In that way a decentralized relation is generated between the nodes, increasing the communicative and exchange capacity of those when joining new nodes to the network⁶, meaning that the greater the number of nodes, the more the abilities of those, amplifying the potentiality of a single node to an upper level. This has consequences in the political arena, as H. Rheingold has analyzed during the last years, increasing the number of political spontaneous mobilizations convened through mobile phones and the internet, reaching those calls fast and great response due to the nature itself of the mean through which the call is done: the network.

Also it has its impact in the labour world. Regarding the mode of production, in an ideal Postfordist company the node model tends to be implemented. Employees enjoy a great level of autonomy when doing tasks, and in how to distribute its time to fulfil this assignment; also traditional hierarchies disappeared in favour of a constant flow of information between the different members and departments of the company, decreasing the gap between managers and employees. However the dependency between subordinates to their managers remains (Berardi, 2003). In this new organization model, the cooperation among workers is an essential asset, as the ability of those to achieve consensus and new ideas; consequently their linguistic and cognitive capacities play a main role in the whole process of production (Virno, 2003).

In addition, one of the effects of this new scope of labour is that **immaterial elements** become central in the economic process, while working and the product are difficult to assess and to count from the traditional point of view, through which the value of the product depended on the abstract time necessary to produce it (Berardi, 2003). The labour time can not be considered a measure of labour anymore (Gorz, 1998), even though labour time is still the measure that socially is utilized to compute labour (Virno, 2003).

For both non qualified and qualified labour the array of intangible elements are putting in practice. When talking about the non qualified jobs, the employee has to developed

⁶ Rheingold, Howard "Smart Mobs: the next social revolution" (2002)

his/her profession and inherent tasks to that one, that normally are mechanical, physical and the source of value for the company; along with commercial activities, that is, activities that does not generated directly surplus but indirectly, and in which language and others human abilities are utilized for the sake of increasing productivity. In that way the worker does a double activity as professional and salesperson, generating value through its main occupation and optimizing the obtaining of surplus through the second. While in various qualified jobs, the abilities itself are the value generated factor of the economic activity, as for instances the public relations, being undistinguished the worker and the product.

Besides, the traditional parts of the economic cycle are modified too. The production, distribution and consumption loss their boundaries since part of the products are non material (Berardi, 2003). The three traditional circuits merge when we are talking about some specific immaterial products canalized through the internet or exchanged in person such as knowledge related to education. Also distribution is instant for another set of products due to internet immediateness while producers and consumers establish a two directions flow, with Media products as example. Also scarcity, a precondition for the creation of a market, disappears since information can be copied, stored and shared infinitely without any detriment to the holder of information (ibid.).

Moreover, the blurred **labour time**, is in great part consequence of the new IT technologies and the possibility of accessing to the internet far from a fixed facility, implying that the means of production are not localized in a specific geographical position (the factory, the office). During the Fordist stage, the working day was perfectly delimited from the private or personal life of the worker. Once the whistle of the factory sounded, the worker did not have to deal with any aspect of his or her job, managing his time in the way they wished. But in the Postfordist era, tasks and duties that are inherent to the job position are implemented during any time of the day, an invasion of the periods of life in which the profit-making logic was not present yet. Life itself is the source of value, since capital accumulation depends on knowledge expressed through the construction of ideas and speeches, therefore any moment of the day is a proper moment for being commoditised. In the next section we will go in depth into that idea.

3.2.2 From the factory to life

The distinction between labour and life time leads to the concept of biocapitalism, a theoretical category that indicates that the whole time of one's life is embedded within the production sphere (Giorgi, 2006).

In the classical Marxist analysis⁷, the value of the production underlies in the socially necessary or useful labour time, being this labour time general and abstract labour, independent from the output/ product and from the worker. In that way each commodity has certain quantity of labour time “crystallized”⁸, necessary for its creation. In addition, the process of exchange of products is what makes labour time socially useful, changing as equivalents in terms of labour (exchange value), different products with different personal and particular value (use value).

What it is happening in the current society is that labour time is falling apart, leaving its prominent role to life itself as source of value. The starting point of this theory underlies in the ideas that we previously stated: technology and the immaterial means of production. During daily life, time is divided into labour per se, as the waged period of the day, while the rest of the time in which individuals do not carry out with labour in strict sense, they develop activities that contributes to production and to capitalist accumulation too (Virno, 2003). In this way there is a transition from working time/ no-working time to remunerated life/ no remunerated life, because the period of time external to the socially conceived work is under the roles of the capitalist mode of production too (ibid.).

P. Virno points out as the cause of this fact to the interrelated nature of knowledge and the individual (Blondeau, 2004). It is established a symbiosis between language and labour, and production takes advantage of every fundamental element of the human being: affects, instincts, taste, etc.; elements that are indissoluble to the person's nature (Virno, 2003). Productivity depends on the individual himself/herself and not in the effectiveness when carrying out working tasks; it lies on the gained skills in every moment of your life, beyond education and training. Although it has to be said that along history every kind of job has required a minimum of cognitive skills, normally

⁷ Karl Marx “A contribution to the critique of the political economy” (1859)

⁸ Enrique Tierno Galván “Anthology of Marx” (1972)

they played a marginal role. What is different in Postfordism is that this range of skills is put in value (Berardi, 2003).

However, the group is the main requirement for putting in practices these human abilities, the relations between people. What it is said with this statement is that the cooperation and collaboration are the base of the production process, including the one in a capitalist framework. The concept of Multitude and Cognitariat refer to this group, describing it in depth in section 3.3.3.

The foundation of these notions is rooted in the “General Intellect” of K. Marx. When Marx names the concept in his “Grundrisse”⁹ he refers to “the general social knowledge [that] has become a direct force of production” (Marx, 1858). He argues that the development of industry reaches to a level in which the workers are not involve in the production, instead they play the role of regulators, staying on one side of the process of production. This is due to it has been achieved a certain qualitative level of fixed capital through which human can transform the process of nature into an industrial process, a moment when thoughts prevail over physical actions.

In that sense, wealth creation depends on a lesser extent on labour time, but in the own abilities of the workers and in the general level of science, what generates a contradiction: labour time is less necessary than before and it is decreasing although it is the measure and the source of wealth. What Marx remarks is that “social life itself have come under the control of the general intellect” (Marx, 1858), suggesting that every idea and vital process is part of the knowledge that can encourage the capitalist accumulation.

In that sense and linked to the explanations for network and node previously stated, minds working connected between them reach a superior level of knowledge and abilities, a greater power. A worldwide decentralized network of people is “the strategy to maximize the productivity of the cognitive labour” (Berardi, 2003, p. 129) . In this network, each participant is a co-holder of the power (Blondeau, 2004), in opposition to the mere user of the means of production of the Fordist time, even though that does not

⁹ Source: <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1857/grundrisse/ch14.htm#p711> Karl Marx “Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie” Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy 1857-1858. Notebook VII. “Contradiction between the foundation of bourgeois production (value as measure) and its development. Machines etc.”

imply that the worker is the owner, still it prevails the production of surplus and the appropriation of this by the owner.

To continue, another effect carried by Postfordist organization of labour and life is the politicization of the working environment and the consequent de-politicization of the life sphere (Boyer & Durand, 1993). This idea is strongly correlated to the fact that during the working day are putting in practise different competences within the knowledge and cognitive skills. To negotiate, to defend arguments, to hold positions, to persuade, to convince workmates is a daily part of a great number of jobs. Therefore activities and actions that were subsumed in the world of politics, social organizations, trade unions, etc, leading to have a voice, are now under the rule of the work place.

This fact has two consequences, on the one hand the “zoon politikon” has been commoditised (Virno, 2003). In Fordism, the worker looked for taking part in organizations out of work; they socialized through groups that had a high component of subversion and struggle (Berardi, 2003), showing in these groups the abilities that the factory denied. As a result, in the current times workers do not have the imperious need of executing certain social skills since they use those during their working time, having and impact on political and social participation levels, in decrease.

On the other hand, creativeness and innovation are present when working, what allows to certain extent a re-appropriation of labour in opposition to the depersonalization of Fordist labour (Gorz, 1998). The use of own ideas, the self-managing of schedule, the ability to decide the order of task implementation along with other aspects are more present now at the workplace than never before, specially in high-skilled positions in which the activity itself allows a great degree of spontaneity versus a established pattern of behaviour as Fordist activities require.

Nevertheless this flexibilization or taking of control of the worker can be seen as negative too when it is emptied of its independence and autonomy due to the commoditisation of human relations and immaterial skills, of language (Berardi, 2003). The intangible elements that have been state before are co-opted by capital accumulation, becoming every aspect of the workers' inventive into an output, a product. That leads to insincerity, to the objectivation of “affective bonds between people” (Gorz, 1998) and to a misuse of the human capacities because of its subordination to the production and profit-making activity (Gorz, 1998).

Also this implies a new dimension of alienation different to the one known during the Fordist period, related to “happiness ideology” impulse by the advertising industry and the political establishment which situates desire and non-lived pleasure in commoditize items (Berardi, 2003). In addition, the lack of control over the own time and the difficulties to develop a long term life plan provoke self-fulfilment problems. Further explanations about the issues related to psychological aspects are given in the section 3.3.

Finally, other important issue that it is exposed by the theorists is a new consideration of labour itself, of the workforce, in comparison to Fordism. In the previous period the economic model of industrial capitalism required labour, workers, as one the main factors of production. As it has been said before, those were a scarce element in the production. Policies and reforms were taken in order to make more attractive the workplace and the assemble lines. The welfare state contract achieved this goal. Nonetheless, in the current times labour is not as an essential part for the accumulation of capital as before since a variety of changes has taken place becoming labour surplus to requirements (Giorgi, 2006). Technological improvements have allowed substituting workers for machines; even the most important changes are the emergence of an International Division of Labour, increasing the absolute number of workers, and the financialization of the economy, that permits an increase of accumulation of capital without any material or productive basis. Within the whole trend underlies a contradiction because nowadays there is scarcity of remunerated jobs even though there are more activities subsumed into the labour logic than in previous periods.

Critiques

The main critiques to Postfordism can be found summarized in the work of E. de la Garza Toledo¹⁰. The work process in its different dimension comprehends the target of the critiques, especially to the positions that Postfordist authors maintain when describing Fordism. Firstly, critiques fall on the centrality of chain production as main production process during the XX century. The detractors of Postfordist view argued that within the labour world there were a lot of working methods and organizations of labour, pointing to an idealization of the factory. Secondly, the work in the factory was

¹⁰ “La Formación Socioeconómica Neoliberal: debates teóricos acerca de la reestructuración de la producción y evidencia empírica para América Latina” 2001, Plaza y Valdés.

not as rigid as the Postfordist authors suggest. There were certain numbers of unexpected events during the production that workers have to face with some degree of independency, along with different departments and activities lacking of the features of the chain production. Finally, opponents to Postfordists mention that the latter have identified flexibility as the more productive labour method related to the emergence of new technologies; however there is a lack of evidence about this fact.

3.3 From proletariat to precariat. Social class concept to understand society.

Social class is a theoretical concept through which real, tangible facts, tried to be categorize, that is, an approach created and reshaped along the time with the purpose of showing us with the greatest accuracy what is society made of.

The idea is strongly related to traditional debates on social sciences that still remain in the current time: both the question whether the human being is more influenced by his biological part or his social part, and the question of the relationship between an individual and a group.

Through this section different views about social class will be detailed, along with concepts such collective consciousness, identity and collective representation, amongst others, in order to reach the most recent suggestions and ideas concerning groups in society and the called “precariat”.

3.3.1 The origin of the concept. Marxism.

The multidisciplinary studies of Karl Marx in economics, politics or philosophy left a great numbers of concepts that have a strong influence in later studies in different fields. One of those concepts is social class, a notion widely used in his political conception of society.

His starting point underlies in the conviction that social classes are an external reality to the observer, a substantial item, originated in specific material conditions in the society, that is, due the relations of production and the ownership of the means of production within the industrial capitalist economy (Gurvitch, 1967). In this way, the society tended to be divided in two big groups, or social classes, the bourgeoisie and the

proletariat, even another three groups, landlords, the petty bourgeoisie and farmers-peasants could be identified in the Marx's time society (Gurvitch, 1967).

The bourgeoisie as owners of the means of production are in contradiction with the proletariat, who trade with their own capacity to work in their relation with the bourgeoisie, and produce through the means of production of the latter, both a product and a surplus value that remains in the bourgeoisie part.

Moreover, material aspects influence on the abstract aspects as ideology, culture and consciousness (Gurvitch, 1967) ; however there is a certain degree of immaterial component, introduced by Marx through the notions of "class in itself" and "class for itself". Using this distinction, the German author firstly present a conception that in current theories is often appealed, through which a social group is defined regarding another social group, the Other, being the own relation between both groups the one that generates the identity of both of them. Secondly, those notions link the material explanation of social classes to the intangible, that is, the ideology. Hence, proletariat as a "class in itself" it is understood as a class by the other classes of society, whereas a "class for itself" is the moment when the proletariat identified themselves as a group with a common vision of the society, common project and a common goals, when they take consciousness, **class consciousness** (Gurvitch, 1967).

The main critics aroused to Marx ideas deal with a lack of explanations to certain social phenomena, such as when a member of a social class behaves in contradiction to his/her class (Gurvitch, 1967). Marx tried to solve this in part through the idea of the "veil of ignorance", meaning that the ideology of the upper classes impacts on workers capacity to analyze society, accepting those the definition for reality of the bourgeoisie. Along with that, other lax aspect is the one about the number of classes, failing in part by the moment in his prediction about the bipolarization of the society and the disappearance of the middle class, at least for the developed world. Beside, the debate about the validity of the concept of social classes itself as Lukács as argued, that is, if those can be extrapolated to other historical periods in which capitalism was not the mode of production of the society (Lukács in Gurvitch,1967). Finally, Marx is accused too of certain social determinism due to the lack of freedom of individuals since they are born assigned to a specific social class.

Regarding his political prediction, Marx situated the proletariat as the revolutionary class that would climb to power through a violent struggle, a revolution, through which the means of production and the state would be conquered by them. In a later stage classes and the state itself as representation of the power class would disappear.

3.3.2 Alternative views along history. What matters in social groups

To continue and linked to the critics to Marx view of social class, we find the ideas of Marx revisited by his followers. Authors as Bernstein and Kautsky bended to a view of the middle class as an essential part for balancing society in which the state develops a mediator function (Gurvitch, 1967).

Whereas Lenin sticks to the Marx definition of class, but focusing especially in the material aspects, leaving apart consciousness and ideology. Also the number of classes and layers change due to the specific features of the post-tsar society in which can be found different strata of peasants.

Naming again G. Lukács, he dissociates, separates, the class consciousness from the psychological consciousness, indicating that ideology its a product of class consciousness but other kinds of manifestations depends on the psychological one (Gurvitch, 1967).

However greater distinctions are found in authors from other theoretical visions. The main differences between them, and those and the Marxist view underlie in the base and pillar of the condition of social class. While for the Marxist, the ownership of the means of production is the key issue, it can be found other key factors in the literature. Also there are differences in causality, causes and effects direction; and in the conception of the class as a group formed by individuals or as an entity by itself.

For the German economist G. Schmoller, the social class is a product of a profession, what makes the analytical category into a real group. While, M. Weber states three different origins of a class: due to general ownership, because of the acquisition of goods and due to inheritance (Gurvitch, 1967). In addition, he understands social classes within a global community or group in which those social classes have relations. Hence

his starting point conceived the class as an aggregated of people, and not as a whole as in the case of the Marxists.

Besides, another origin of social class can be found in the family, as J.A.Schumpeter states. The individual belongs to a specific class to the extent that his/her family belongs to that class. Also he incorporates to each social class a concrete function within the society, learned from the family; however the functions are not specified (Gurvitch, 1967).

Finally, another relevant author who studies in deep the concept of social class is M. Halbwachs. His main contribution to the class concept is the multiplication of causes of the formation of a class, joining material aspects and immaterial (Gurvitch, 1967). The relevant issues to understand if a social group with explicit features is a class is linked to the opinion that members of the group have about themselves along with the vision of the society about them (Halbwachs, 1938). As well as Marx, he uses the class consciousness concept as a requirement for being a class; otherwise the group would be a “class in the way to formation” (Gurvitch, 1967). In that way he adds some features to that: the member of a class have a collective memory, and similar necessities in terms of physical items as consumption, and abstract as collective representation, that is, the need of showing themselves as a group with an own voice. In his work, the class is previous to the individual, giving to the group a great relevancy; even the individual shapes the group nature too.

3.3.3 Current ideas about class and social groups. The precariat and beyond

Nowadays it can be said that the class concept is still valid. Government institutions define this as the socioeconomic status of a person mainly regarding profession, education skills and labour relation (employee, manager, free lance, etc).

However as we have indicated during the whole theoretical part, we are witnesses of great changes in society that have altered the traditional conditions for being a member of a specific class. Labour relations, profession or education as individual variables do not show us with the same precision if a person has high or low standard of living since the correlation between those have changed. In that way following the words of Guy Standing it can be identified seven classes in modern Western societies: billionaires,

“salariat”, “proficians”, traditional working class, precariat, unemployed and a detached group (Standing, 2011). Within this seven classes system, following his hypothesis, the precariat is a “class in the making”, a group that have distinctive features but that does not identified itself as a common group yet, consequently this one can not canalized its demands (Standing, 2011).

The precariat is understood as the socioeconomic group that suffers from a great level of **uncertainty** in their life due to a problematic accession to employment and labour market, related to a lessening of rights (Bilbao, et al., 2000).

The main feature of precarious workers is temporality, a time variable, materialized in the succession of contracts in the same or different activities with periods of unemployment in between of those, what means that the precariat does not have a stable job and pay. Also the precariat is strongly linked to the shadow economy, that is, a parallel economic and labour market running externally to certain number of controls from the state side. Within the precariat we find the temporary workers, part-time workers, freelance, interns, and a range of workers from sectors that are recognized by its precarity as call-centres, etc (Standing, 2011).

Temporary jobs imply certain number of effects in both works in itself and in life of the worker. In comparison to other groups before showed, there is a dynamic of distrust in the relation between employers and employees. The worker experiment a low level of loyalty regarding his company and his duties, while the bosses have a minimal trust in their employees, easily replaceable (Standing, 2011). Also there is an impact on trade union affiliation due to the lack of commitment to labour.

Regarding demographic groups, there are clear patterns showing the impact of precarity in some of them. Firstly, women are likely to be a part of the precariat due to the “triple burden” that they carry: babies, job and elders (Standing, 2011). Despite of the incorporation of women to the labour market, some specific roles are still on their hands, forcing them to temporality and part-timing. Along with them, youth is another target for precarity. Youth have a weaker bargaining position what makes them to access to labour market in low skilled jobs, as in the case of Spain, reaching 40% of university student enrolled in those (Standing, 2011). In that way the investment in education is far from being profitable for the most of students, while in some country education make them incur in debts (Standing, 2011).

To continue, other groups hit by precarity are ethnic minorities, disable people, criminalized, elders and one above all of them, the migrants. Standing introduces through them the concept of “**denizens**”, to refer to the citizens who do not enjoy of the full array of civil, political and social rights, but they lack some of them due to their labour conditions (Standing, 2011). Also Standing adds a political dimension when he talks about certain groups of the precariat as “demonized” groups, meaning that the official speech of the establishment, the Media and the ruling powers focus on the harmful nature of those groups in terms of public expenditure and social cohesion.

Coming back to the impact of temporality on life of people, we found **short-termism** as the principle that guide people’s life project. It is a dependency, a lack of control and autonomy for planning own life (Bilbao, et al., 2000). The difficulties to manage their use of time provokes stress and mental instability as anxiety, alienation and other disorders including infantilising of people behaviour linked or triggered to a lack of long term perspectives (Standing, 2011).

A partial explanation about this can be found in the “work for labour” notion, the time needed for searching a job once the current job would finish, for dealing with bureaucratic task and other time consuming activities. Remarkably related to the “work for labour” notion is the concept of “**precarity trap**” through which Standing affirms that there is a type of transaction cost for the precarious when thinking about accession to job. If precarious individuals are getting social benefits they would calculate the problems related to applying and getting again those benefits when the part time job ends (Standing, 2011).

Along with that, the expansion of working hours and the limitation of leisure time impact on people minds too (Standing, 2011). Following with psychological aspects, social and personal inclusion through identities and cognitive and linguistic common places through which people can share similar meanings about society are essential (Virno, 2003), being employment one of those remarkably important issues in the current times (Gorz, 1998). In that way the lack of employment or the lack of quality employment is one of the reasons leading to social pathologies that are affecting more and more people, as panic syndromes due to fears and the raising of competitiveness (Berardi, 2003). In addition, the increase of surveillance, invasion of privacy, the criminalization of protests, etc. what Giorgi calls the “synoptic” society as evolution of

the panoptic, is another cause for personal disorders too. However those illnesses are treated through psycho drugs and other physic items, leaving apart the deep causes in which these pathologies are rooted (Berardi, 2003).

To sum up, the precariat is not solely defined or differentiated by its relation to the means of production, by a profession or education level, but mainly through a labour relation that lacks of a number of conditions along with political changes in terms of rights that create a state of uncertainty and insecurity in several members of the society and a worsening of living standards.

Critiques and alternatives

A number of author's state various limitations to the vision of G.Standing. One of the critiques point out to his ethnocentric perspective (Munck, 2013). That is due to the omission of the global South and the developing countries in his theory (Bremans, 2013). It is argued by Munck that the precariat is present in developing economies for decades as the normal trend. Nevertheless it has to be said that the critique does not delegitimize the validity of the concept neither its usefulness for the North case.

Another critique to Standing underlies on his understanding of the whole dynamic of change. In that way in his words there is not a clear distinction between the transition from the Fordist labour model to the Postfordist, avoiding causes and dynamics of this change, merely describing the Tertiarization process. Consequently what he sees as the emerging of a new class could be indentified as the change in the production model and the regulation of labour (Bremans, 2013).

Also it can be found different categorizations of groups of the society regarding its uncertainty levels. In the case of A. Fumagalli his classification underlies in the idea that precarity is not a particular condition within a group but a structural and generalized phenomenon. In that way he finds four different subjectivities: the precarious as unstable workers; discouraged inactive; neets as people with a precarious existence; and official unemployed (Fumagalli, 2013). He considers permanent employed workers as potential precarious and shares the concept of precarity trap with Standing. In his political view of the phenomenon, Fumagalli affirms that precarity could be overcome with proper public policies; however the existence of a new type of industrial reserve

army could be a goal for the political and economic establishment in order to maintain low salaries and to reduce the bargaining power of workers (Fumagalli, 2013).

To continue, during the last decade other authors went beyond the precariat notion identifying other groups and subjectivities within the society, mainly the Multitude and the Cognitariat. Multitude is defined as a “group of cooperative and productive potentialities” (Giorgi, 2006, p. 106), external to the people concept and the national-state. Also it is defined as an external to the activity of the public sphere understanding this one as the activity of the state, arguing that it is desired this articulation in an independent public space if certain democratic atmosphere wants to be maintained (Virno, 2003). P.Virno reasons that the Multitude and the working class are compatible, as well as the concept of people and working class have coexisted during decades (ibid.). While Berardi and his cognitariat underlines the group as the one carrying with it the mean of production, the knowledge, the human intelligence, affirming that this “virtual class” is not a class in the classic sense, but it can be articulated as one (Berardi, 2003).

The change in the mode of production along with the emergence of new groups imply new social practices: “the new articulation of the relations of production, the system of control to discipline labour has changed too” (Giorgi, 2006, p. 50), situating the Fordist mode of control as obsolete, turning to a Postfordist control in generic, that is, the control of the group (ibid.). In the Fordist stage the control fell on the individual, with disciplinary purposes, seeking for reshaping the anomic subjects to make them proper workforce, neutralizing its deviated behaviours. The punishment through the repressive institutions, as prisons, reproduced an environment in which the living conditions were worst to the ones that suffered the lower group of the society (ibid.).

Whereas the Postfordist moment, the exceeding labour that makes outdated the Fordist disciplinary model, generates two dynamics. A positive one by which the Multitude embodies a group of subjectivities that exceed the rationality of capital (Giorgi, 2006), pointing to the contradiction between the unlimited potential capacity of the group against the relations of production that stop the autonomy of the capitalist management (ibid.), that is, the need of certain degree of control for the sake of accumulation of capital. That makes the Multitude a likely candidate to lead social changes.

On the contrary, it can be seen a negative trend due to a production sphere with lower needs of labour, and the contradiction between **citizenship and labour**. The welfare state contract is broken because of the surplus of workers: unemployment rises with the consequent loss of rights. This last is provoked by the convention that has established the identification of workers with citizenship during welfarism. People entitle to benefits and rights are those who pay and contribute to the public budget, but since there are greater numbers of people who can not contribute through their jobs, the state does not guarantee their rights (Giorgi, 2006). In that sense, the strategies of social control turns to governing, to control the surplus of people, mainly through the incarceration of members of risky social groups, through the deployment of surveillance devices in cities and through the internet control, all of them transcending the individual (ibid.).

In the following part we are going to focus on different variables of the Spanish society led by the theoretical background that we have discussed along these pages, in order to check to what extent the Spanish case reflects the ideas stated.

4. Analysis

4.1 Welfare State decomposition. Creating Denizens

The aspects to analyze in this section are remarkably related to the neoliberal supremacy as main ideology guiding policymakers and to the economic crisis too. Within this framework, the decline of public expenditure in key social areas is one of the main reasons for provoking an instability climate in the most of the society, especially in those who are in weaker position. In that way, the principle of universalism in the delivery of social policies is broken. The model of the Spanish welfare state is changing to “work-related” assistance or simply to privatization, what is creating denizens, as a second level citizenship with fewer rights.

A brief official explanation of the situation started with the “real estate bubble” and the international financial crisis what led to the bankruptcy of few of the largest Spanish financial institutions. The state intervened or nationalized 8 banks, receiving a loan or bail-out worth 41.300 Million Euros from the European Stabilisation Mechanism in order to inject liquidity in the financial system, using 23.500M€ (almost the 10% of the GDP of Denmark) solely for one bank, Bankia¹¹. As the Spanish state is the guarantor of the operation, the loan computes as public debt, increasing this exponentially, consequently failing the state to fulfil the Stability and Growth Pact regarding public debt as percentage of GDP (not exceeding 60%) and public deficit (not exceeding 3%)¹².

This is how the political legitimating for reducing welfare state underlies in the fulfilment of the Pact and the return of the loan, a constitutional obligation since September 2011¹³. But the social consequences are patent. We are going to analyze those through the changes that health, housing and education have suffered.

¹¹ Source webpage “El Diario.es”: http://www.eldiario.es/economia/cifras-rescate-financiero-pagar_0_197030919.html

¹² Source webpage European Commission http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/index_en.htm

¹³ Modification of the Article 135 of the Spanish Constitution of 1978 about public budgets equilibrium and the priority to debt service. Source: BOE (Official State Gazette) Number 233 <http://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-2011-15210>

4.1.1 Health care apartheid

A common place between Spanish people until few years ago was that the Spanish health system was one of the best of the world. A 2000 report of the World Health Organization¹⁴ situated the Spanish Health System in 7th world position, however current quantitative changes in terms of budget decrease and privatizations, and qualitative in terms of coverage, are modifying this fact, decreasing.

Since quantitative changes influences in the total of the users and population, the focus is going to be set in the qualitative ones that fall in specific groups within the society. With the framework of a health system reform as starting point, the current government of the Popular Party has implemented various legislative modifications in order to “rationalize” the public health system.

Causes

The implemented legislation is the following in chronological order:

1. Real Decreto-ley 16/2012, de 20 de abril, de medidas urgentes para garantizar la sostenibilidad del Sistema Nacional de Salud y mejorar la calidad y seguridad de sus prestaciones.
Royal Decree- Law 16/2012, 20th April, about urgent measures to guarantee the sustainability of the National Health System and to improve the quality and safety of benefits.
2. Real Decreto 1192/2012, de 3 de agosto, por el que se regula la condición de asegurado y de beneficiario a efectos de la asistencia sanitaria en España, con cargo a fondos públicos, a través del Sistema Nacional de Salud.
Royal Decree 1192/2012, 3rd August, through which it is regulated the insured and beneficiary conditions regarding health assistance in Spain, charged to public budget through the National Health System.
3. Real Decreto 576/2013, de 26 de julio, por el que se establecen los requisitos básicos del convenio especial de prestación de asistencia sanitaria a personas que no tengan la condición de aseguradas ni de beneficiarias del Sistema Nacional de Salud y se modifica el Real Decreto 1192/2012, de 3 de agosto, por el que se regula la condición de asegurado y de beneficiario a efectos de la asistencia sanitaria en España, con cargo a fondos públicos, a través del Sistema Nacional de Salud.
Royal Decree 576/2013, 26th July, through which it is stated the basic requirements of the special agreement for health assistance delivery to people without insured or beneficiary condition in the National Health System, and it is modified the Royal Decree 1192/2012.
4. Ley 22/2013, de 23 de diciembre, de Presupuestos Generales del Estado para el año 2014. Modificación Siete. Se incorpora una nueva disposición adicional, la sexagésima quinta, al Texto Refundido de la Ley General de la Seguridad Social, con la siguiente redacción: “Disposición adicional sexagésima quinta. Pérdida de residencia a efectos de prestaciones de la Seguridad Social, incluidos los complementos a mínimos.”
Law 22/2013, 23th December, of the Spanish Budget Act for 2014. Modification number 7. A new additional disposition is incorporated, the 65, to the Social Security General Law with the

¹⁴ Source website World Health Organization
http://www.who.int/whr/2000/media_centre/press_release/en/

following words: “Lost of residence regarding Social Security benefits, including complements to minimums.

The first and second modifications are the cornerstone of the whole process of reform of the sector. The most important change brought by them is that Spanish health assistance is given by the public system to those insured under the Social Security, and not given universally as until the reform. The groups entitle to health are: workers member of social security system and their beneficiaries, pensioners, benefit recipients and job seekers into the official employment office.

However there are some exceptions. The following groups can receive public health assistance: 1.foreigners due to an emergency situation either due to an illness or to an accident; 2. pregnant women; 3. foreigners under 18 years old; 4. seekers of international protection as refugees and asylum seekers; 5.victims of human trafficking in a reincorporation to society situation. In addition it affects administratively to other groups as youth over 25 who have not contributed to the Spanish Social Security System, changing their status to “no income” group.

Also those laws divide the assistance into 3 types: common basic services list, common supplementary services list and common accessory services list. The services of the first list are paid by taxes while the second and third lists are both paid by taxes and by a direct payment when using the service, what it is called “copayment”, introducing a new regressive taxation element into the system.

In addition the third law describes the requirements for those who want to apply for the common basic services list (for those excluded from the assistance), in the way they can obtain the assistance by paying 60€/month for under 65 years old people and 157€/month for those over 65.

Finally, the last legislative modification excludes from the public health assistance those unemployed (Spanish nationals and foreigners) not entitled to benefits that have been abroad longer than 90 days.

Consequences

This reform has impacted in different groups in several ways. The most damaged group have been the irregular immigrants, who have automatically lost their right to health coverage after the implementation of the law along with unemployed people, who find

administrative barriers and problems. Along with that, the economic requirement is the greatest problem. The state creates an economic barrier that damages the lower income groups.

Following the report of “Doctors of the World” about “the impact of the health reform on the right to health”¹⁵, around 873.000 foreigners lost health assistance because their lack of residence permit, reaching up to 20% of the resident immigration in Spain. Within this wide group, there are people who have lived in the country for years, but due to unemployment have lost their resident permit. The main problems that they have to deal with are the impossibility to access to medical staff due to lack of information or administrative barriers; difficulties to access to medicines due to the 100% payment, and to fill a mandatory payment form for the medical assistance what dissuades people about going to medical centres.

Also the NGO complains about the implementation of the law due to the worsening of medical assistance to patients that were previously under treatment along with the practical exclusion of groups and people that theoretically are included in the law. Another anomaly is the dissymmetry between regions (Comunidades Autónomas): 10 out of 17 have established programs to give health assistance to irregular immigrants without income while 8 have set up programs to assist people non protected by the Real Decreto-ley 16/2012.

Regarding a report of the Health and Family Association¹⁶, this is the list of groups susceptible to see their Right to health set back between the Spanish citizens:

People over 26 never include in the Social Security System as workers: university students, youngsters who did not get a first job, disabled people with a degree of disability lower than 65%, people from gypsy ethnic group, workers of the informal sector, independent divorced housewife, separated housewife coming from unmarried partner, religious and self-employed and liberal professionals.

¹⁵ “El impacto de la reforma sanitaria sobre el Derecho a la Salud” Médicos del Mundo, Septiembre 2013. Webpage: <http://www.medicosdelmundo.org/derechoacurar/mapa-semaforo/>

¹⁶ “Impacto de la reforma de la asistencia sanitaria en España sobre la cobertura pública y universal”. Asociación Salud y Familia. Barcelona. 3rd may 2012

As we can see various groups could suffer a process of social exclusion through their exclusion from the public health system, especially immigrants already integrated into the Spanish society.

4.1.2 Housing. From abundance to “scarcity”

Housing and real state sector have been one of the pillars for the economic growth that the country had during the early years of the decade 2000s. Huge number of new builds appeared as long as price increased. A process of gentrification of city centres of main cities made difficult the access to a house for great parts of population, and those who decide to buy a house got engaged in 30-years mortgages.

The Spanish Constitution of 1978 in its article 47 states:

“All Spaniards are entitled to enjoy decent and adequate housing. The public authorities shall promote the necessary conditions and shall establish appropriate standards in order to make this right effective, regulating land use in accordance with the general interest in order to prevent speculation. The community shall participate in the benefits accruing from the urban policies of the public bodies¹⁷”.

However neither during the economic boost nor in the crisis scenario this right has been properly promoted; impacting on peoples’ standards of living, leading those to social exclusion or precarity. What happened in Spain with housing sector and its paradox is going to be explained through 3 charts in order to understand the current situation.

Causes

Mainly those are the variable that shed lights in nowadays housing dynamics in Spain: prices, number of constructions and mortgages. We are going to check the evolution of those during the last years.

As it can be seen in the chart number 1, the price of housing rose more than twice in less than 6 years, between 2000 and 2006.

¹⁷ Source: webpage Spanish Congress. Spanish Constitution in English
www.congreso.es%2Fconstitucion%2Fficheros%2Fc78%2Fcons_ingl.pdf&ei=z-XDU8PvFoXL0AX7i4DYBg&usg=AFQjCNE5bK8wRXLWO9TCIJut0S7QFOh_qA&bvm=bv.70810081.d.d2k



Chart 1. Housing Price in Spain¹⁸

The early years of the decade 2000s saw a fast increase on the prices in the whole country. While at the same time the number of housing built each year during the same period was rising too, reaching millions as the chart 2 and chart 3 shows.



Chart 2. Data about housing from 1985 to 2013¹⁹

Again the trend is clear, between 2007 and 2008 the real estate and construction sector collapse, in terms of decrease of “housing in project” (orange) and “started housing” (green).

¹⁸ Source: internet blog <http://cdn3.gurusblog.com/jordi/wp/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Espa%C3%B1a-precio-vivenda.png>

¹⁹ Source: internet blog estrategiastendencias.blogspot.com

Housing to build											
Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Number	403.789	471.455	544.578	604.345	737.186	634.098	268.435	130.546	91.645	76.005	57.543

Chart 3. Housing to build in Spain 2002-2012. Source: INE

The housing to construct reflects a 969 % decrease in the period between 2006 and 2011. Also around 6,6 million housing were built between 1997 and 2007, the same amount that were built in France, Italy and Germany together during the same period²⁰.

During the phase both facts created a perverse trend, an increase in the number of mortgages that can be seen in the chart 4, especially higher after 2004 when prices were mounting much faster than salaries.



Chart 4. Number of Spanish Mortgages. Source: bolsa.com

Due to the facility for liquidity the number of mortgages rose until the crisis started, being the whole process based on the connection between real estate sector, financial sector and the political level in connivance, and so often involved into corruption cases.

As we can see in the report “Housing emergency in the Spanish state”, traditionally those sectors have encourage private property, what explains that solely 17% of housing in the country is through rents, also due to the lack of alternatives for housing. Even the public housing has as destination the private property as it shows that a 2% of the total housing is for social rents. Public support is mainly canalized through subsidized loans,

²⁰ “Housing emergency in the Spanish state” Observatorio Desc y PAH (Affected by Mortgage Platform). 2013

rental assistance programs (up to 2,400 €/year and up to a year)²¹ and to foment public housing. On the other hand, the private rental market reaches the 15% of total housing what makes it insufficient; whereas private owners possess around 13,7% emptied housing.

These facts are the ones currently creating a social emergency within the society.

Consequences

During prosperity time, along with the difficulties to access to a house due to the elevated prices hitting mainly youth and immigrants, there was another phenomenon, what in Spanish is called “Piso Patera²²”, an overcrowded flat where people live in dilapidated conditions, mainly immigrants that could not afford the high rents of the pre-crisis moment. It can be imagined the living conditions of the participants of these kind of accommodation.

While currently, the main social impact of the whole process was the indebtedness and the over indebtedness of several strata of the society, especially those with lower incomes. Some of them tied to mortgages with dubious legal conditions.

These facts along with the high unemployment level have led to a challenging social situation: foreclosure procedures and evictions due to the payment inability of thousands of tenants. According to the report of the PAH, 415.117 foreclosure procedures started between 2008 and 2012 while the number of evictions reached up to 244.278. By financial institution, Bankia is the first bank in foreclosure procedures and eviction, reaching up to 20% of the total.

The INE, the Spanish National Statistics Institute started in 2014 to analyze the statistical operation “foreclosure procedure”, what suggest that from the point of view of the official institutions this fact is likely to be permanent during the next years. It can be found in their results that for the first quarter of 2014 there was an increase of 19,5

²¹ Source: webpage of Ministry of Foment
http://www.fomento.gob.es/MFOM/LANG_CASTELLANO/DIRECCIONES_GENERALES/ARQ_VIV_IENDA/APOYO_EMANCIPACION/PRGM2.htm

²² Patera is the denomination for the ships or boats in which the African immigrants cross the Strait of Gibraltar, the natural border between Europe and Africa.

on foreclosure procedure comparing to the same quarter of 2013²³, reaching 32.565 housing. Also there was a 10,4 % increase regarding the last quarter of 2013.

Concerning property type, 78,1% of housing under a foreclosure procedure were main residence, even this represents a 4,2 less than during the same quarter of 2013.

People under this process and evicted suffer a triple burden: firstly, their personal and psychological conditions are strongly damaged due to the process itself, being accounted several suicides directly related to evictions; secondly, the former tenants has to carry with the debt even once evicted, due to the lessening of the value of the property, much lower than when he or she got the mortgage. Finally and because of his or her indebtedness, they also carry with the social and administrative stigma of being a defaulting debtor what implies problems when hiring services from private companies, etc.

4.1.3 Education. Reducing a reduced social mobility.

The starting point of the Spanish education system it is rooted in inequality comparing to the most if its counterparts in Europe. Private and semi-private schooling form a great part of the education in terms of students as a product of the historical path of the country and the influence of the Catholic Church through its diverse groups.

Along with inequality, policies are implemented by regions what creates differences too. In that way and due to other structural problems, Spanish students score under the average in the PISA report (Program for International Student Assessment) of the OECD. The system has a high level of school failure, 24,9% of the total population, contrasting with 40,6% of population graduated in tertiary education²⁴.

In the next paragraphs it will be explained how the system exclude students from their vocational and professional choices.

²³ Source: INE. Main results

<http://www.ine.es/jaxi/menu.do?type=pcaxis&path=%2Ft30/p153&file=inebase&L=0>

²⁴ Source: webpage Ministry of education, culture and sport (MECD). Statistics 2013-2014
www.mecd.gob.es/prensa-mecd/actualidad/2013/09/20130916-datos-cifras.html

Causes

One of the main mechanism through which the system shows its nature of exclusion is the increasing of **public prices** for attending to education.

The Comunidad de Madrid (Madrid Region) is one of the paradigmatic examples as it can be seen in chart 5 in which it is shown the prices on 2009/2010 and on 2013/2014 for both bachelor and master degrees for the different degree category²⁵:

Year/ degree type	2009-2010	2013-2014	% of increase for the period
Bachelor degree			
Cheapest	10,61€/C	27€/C	254%
The most expensive	16,57€/C	33€/C	199%
Master degree			
Professional			
Cheapest	24,62€/C	35€/C	142%
The most expensive	31,32€/C	46€/C	146%
Non-Professional	X	65€/C	

Chart 5. Public university prices. Source: Self-elaboration from MECD (Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport)

In the academic year 2009/2010 the price of an average academic year with 60 credits reached up to 636,6€ for the cheapest degrees, while to study a similar degree 5 years later cost 1620€.

In the case of the master degrees, due to changes in law within the Bologna process and the convergence with the EHEA, those were divided into “professional” (required in order to work in some specific fields as lawyer, teacher, etc) and non-professional (the rest). Consequently, a one-year master degree in 2009/2010 cost 1477€, while a similar master 5 years later reached up to 3900€. In both bachelor and master degrees, the prices for enrolment in case of re-examination can increase up to 100% per credit.

However it has to be said that in the rest of Spain the increases have been in lower degree than in Madrid Region, even there area high differences between regions.

The increases on prices has been also patent in vocational education and training, almost totally subsidized few years ago costing around 1€ in concept of schooling insurance,

²⁵ Depending on the level of “experimentally” of a degree, there are different prices: the cheapest degrees are in social sciences while the most expensive in natural sciences.

growing the prices up to 580€ for the two years courses for the academic year 2014/2015.

Another mechanism that impacts in equal opportunities is the decrease on **scholarship distribution** and amount. As it can be seen in chart 6:

		2009-2010	2012-2013	2013-2014
General ²⁶ Scholarship	Number of students (university)	236.243	296.783	322.000
Collaboration ²⁷ Scholarship		3.035	3.302	2.356 ²⁸
General Scholarship	Amount in Euros	686.882.966	952.950.000,59€	994.720.000€
Collaboration Scholarship		8.923.500	8.915.400	?

Chart 6. State scholarships by number of student and amount in Euros. Source: self-elaboration from MECD webpage

In absolute numbers both the number of students with scholarship and the budget increased during the period for the “general scholarship”. However those grew in different proportions: while the budget rose 4% from 2012-13 to 2013/14, the number of students increased 11%, therefore there was a decrease of the amount of money received by each student. Around 80% of students seen their scholarship decrease between 14% and 18%²⁹ during the last year. While regarding “collaboration scholarship”, the newest data shows a decrease of students in absolute numbers.

²⁶ Paid money in concept of transport, materials, etc.

²⁷ Scholarship-salary as payment for the collaboration with a professor in his/her researches

²⁸ Academic YEAR 2014-215

²⁹ <http://www.dudasbecasmec.com/2014/04/razones-por-las-que-han-bajado-las.html>

In chart 7 it can be seen the variation in the investment on scholarship done by the government in the last decade:

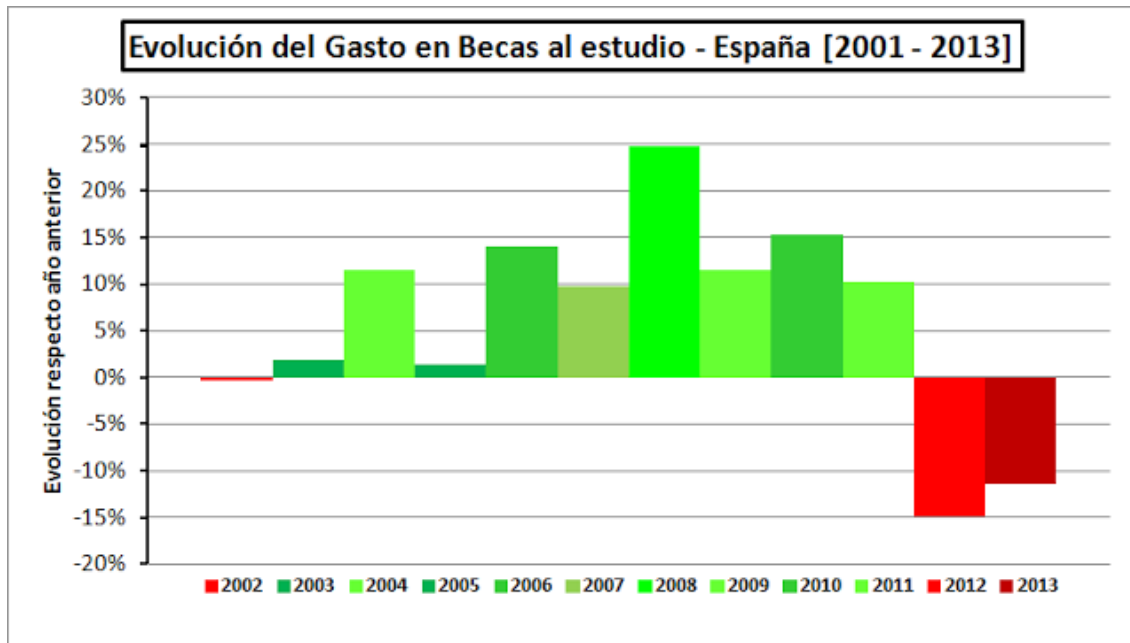


Chart 7. Evolution of expenses on scholarships by the state 2001-2013. Source: [webpage dudasbecasmec.com](http://webpage.dudasbecasmec.com)

The trend of growth for scholarship has changed during the last 2 academic courses, even though for the academic year 2013/2014 there is no summarized information by the Minister since the process of assignation has suffered a delay of several months, with students getting their allowance at the end of the academic year. A 15% decrease in 2012 and 12% for the budgetary year 2013 shows the possible trend for the next years.

The increasing number of students, as a product of the economic crisis, has been contained through stricter academic requirements: a higher number of courses have to be passed in order to do not return the money and also a higher grade has to be obtained in previous courses to get a grant in the following one.

Adding to that the amount of money designed to the Erasmus students have decreased in the last years, along with the disappearance of the “Seneca scholarship”, an internal Erasmus for interuniversity exchanges.

Concerning vocational and training education the trend follows an increase in both the total budget, and the amount of money received per student³⁰. However, the budget is half the assigned for university education counting with a similar number of students.

Consequences

In general three trends intervene in education limiting its social inclusion nature: firstly the decrease of budgets (as well as for other services) impacting in every user of the service, generally is lessening the quality, especially the part of the budget to 100% public education institutions, whereas the semi-private and private are receiving higher transfer. In the country the decrease of budget especially hits primary and secondary education within the framework of the privatization of public services.

Secondly, the increase of prices, what is a strongly regressive taxation policy, charging every possible user in a similar basis (except in Catalonia region where the university fees are related to family income).

Thirdly, a system of scholarship that even increasing the budget has to satisfied the demand of more students benefited with scholarship what it is translate into a lower allowance per student. Assuming that due to the impact of the government policies and the economic crisis into the society, a strong scholarship system is currently more necessary than ever if the principles of social redistribution of wealth and equal opportunities want to be maintained.

Despite the facts, the net rate of university enrolment (people from 18 to 24) followed an increasing trend reaching up to 28,6% in 2012/13 in opposition to the 23,8% in 2008/09, what induces to think that education is working as a refuge from the labour market scenario. Although the enrolment in master degrees fell 8% for the year 2012/13, probably due to fees³¹.

Due to more recent statics are not available and the lapse of time between the changes and its possible impact is still short; from a researcher point of view it will be interesting to follow the impact of the latest increases on prices to observe how this

³⁰ www.dudasbecasmec.com%2F2014%2F04%2Fflas-cuatro-razones-del-ministerio-para.html

³¹ Source: El Pais webpage:
http://sociedad.elpais.com/sociedad/2013/03/09/actualidad/1362857369_438513.html

affects to enrolments and university abandonment in the long-term, generating new excluded people.

4.2 Spanish labour market and conditions. Material and immaterial aspects

Change, evolution (or involution) is what Spanish labour world is suffering. It is difficult to draw a time framework due to there have been major modifications since the beginning of the representative democracy period in the late Seventies in order to “deregulate” the labour market. What it is clear is the deepening of the changes in the last decade; especially last years encouraging a change of model in which labour is not stable and for the whole life and workers are less and less protected. Along with that, the general change embedded in the emergence of the knowledge society, and the tertiarization of the economy is gradually implanting Postfordism as the hegemonic production model, bringing changes on work conception and conditions. These two trends will be examined in this order in the next sub-sections, ending up tackling interns as the example of the convergence of both dynamics, creating one of the demographic foundations for precarity.

4.2.1 Labour market and workers conditions: universalization of precarity

The Spanish labour market shows certain particular features that are shared by other southern European countries too. These particularities can have a great influence in the formation of the precariat as a group within the society.

The main figures about the labour market indicate a 59,46% of active population during the first quarter of 2014³² with an unemployment rate for May 2014 of 25,1% for Spain Vs. 10,1% for the European Union 28 members (EU), while the youth unemployment rate reached the 54% for Spain and 22,2% for the EU³³. A high unemployment rate was reached in 1984 and the mid 1990s too, exceeding in both periods the 20%; therefore it is not an exceptional situation for the Spanish labour market.

³² Source: INE http://www.ine.es/inebaseDYN/epa30308/epa_resultados_4.htm

³³ Source: Eurostat <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/euroindicators/peeis>

Moreover, the registration to the social security system has decreased to the levels of 2003³⁴, and temporality as percentage of total workers shows a 23,2% for Spain, almost twice the level for the EU 13,8%³⁵, even though far from the 34% achieved in 2006 and surpassed in 1994. In the month of June 2014, the most recent figures show that the 92,74% of all signed contracts have been temporary contracts³⁶.

Regarding part time job, this represents 2.746.100 (around the 16% of the total employed people) for the 1st quarter of 2014. In chart 8 it can be found the reasons for working in a part time job.

Cause	Number of people	Percentage %
To attend to education or formation	137.000	4,98
Illness or disability	29.600	1,07
Child, illness adults, disable people or elders care	260.500	9,48
Other family or personal responsibilities	131.500	4,78
Impossibility to find a full time job	1.713.000	62,38
Do not want to work in a full time position	176.100	6,41
Other reasons	293.200	10,67
Total	2.746.000	100

Chart 8. Part-time employed people by reason to work in part-time job for the 1st quarter of 2014. Source: INE

As it can be seen, the first cause is the “inability to find a full time position”, along with “other reasons”, and the “care of children, ill people and elders”. Only the 6,41% of part time workers directly wish such condition.

Besides the hours worked per week for full-time employees are in the average of the EU with 41,8 hours/week in 2008³⁷. According to the VII National Survey about Labour Conditions the total workforce working longer than 40hours/week represents 21.6% of workers while 19,7% of them need more than 30 minutes for commuting. However close to 80,9% of workers prefers their current schedule, with an only 2,8% that would reduce it³⁸.

³⁴ Source: Social Security. Ministry of employment and social security (MEYSS). Government of Spain http://www.seg-social.es/Internet_1/Estadistica/Est/AfiliacionAltaTrabajadores/AfiliacionesAltaLaboral/index.htm

³⁵ Source: Eurostat <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do?dvsc=9>

³⁶ Source: MEYSS <http://prensa.empleo.gob.es/WebPrensa/noticias/laboral/detalle/2250>

³⁷ Source: Eurostat <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/graph.do?tab=graph&plugin=1&pcode=tps00071&language=en&toolbox=sort>

³⁸ Source INE: EPA 1st Quarter 2014

Analyzing other variables it can be found another controversial issues for Spanish workers, 40,1% of workers work overtime both paid (in money or holiday) and not paid. This fact impacts especially in high skilled professions but it is present in other occupations too. Related to that, 22,6% of workers consider that they have problems in their work-life balance due to the unpredictability of the working day that affects personal and social time.

Furthermore, when talking about health issues, the most of the workers complains about some kind of pain related to work (77,5%), stating the 86,4% of them that their health problem has getting worst or has been produced by work. The main problems are related to tiredness and exhaustion (87,3%), muscle-bone problems (87%) and stress, anxiety and nervousness (82.1%). All of them are strongly related to the mental health and state of workers.

Furthermore, beyond the physical aspects, when analyzing more subjective and intangible features of work, we can find the following results: a cleavage between manual and high skilled workers in terms of monotony and autonomy. Monotony in terms of repetitive movements and tasks hits 59% of workers, especially drivers and factory workers whereas the level of autonomy can be seen in chart 9:

	Mining and construction	Drivers	Health care workers	Teachers and professors	Hospitality and cleaning	Retail	Agriculture	Defence and security	Factory workers	Traditional industry	Liberal professionals	Technician	Managers	TOTAL
Can chose or modify														
Order of tasks	30,9	46,8	34,7	19	31,4	30,4	40,5	33,9	58,4	40,7	12,1	22,6	6,5	29,6
Labour method	31,6	51,3	40,6	18,8	37	37,8	40,3	42,3	61,5	45,6	17,6	31	13,2	34,9
Labour intensity	31,2	43,6	44,3	23,9	36,8	34,2	34,7	34,8	55,9	39,6	19,8	29,2	16,6	33,8
Breaks distribution	35,6	37,2	39,3	48,4	41,3	35,4	41,1	36,5	60,1	42,9	18,3	23	13,5	36,1
Use of own ideas	18,9	31,9	15,4	5	29,4	24	31,1	23,3	36,9	29	3,3	15	5,7	21,4

Chart 9. Lack of autonomy by occupation. Source: "Exposure to risks in labour. Main results of the VII National Survey about Labour Conditions (VII ENCT)". Ministry of Employment and Social Security

While when talking about different aspects within autonomy (order of tasks, method, intensity and breaks distribution), solely a low number of high skilled workers feels a lack of power decision in comparison to the rest of workers, with the exception of teachers and professors. For the variable "use of own ideas" we find similar patterns. It can be said that the highest skilled workers enjoy in a greater extent of the re-

appropriation of work that our authors argue when transiting to a postfordist society. Nevertheless the data refute in part their ideas considering the high level of positive acceptance of jobs.

The 23,9% of workers feel overwhelmed or with too much work, being the levels quite similar between professions, feeling slightly more stressed the high skilled workers. Also, only a 6,1% feels that “is not doing a useful activity”, while around 85,9% thinks that they can “develop their best abilities and skills” at the workplace, as well as the 83.6% can “learn new things”. Meaning that despite of the difficulties and problems originated in jobs, the most of the workers find rewarding their occupations.

Additionally, another specific feature of the Spanish labour market and economy is the great level of shadow economy and informal labour. In relative numbers the Spanish shadow economy is very similar to the European mean, 19,2% of the PIB is produced by the informal and illegal economy in 2012 while 18,4% for EU-27³⁹, due to the European mean has increased during the last years with the adhesion of new members states from Eastern Europe. However the date about informal employment is considered as non realistic, reaching 5% of total employment for the EU-27, being Denmark the 1st country with more informal unemployment, 18% of the total workforce. This fact can not give us an accurate image of the daily life reality of the Spanish economy. Also dualism is patent, as destruction of temporary employment corroborates, increasing due to the last legislative reforms.

The current dynamics within the Spanish labour market can not be understood without analyzing the legislative modification taken in 2012. Theoretically the “Reform” is implemented as a political reaction to the economic crisis, with the goal of reducing the level of unemployment through a lessening of working conditions, that is, to avoid unemployment making the working conditions “more attractive” for employers. However by the moment, 2 years later, the unemployment rate is still one of the highest in Europe. What has changed, to rise, is the level of precarity.

The Royal Decree Law 3/2012, BOE 11/02/2012 about Urgent Measures for the Reform of the Labour Market⁴⁰ represents the institutionalization of precarity in Spain, even the

³⁹ Source: EL País

http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2013/07/07/actualidad/1373229721_067495.html

⁴⁰ Source BOE: <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2012/02/11/pdfs/BOE-A-2012-2076.pdf>

law affirms that the goal is to end up with the structural problems of the labour market as its dualism. Those are the main modifications of the Law:

- Contracts: 4 new contracts were added to the already existing reaching 44 types of contract: 17 permanents, 18 temporaries, 4 types about formation and 5 in internships⁴¹. The new 4 contracts are: “for entrepreneurs”, “part-time contract”, “telecommuters contract” and “formative or learning contract”. All of them have specific requirements for hiring depending on the contract: to unemployed people, under 30 years old and over 45, the duration of the contract and tax credits (social security discount for companies). Also the Law states tax credits for companies who transform temporary workers into permanent ones.

The most relevant effect for precarity is related to the “entrepreneurs contract”, that allows the free dismissal during the first year, fact corroborate by the Constitutional Court of Spain the 15th of July 2014 as legal.

- Labour conditions: the article 41 of the Law establishes that the managers of a company can change labour conditions in terms of working days, working hours, schedule, salaries or performance system; if there is economic, technical, organization or production causes for that.

- Termination of contract: elimination of the “previous authorization of the administration” for collective dismissal; objectivation of dismissal causes and the reduction of dismissal costs. The objectivation means that the procedure of dismissal is correct if during 3 consecutive months the incomes or sales of the company decrease; while the reduction of the dismissal cost is made through 2 mechanism: the first is the cancelation of the “salary processing”, that is, the companies’ payment of a salary until the trial takes place when the dismissal was unfair, leaving few exceptions: void dismissal, readmission and worker representatives dismissal. The second mechanism is the reduction of severance payment for the unlawful dismissal: from the previous 45 days of salary per year worked up to 42 monthly payments to 33 days of salary up to 24 months since the Law implementation.

- Collective agreements: priority of the company collective agreement against national, regional or sectorial agreements regarding some basic labour conditions.

⁴¹ Source: State Spanish Public Service
http://www.sepe.es/contenido/empleo_formacion/empresas/contratos_trabajo/indice_contratos.html

The consequences of the new legislation could be expected. Workers could see modified arbitrarily their labour conditions due to the definition of the law is lax enough to allow a wide variety of scenarios, that are confusing. Along with that, dismissed workers will receive much less money than previously, making cheaper the dismissal for the company and making the permanent workers closer to the temporary ones, who have already a lower severance payment. Adding to that, the number of collective dismissals has increased due to the lack of the administrative authorization procedure. Finally, collective agreements are subordinated to the companies one, fragmenting workers, what can induce to a worsened of conditions due to a weaker bargaining capacity.

According to the report of February 2014 carried out by one of the main trade unions in Spain (UGT)⁴² about the impact after two years of the reform, it can be found that: the registration to the social security system fell 5,9%; unemployment rose 11,8%; there is a 6% less permanent workers; an increase on involuntary part-time work around 27% and the coverage of collective bargaining is descending in 2013 with a 52,73% of workers without a new collective agreement, ruled by the old one.

Another important impact is in chart 10, showing the ratio between temporary and permanent contracts:

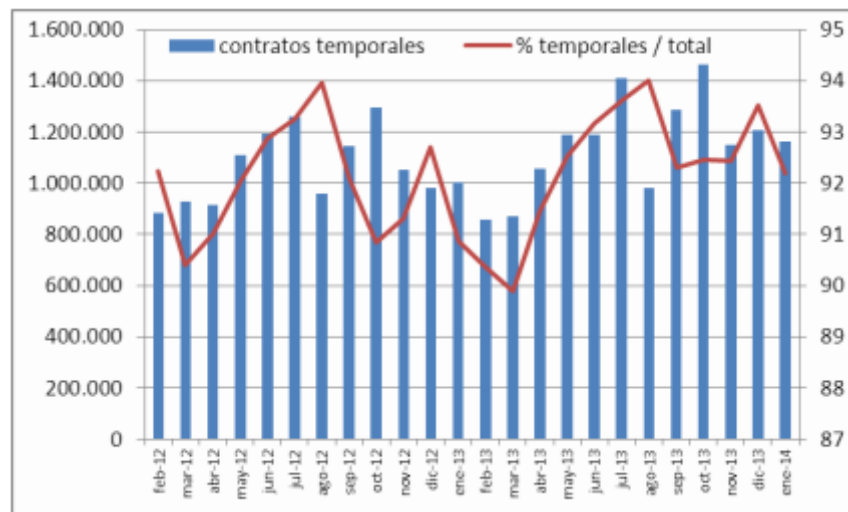


Chart 10. Number of temporary contracts Source: UGT report “2 years of labour reform: evolution of employment, contracting, dismissal and collective bargaining” feb.2014

⁴²Source: UGT (Unión General de Trabajadores) Secretaría de acción sindical-Coordinación área externa-gabinete técnico confederal. “Dos años de reforma laboral: evolución del empleo, la contratación, los despidos y la negociación colectiva”. Febrero 2014

Since the implementation of the law, every month more than 91% of the total contracts have been temporary contracts, without any change in the trend. Also salaries have fallen too, as it can be seen in chart 11:

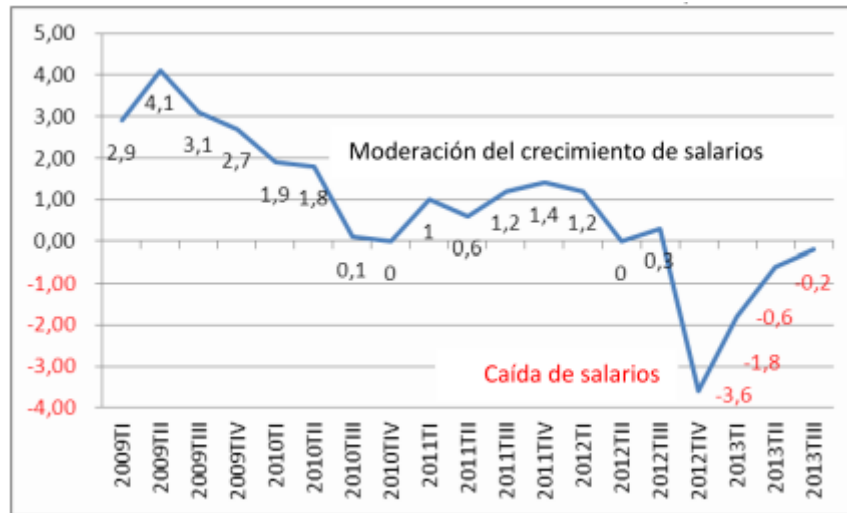


Chart 11. Annual variation rate of wage costs. Source: UGT report “2 years of labour reform: evolution of employment, contracting, dismissal and collective bargaining” feb.2014

In terms of real salary, there has been a decrease since 2012; even the trend shows that it is likely a growth of those for next quarters.

Summing up, the labour market reform can be understood within a process of “internal devaluation” for encouraging competitiveness, as the official speech says. However the social impact of the reform is remarkable: subsumes into temporality the majority of workers, worsening labour conditions and pushing downward salaries.

Adding to that, there are around 4 million of unemployed people without unemployment benefits, reaching the rate of unemployment benefits coverage 32,5% over the total of unemployed. People lose their unemployment benefits because those have expired or the requirements became more restricted to them, even though an indeterminate number receive some kind of social benefits from municipalities or regions⁴³. Between the unemployed without benefits, 1.418.199 is young people. Also a restricted number of unemployed people can access to a set social subsidies with duration from 6 to 24 months through which they receive a subsistence income of 426€/month⁴⁴.

⁴³ Source: UGT (Unión General de Trabajadores) Secretaría de acción sindical-Coordinación área externa-gabinete técnico confederal. “Dos años de reforma laboral: evolución del empleo, la contratación, los despidos y la negociación colectiva”. Febrero 2014

⁴⁴ Source: SEPE. Benefits http://www.sepe.es/contenido/prestaciones/tablas_datos.html

As it can be seen, the proposed “flexicurity” of the government lacks on security and exceeds on flexibility based on the evidences. Labour conditions turn very difficult for the most of workers while social protection covers a minority and in a survival basis

4.2.2 Postfordism. The proof of the accession of the new model

In this section we will focus on other intangible effects of work and the current organization of labour in workers, always with the goal to know how these facts can lead to the precarity phenomenon. This will be done studying one of the paradigmatic examples of how postfordist ideas were implemented in Spain through the headquarters of three of the biggest Spanish multinational companies: Banco Santander, Telefónica and Repsol, inspired by the Redmond Campus of Microsoft Corporation.

The Santander and Telefónica complexes were build during the prosperous years of the economic cycle based on the real estate sector and the construction in the decade of the 2000s, both in the periphery of Madrid and both connected to the city by public transport facilities built for the occasion.

The “Grupo Santander City” working since 2004 gathers 6.800 workers in 250 hectares where it can be found: a formation centre for 600 pupils, accommodations, a kindergarten for 500 children, shops, restaurants and sport facilities joined by internal bus lines⁴⁵. In the case of the “District C (Communication)” of Telefónica, 12.000 employees work in the buildings since 2006, having similar facilities to the ones of Santander “city”: formation centre, restaurants, health centre and policlinic centre, commercial area with travel and insurance agencies, hairdresser, dry cleaner, optician shop, pharmacy, bank offices, gym, kindergarten and an own bus and metro station inside the complex⁴⁶. While the “Repsol Campus” was built in Madrid inner part during

⁴⁵ Source: Santander web page “Ciudad Grupo Santander: La idea y filosofía del proyecto”

“http://www.santander.com/cs/gs/Satellite?pagename=CFWCSancomQP01%2FGSInformacion%2FCFQP01_GSInformacionDetalleMultimedia_PT12&seccion=1&cidSel=1278681548295&appID=santander.wc.CFWCSancomQP01&canal=CSCORP&empr=CFWCSancomQP01&leng=es_ES&cid=1278677205746

⁴⁶ Telefónica: Distrito C en datos, Dossier de prensa.

http://www.google.es/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCIQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fsaladeprensa.telefonica.es%2Fdocumentos%2FDC_Magnitudes.pdf&ei=E5O5U-7ZHsr80QX5qoGABA&usg=AFQjCNGLS2smjU3oRqVuCA9-HitJrWhFMQ&bvm=bv.70138588.d.d2k

the crisis context, for 4.000 and more modest facilities: restaurants, auditorium and meeting rooms⁴⁷.

The leitmotiv of all of them is connectivity and flexibility between employees. For Repsol, along with innovation in construction and energy efficiency, the high technology devices and facilities are the cornerstones of these structures, being these the ones that allow interrelation, collaboration and “a place where ideas flow and there is a constant dialogue between different parts of the company, as a product of the absence of divisions and offices”⁴⁸. While what Telefónica was looking for with District C was “to foment the new labour philosophy of the corporation which main axis are to increase the proximity between managers and collaborators, to impulse work-team, fomenting tasks by functions and goals and finally, to facilitate the exchange of ideas, knowledge and experience”⁴⁹. The network reigns in the organization of labour and companies, giving great importance to the dynamics generated between workers, looking for the “multitude”, encouraging the “general intellect” through the addition of individual skills and abilities in order to obtain better performance. Each node in coordination with the rest of nodes goes beyond its own tasks to a scenario in which the source of wealth and productivity is the own relation between workers.

Other essential aspect in the construction of these infrastructures is the work-life balance, in that way the Grupo Santander City is “a city designed with employees in mind: the City provides workers with significant benefits, both for their professional activities and for dealing with aspects of their daily personal lives”⁵⁰. However during the first years of existence of the new headquarters, solely one third of the workers improved their situation with the change of location and facilities⁵¹. The feeling of being in a cage is common between many workers, as well as a lack of capacity to manage the own time, as it can be seen in the words of a Telefónica employee: “Before

⁴⁷ Source: Repsol webpage “Conocer Repsol”

http://www.repsol.com/es_es/corporacion/conocer-repsol/campus-repsol/default.aspx?a=que-es-campus-repsol

⁴⁸ Source: Repsol webpage “Conocer Repsol”. Others ways of working

http://www.repsol.com/es_es/corporacion/conocer-repsol/campus-repsol/default.aspx?a=otra-manera-de-trabajar

⁴⁹ Castillo, A. Telefónica Information System. “Information systems and its impact in the companies’ competitiveness. The case Telefónica in the District C.

⁵⁰ Source: Santander web page. “Corporate headquarters. Thought for the employees”

http://www.santander.com/csgs/Satellite/CFWCSancomQP01/es_ES/Santander-/Acerca-del-grupo/Pensada-para-los-empleados.html

⁵¹ Source: El País “Living in the city-company”

http://elpais.com/diario/2007/04/01/economia/1175378404_850215.html

[in the old location] at lunch time I could go for a walk or to buy a CD; now I directly go to the office because I do not have anything better to do”⁵². There is to certain extent an appropriateness of the personal life of the worker by the company since a great part of activities of what it is supposed to be his/her leisure time is embedded in the workplace, being leisure commodified in profit-making activities for the company, or even the leisure time is changed to work time.

In the short term, the headquarters look for increasing economies of scale and efficiency of the companies along with obtaining profits when selling the offices in the city centre. However the long term strategy is related to the increase of productivity of workers through the control and invasion of life of workers, controlling not solely the working time but the leisure time, invading a personal sphere both for obtaining surplus and profits. What we can assume is that this impacts on workers well being in a negative way at least in terms of time managing and independency.

Nonetheless, in the labour sphere the figure embodying precarity for white collar positions is the intern, trainee or apprentice. The following section analyzed them and their conditions.

4.2.3 A paradigmatic example of confluence of both processes: Interns

Interns can be considered as the convergence of both processes, different in nature, but contemporary. On the one hand their labour conditions are one of the worst between all kinds of workers. On the other hand, they develop their activity in the tertiary sector, in positions that require high qualifications. In that way they are one of the groups that suffer one of the strongest lacks of expectations. They suffer the negative effects of both dynamics.

To begin with, some data have to be provided to understand the scope of the fact. The number of institutional studies about the phenomenon is very limited, therefore the information available too, however according to the report of the Spanish Youth Council “Quality, youth employment, interns and internships”⁵³, around 8,1% of

⁵² Source: El País “Living in the city-company”

http://elpais.com/diario/2007/04/01/economia/1175378404_850215.html

⁵³ Source: Webpage <http://www.cje.org/es/publicaciones/>

Spanish youth (under 30) is working as intern or in a formation period, even though this estimation can be far from the reality, due to more and more companies and public institutions use this type of “contracting”.

Starting from the beginning, the intern is not a worker since his legal status is defined by an agreement between a company or public administration and an education institution (educative cooperation agreement in the legalese), being a requirement to be enrolled in an education program. They do not enjoy of collective agreements and the Workers Regulation (Estatuto de los Trabajadores). The legislative limits are blurred what encourages that internships hide a labour relation but not legally recognize, where precarization underlies.

A number of explanations for the intern phenomenon can be found in labour market aspects. Quantitative information shows us the weak bargain position that those have. Along with the youth unemployment rate already reported in other sections of this paper, reaching more than half of the youth population, in chart 12 it can be seen the composition of youth unemployment through the percentage of unemployed people by education level:

Education level/year/number of students (thousands)	From 16 to 19	From 20 to 24	From 25 to 29
Illiterate	0	0,2	3,2
Incomplete primary education	0,3	10,1	8,7
Primary education	21,4	68,7	65,4
First stage of secondary education	111,9	298,3	270,7
Second stage of secondary education	18,9	108,5	85,9
Second stage of secondary education with vocational training	16,5	97,5	80
Higher education	0,4	128,7	254,1

Chart 12. Unemployed by level of education and age. Source: INE

It shows one of the specificities of the Spanish labour market, the people with the highest level of education represent the 2nd unemployed group, while the 1st position is for the ones that have finished the mandatory school in the groups of people between 25 and 29. We could think that a high education level could be a safety net against unemployment and precarious jobs, but this does not apply for the Spanish case, even

though it has to be said that demographically the young population with high education is quite significant.

Other specificity is showed in chart 13 in which it can be seen how Spain leads the ranking of overqualified workers regarding their position requirements.

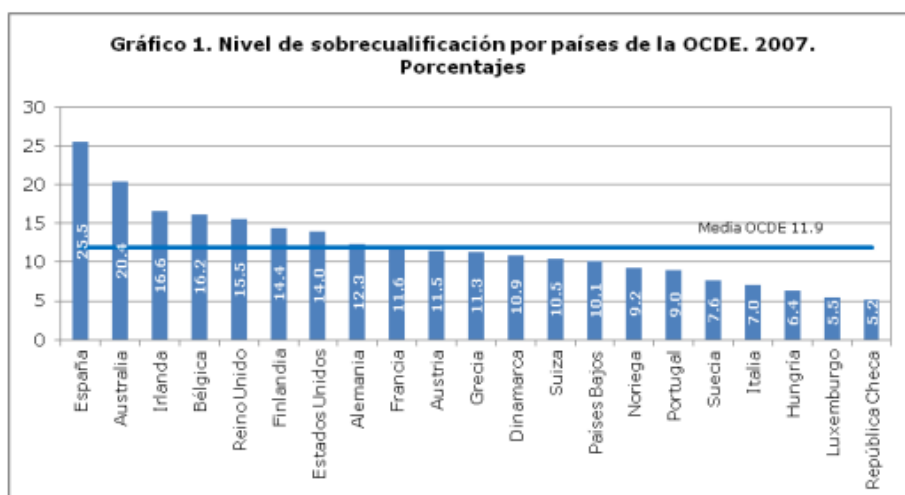


Chart 13. Percentage of overqualified people by country. 2007. Source: CIS “Youth, formation and employment: adequateness of formation to labour market requirements”. 2012

Following the qualitative research made in 2012 by the Spanish Centre for Sociological Researches (CIS) about the transition of young people with high education to labour market⁵⁴ through focus groups, it can be seen in depth the overqualification phenomenon.

Overqualification is seen by youth as one of the main problems when getting access to the labour market. By overqualification it is understood the difference between the qualifications obtained through education system and the professional status. Although the level of labour conditions in terms of salary, schedule, contract conditions and responsibility are active aspects in understanding a job as non appropriate for specific high education standards.

Adding to that, workers with high education face other problems such as higher or different position requirements to the ones provided by their education background, along with the demand by employers of attitude competencies, that is, a set of aspects related to responsibility, leadership, learning ability, initiative and ambitions amongst

⁵⁴ Source: CIS 2012(Centre for Sociological Research) Qualitative study: “Youth, formation and employment: adequateness of formation to labour market requirements” Study number 2971

others, considering those as important as the theoretical or practical knowledge. The highest skilled workers are the ones who face the greatest problem regarding these kinds of abilities, due to these are less demanded in lower skilled jobs. To certain extent the education system is blamed by the participants for omitting the training of these psychosocial skills, showing the difficulties of workers to adapt to the postfordist mode of production in which the immaterial values play an essential role.

Also other aspects that the participants complain about are the demand of work experience, the devaluation of their education-based CV, adding to practices of nepotism, especially in small and medium size Spanish cities, as the CIS report describes. In that way the lack of expectations influences on the well-being of the youth and make them to accept disadvantageous internships agreement as the best option in order to build a career or to have a job in the future.

The material conditions for an intern are half the salary of a graduated with contract (3,98€/Hour Vs 7,93€/Hour) according to a 2007 report by CCOO⁵⁵. During the last years their legal status has been improved: a set of Royal Decrees (Reales Decretos) , especially the RD1707/2011 about “external academic internship for the university student”, including the interns that received a salary into the General Regime of the Social Security. In that way the period that they work counts for their future pension, and they gain the right to benefits in case of illness. However similarly to other workers hired through “formation contracts” their activity does not generated the right to unemployment⁵⁶. In 2013 further modifications made public administration credit the social security payments of the companies that hire interns, what implies that the companies do not have to carry with the social security payments but the state covers those through the public budget⁵⁷ (approximately 30€/per person/month).

Around 70.000 thousand people is under this status, with lower rights than workers with a contract, however is much worse for those who are taking an internship without any remuneration. In 2013 around 58% of the Spanish interns did not receive any kind of remuneration, what it is truly similar to EU average, while from those who received a

⁵⁵ Source: CCOO Report “Youth and internships in workplaces. Formation period or hidden labour relation? 2007

⁵⁶ Source: Público <http://www.publico.es/dinero/402703/los-becarios-comenzaran-a-cotizar-a-partir-del-1-de-noviembre>

⁵⁷ Source: CCOO. CCOO values that government keeps the right to social contributions of interns. <http://www.ccoo.es/cscceo/Informacion:Noticias:654553>

payment, 70% complain that it was insufficient for covering life expenses⁵⁸. Along with that, 67% interviewed affirmed that they have participated in an internship after finishing their studies (33% for EU average), what in part it is explained due to certain education modalities as “online masters” as requirement for “accessing to the intern position”. Through this kind of mechanism, workers are formally enrolled in education, what makes them candidates for an internship agreement.

Coming back to the report of the Spanish Youth Council we find interesting figures that help us to understand the vision of interns about their jobs: the most of interns think that the internship was/ is useful for their professional careers and useful to find a job (around 87%), while 61,7 think that their task and duties were similar to the ones of their workmates. Also there are more people who consider an internship as a formation period rather than a job (60% vs. 40%). The authors of the report argue that the positive vision that the interviewed have about their internship period can be due to the comparison to the unemployment scenario or the NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) scenario, generally conceived by society as much more negative.

To sum up, the logic underlying the whole dynamic is the creation of a parallel labour market where workforce is more than abundant, in which interns compete with workers with contract who have to leave apart their working conditions if they want to keep their job. In this framework the deregulation of labour market is one of the cornerstones of the process.

In that way precarity is not a temporary state, during the insertion in the labour market from the education sphere, but a stable pattern in which more and more activities and occupations are included, in which workers go from temporary contract to temporary contract (or through internships if they fulfil the requirements), and suffering negative working conditions, creating a precarity trap different and much more perverse to the one referred in the theory.

An example of that is even found in value added sector as consulting companies and law firms, in which the precarity is patent in salary but especially in working hours and

⁵⁸ Source: Europapress from European Commission Euro barometer
<http://www.europapress.es/sociedad/noticia-58-becarios-espanoles-no-cobra-periodo-practicas-20131126174647.html>

intensity of tasks. As commentators said⁵⁹, the competitiveness inside the companies between employees, and the attempts to satisfy managers leads to a degrading situation even for those workers who have the ability to work in their desired field and position, transforming their working time in an unpleasant procedure that has to be achieved in order to get a salary and to promote.

4.3 Social class

In this last section it will be drawn a picture of the current Spanish society in terms of class from the variables that M. Halbswachs argued that are essential components of a social class: material aspects and abstract aspects, in order to find causes for the appearance of the precariat as subjectivity.

First section will focus on the evolution of wealth distribution during the last years. In the second sections, sociological variables will be tackled in order to understand the common situation faced by thousand of people. Finally in the third part, we are going to focus in the political confluence of the changes that society is witnessing from the point of view of the precariat as a group acquiring self consciousness.

4.3.1 Society's polarization. The material root of a new subjectivity.

There are different indicators that show the separation of groups within the Spanish society regarding income levels, increasing the gaps between them. We can think that this fact can be the base for further modifications in the society cohesion, generating new groups and collectiveness.

In chart 14 can be seen the trend of different variables regarding income inequality and distribution of wealth:

⁵⁹ Source: El País. Explotación remunerada (Remunerated exploitation)
http://elpais.com/diario/2010/03/14/negocio/1268578051_850215.html

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Measure								
Gini (at disposable income, post taxes and transfers)	0,331	0,322	0,314	0,306	0,315	0,328	0,334	0,343
Gini before taxes and transfers	0,456	0,462	0,452	0,444	0,459	0,489	0,506	0,520
S80/S20 disposable income quintile share	6	5,8	5,4	5,1	5,6	6,1	6,3	6,7
S90/S10 disposable income decile share	10,7	10,3	8,9	8,4	10,4	12	12,1	13,8

Chart 14. Inequality and wealth indexes for Spain. Source: OECD

The Gini index, one of the highest of the European countries and above the EU 28 average⁶⁰ decreased until the year 2007, the turning point in which it rose in what seems a stable pattern for both indexes, before and after taxes. The rest of the variables follow the same trend. It is remarkable the increase of S90/S10, that is, the people of the 10% richest group than have an income 13,8 times higher than the 10% with lowest income, increasing this more than 60% since 2007. When talking about quintiles, the 20% richest receive 6,7 times the income of the 20% poorest, following also a growing trend since 2007.

Moreover not solely inequality rises, but poverty. The at-risk-of-poverty rate, or relative poverty (people earning a 60% of the national mean income) has grown during the last years (not in a steady pace) reaching its maximum in 2012 with 22,4% of population⁶¹, even in 2013 there was a decreased achieving 20,4% of income earners.

Along with inequality and poverty, salaries are another key variable to understand polarization of society. According to the Survey on Salary Structure 2012 by the INE, the mean gross salary in Spain was 22.726,44€ (1.623€ divided by 14) while the most frequent gross salary was 15.500€ (1.107,14€/month)⁶², around 987€/month after taxes⁶³.

However, a more specific analysis regarding Personal Income Tax by the Tax Agency on 2012 can show us with greater accuracy the salary levels. In chart 15 can be seen the income section, the number of people, and percentage by monetary income. The most remarkable fact is that the most numerous group is earning between 12.000 and

⁶⁰ Source: webpage Eurostat Gini coefficient of equivalised disposable income <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do?sessionId=9ea7d07d30db36d4041224024841bfb38c042f410edc.e34MbxSaxaSc40LbNiMbxNbhyMe0>

⁶¹ Source: Eurostat SILC. At-risk-of-poverty rate by sex (source: SILC) <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/graph.do?tab=graph&plugin=1&pcode=tessi010&language=en&toolbox=sort>

⁶² Source: Press release INE 25 June 2014. Survey on salary structure 2012. The gross salary is divided by 14 due to the 12 months plus 2 extra payments.

⁶³ Source: Tax Agency. Personal Income Tax <https://www2.agenciatributaria.gob.es/wcl/PRET-RW14/>

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21.000€/year with 5,1 millions of tax payers out of 19,3 millions, representing 26,36%. Another important number is that 67,4% of the taxpayers earn from 0 to 21000€/year (1.500€/month).

Imputation by section (thousand of Euros)	General information		Information about item 1				
	Settlements total number	Distribution By number	Settlement item		Amount ítem 1		
			Number	Distribution Number	Amount	Distribution	Mean
Negative and zero	341.413	1,76	228.244	1,31	625.097.058	0,17	2.738,72
(0 - 1,5]	1.203.347	6,21	817.194	4,68	3.300.887.626	0,87	4.039,29
(1,5 - 6]	2.710.675	13,99	2.338.571	13,40	17.807.042.870	4,70	7.614,50
(6 - 12]	3.698.017	19,08	3.261.497	18,68	38.185.124.196	10,08	11.707,85
(12 - 21]	5.109.129	26,36	4.767.904	27,31	88.356.780.609	23,33	18.531,58
(21 - 30]	3.001.552	15,49	2.879.841	16,50	78.687.235.339	20,77	27.323,47
(30 - 60]	2.701.597	13,94	2.595.295	14,87	103.302.996.093	27,27	39.803,95
(60 - 150]	548.823	2,83	512.738	2,94	37.398.235.905	9,87	72.938,30
(150 - 601]	60.313	0,31	52.628	0,30	8.594.112.015	2,27	163.299,23
More than 601	4.618	0,02	3.831	0,02	2.516.670.838	0,66	656.922,69
Total	19.379.484	100,00	17.457.743	100,00	378.774.182.550	100,00	21.696,63

Chart 15. Statement of income 2012, Personal Income Tax. Source: Tax Agency (Agencia Tributaria)

Comparing to the same variables for 2007⁶⁴, chart 16 shows an increase on number of people for the lower income groups: 320% increase for the first group; 52% for the group earning between 0-1500€/year; 4% for the group 1500-6000. On the other hand the groups earning 6000-12000 and 12000-21000 decreased 8,8% and 6,4%

⁶⁴ Tax Agency (Agencia Tributaria)

<http://www.agencia tributaria.es/AEAT/Contenidos Comunes/La Agencia Tributaria/Estadisticas/Publicaciones/sites/irpf/2007/jrubik17da.html>

respectively. What this suggests is that there has been a downward pressure on salaries, decreasing the retribution for middle salaries, becoming in lower salaries.

Income €	2007	2012	% variation
Negative y Cero	0,55%/102.678	1,76% /341.413	320 %
(0 - 1,5]	4,08%/762.771	6,21%/1.203.347	52 %
(1,5 - 6]	13,35%/2.495.957	13,99%/2.710.675	4 %
(6 - 12]	20,92%/3.912.332	19,08%/3.698.017	- 8,8 %
(12 - 21]	28,14%/5.263.393	26,36%/5.109.129	- 6,4 %

Chart 16. Comparison 2007-2012. Personal Income Tax. Source: self elaboration from Tax Agency (Agencia Tributaria)

It can be observed too that the number of Mileuristas have increased during the last years reaching 41,08% of the workers in 2012. By Mileurista (one thousand Euros-earner) was understood as the worker that during the middle of the 2000s decade earned 1.000€ per month, even being high-skilled worker in non-manual jobs. That was a benchmark for precarity that in the last years has been broken, changing the connotations and meaning of the category from a negative view to a positive one.

Regarding the working poor (workers earning less than the minimum salary in a year⁶⁵, due to seasonal work, low-paid occupations or unemployment), there are controversy about the methodology and data collection. In that way, INE figure situates this rate in 12,2% for 2012 while other source as the Social Barometer elevates this percentage to 32,9%⁶⁶, based on the Tax Agency statistics⁶⁷. In their page it can be seen that there are 5.615.139 workers earning from 0 to 0,5 SMI and from 0,5 to 1 SMI, what confirms the Social Barometer number.

To sum up as it can be seen through the data, during last years the economic and material conditions of numerous groups of the society have worsened, what can lead us to think that their standards of living deteriorated during the period. In the following section we will focus on other aspect more related to subjective variables that also conditioned the standards of living of population.

⁶⁵ 2012 minimum salary (SMI): 8.979,60€/year; 641,4€/month. Source INE

⁶⁶ Source: Social Barometer webpage <http://barometrosocial.es/archivos/1101#more-1101>

⁶⁷ Source: tax agency webpage

http://www.agenciatributaria.es/AEAT/Contenidos_Comunes/La_Agencia_Tributaria/Estadisticas/Publicaciones/sites/mercado/2012/jrubikf6e9e0025ff1136f29bff175df9d1d435b2ae1955.html

4.3.2 Changes in sociological aspects: uncertainty in every sphere of life.

Unfulfilled expectations of both youngsters and population in general are one of the causes of individual anger and collective complains as well as the raw material to conform a feeling of self-identification and social mobilization. A sense of progress is strongly inculcated in people who expect that the future brings improvements regarding a previous past situation to surpass. Although this dynamic is in questions in current times. In this section we are going to verify different variables in order to corroborate this statement.

To begin with, based on the Survey on Living Conditions 2013, we find a pattern observing the figure about “the level of satisfaction with current life” by deciles of income:

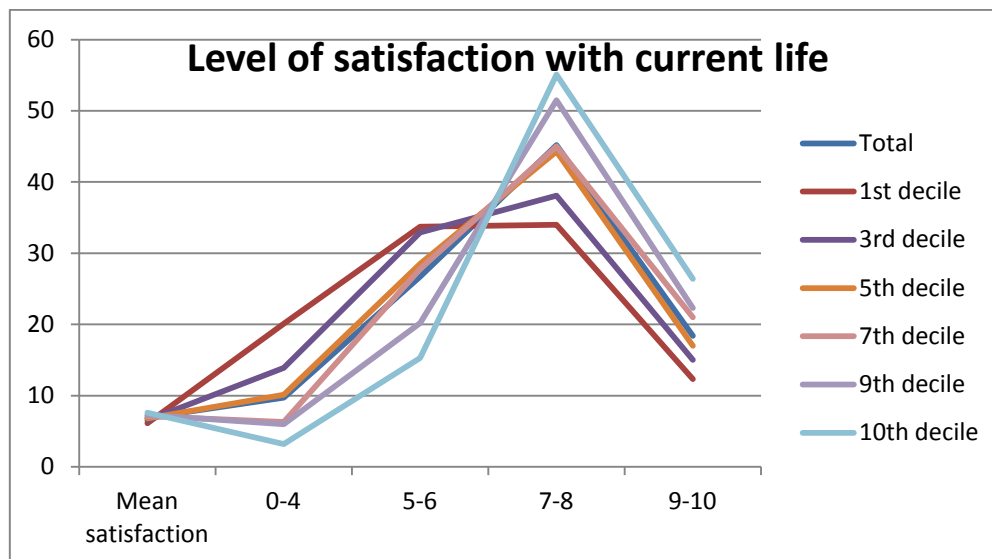


Chart 17. Level of satisfaction with current life. Survey on Living Conditions 2013. Source: self elaboration from INE data

A first approach can tell us that the highest deciles have the biggest number of people, more than 50%, in good rated position (7-8 levels) and in the top (9-10), even this is not the most numerous for none of the deciles. Secondly, for the 1st decile with lowest income, the most of people can be found in the 5-6 and 7-8, and it has the most numerous group in the 0-4 (20%)⁶⁸ comparing to the rest of deciles. Thirdly, there is a clear correlation between income and level of satisfaction: the higher the income, the

⁶⁸ INE. level of satisfaction with current life by deciles of income 2013
<http://www.ine.es/jaxi/tabla.do?path=/t25/p453/modulo/2013/10/&file=01004.px&type=pcaxis&L=0>

better the level of satisfaction, what can lead us to think about the importance of economic variables in the self-perception as individual within the society.

Regarding consumption variables, it is found according to the Survey about Material Deprivation that there are different trends for different items studied:

Item/year/%	2004	2007	2010	2013
Impossibility to go on holidays once per year	45,1	37,9	42,7	48,0
Impossibility to eat a meal with meat, chicken or fish at least each 2 days	2,3	2,4	2,6	3,5
Impossibility to keep the house with proper temperature	9,5	8	7,5	8
Impossibility to face unexpected expenditures	39,6	30,8	38,7	42,1
Delays in bills payments	7,3	6,6	10,4	11
Impossibility to own a car	7	4,9	5,9	6,2
Impossibility to own a Pc	14,9	9,6	7,6	6,7

Chart 18. Impossibility of consuming certain item. Source: Self elaboration from INE data

At the end of the period there are more people who can access to a personal computer, following a decreasing trend; worsening the situation too in the case of car ownership and proper heating in housing even those two follow an increasing trend. While 2007 is again the turning point for the rest of variables that have remarkably grown except the food deprivation that is rising since 2004, even in a moderate pace. Regarding absolute numbers, almost half of the population can not go on holidays and 4 out of 10 people can not face unexpected payments, what suggest that their saving capacity is limited. Also it is notable the increment in this variable along with bill payments delay between 2007 and 2010, the starting point of the economic crises.

Moreover, it is relevant the perception that people have about their own ability to manage their income and budget. This can be also seen in the Survey on Living Conditions 2013 regarding “people with difficulties to make ends meet”.

Item/year	2004	2007	2010	2013
Very difficult	11,8	11,1	15,5	18,6
Difficult	18	16,9	18,3	20
Difficult to some extent	32	31,1	28	28,2
Easy to some extent	26,7	25,7	23,7	22,6
Easy	10,6	13,9	13,5	9,5
Very easy	0,7	1,2	1,1	0,8

Chart 19. Perception of people “to make ends meet”. Source: self elaboration from INE data

In general trends, the percentage of people who feel their situation as “Very difficult” and “difficult” has grown reaching the maximum levels of the period; while the opposite trend can be seen for the intermediate opinions and the “Easy” one. Once again, 2007 changed the trend for the most of the variables, from a decreasing pattern to an increasing one, except for the two intermediate levels that have similar trends since the beginning: to decrease (with an exception in “difficult to some extent” that shows a slight growth).

This chart and chart number 18 suggest that the impact of the economic and political situation on population is lessening its living conditions due to a lack of the most essential elements in order to achieve a decent standard of living; even though the impact is not on the majority of the population but still in a significant part; and by the moment the shortage of material aspects does not push people to absolute poverty in a massive way.

Another set of variables are directly related to certain sociological aspects; those that can show us the habits of the population. One of these variables is the permanence in the family house until late ages, what it is related to temporality in labour market, along with social and cultural variables. For Spain in 2013, the 55% of young people between 18 and 34 live with their parents, a stable pattern during the last decade, therefore unemployment rate can not totally explain this fact; while the mean for the EU 28 is 48,2% (in 2012). There are great disparities along Europe, ranking the Nordic countries in the lowest position while Eastern Europe in the highest (Denmark 17,9% and Slovakia 74,2%)⁶⁹.

Concerning marriage age, Spain is where men and women get married later along with the Nordic countries. The evolution since 2004 until 2011 has been from 31,3 years up to 33,5 for men, and from 29,2 to 31,3 years for women⁷⁰. While the age for having the first children has increased in a moderated way since 2004, when women were 30,9

⁶⁹ Source: Eurostat. Share of young adults aged 18-34 living with their parents by age and sex (source: EU-SILC) <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do?dvsc=8>

⁷⁰ Source: Eurostat . Marriage indicators
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/dataset?p_product_code=DEMO_NIN
D

years old in average, reaching up to 31,6 in 2012, without a clear geographical pattern across Europe⁷¹.

All three facts are a product of a wide range of causes, what could explain that having very different social and political environments, Spain scores as Nordic countries or as the European mean in some of the variables. This fact leaves apart precarity as main engine or cause, even it is an important factor as well as the economic crisis. What it is clear is the rising trend: each one of the social aspect analyzed are done in later ages comparing to one decade ago.

Another aspect present in the theoretical part associated to the degree of precarity and alienation of a society is related to psychological disorders. Spain is the 2nd country by medicines consumption per capita behind the United States⁷² and also it reaches a high level of utilization of medicines for psychological disorders.

In chart 20 it is shown the evolution in the consumption of tranquiliser and hypnotic medicines for the period 2000-2012.

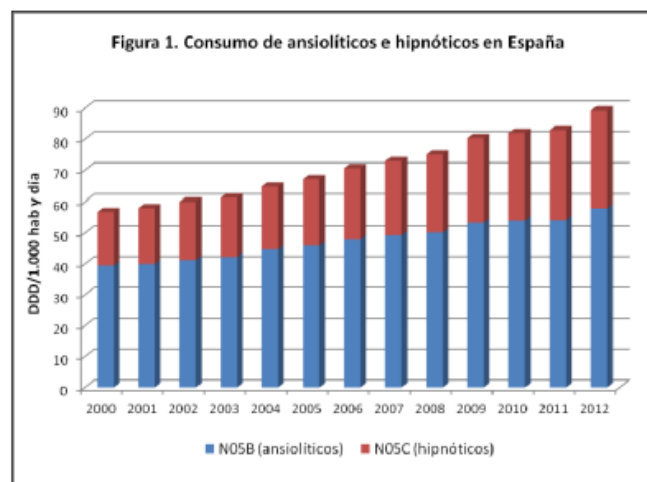


Chart 20. Consumption of tranquiliser and hypnotic medicines. Source: Ministry of Health, Social Services and Inequality (MSSSI). Report about medicine consumption U/HAY/V1/17012014

As it can be seen the consumption of both items has grown close to slightly less than 9% of population taking these medicines every day, what makes the country being over the European mean⁷³. The employ of these medicines is for various purposes; however

⁷¹ Source: Eurostat Mean age of women at childbirth

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/dataset?p_product_code=TPS00017

⁷² Source: El País http://sociedad.elpais.com/sociedad/2012/03/20/actualidad/1332260295_589522.html

⁷³ Consumption of tranquiliser and hypnotic medicines. Source: Ministry of Health, Social Services and Inequality (MSSSI). Report about medicine consumption U/HAY/V1/17012014

the main uses are as short term treatment for insomnia and anxiety disorders. The average growth during the period is around 2-3% with the greatest increases in 2008 and 2011 (a 7% and an 8%), after the economic crisis began.

Other important trend is seen in chart 21 about the consumption of those medicines according to the social class, showing people who took medicines in the 2 previous weeks to the survey was carried out, in 2012.

Social class	Tranquilizer, relaxant and sleeping pills	Antidepressants and stimulants
I	12,98	3,92
II	14,62	6,36
III	14,61	6,73
IV	16,02	6,53
V	17,89	7,45
VI	20,80	8,75

Chart 21. Type of medicine consumed during the last 2 weeks according to social class based on the occupation. Population that have consumed medicines in the last 2 weeks. Source: INE

The highest class is I, while the lowest is VI, even further explanations will be given about the class classification in the next section 4.3.3. In this table there is an obvious fact: more people in lower classes consume these medicines while the less numerous group is the one of the highest class. The difference between the group VI and I is more than twice for antidepressants and stimulants, and almost double for tranquilizer, relaxant and sleeping pills too.

Also it can be seen certain association between number of people under medicines and the social group: there is an increment for both groups of medicines when going from an upper class to a lower, even though groups II, III and IV reach similar levels, and there is not a perfect correlation between social group and people who consume in those groups.

To sum up, the different variable studied in this sub-section sheds light on the relation between the economic situation of the poorest groups of the society and the well-being of those.

4.3.3 Political articulation of uncertainty.

In this last section an attempt of grabbing the concept of precarity as political subjectivity will be done. Firstly, we will expose the class scenario in Spain. Then it will be analyzed a certain number of the biggest social movements and groups part of

the political sphere in the last decade related to precarity, along with current movements. Linking to that how those groups define themselves and how are defined by other actors within the society, everything with the purpose of demarcating the nature of precariat as a group and its consideration as a class.

To begin with, the INE identified in different way the classes in the Spanish society, but both related to the job position. What is interesting of that fact is that the institution does not work with a single classification, along with that it does not developed its own method to classify, but takes the categories from other institutions.

Chart 22 comes from the Epidemiology Spanish Society⁷⁴ (left) and an adaptation of the OECD classification (centre):

Social class (Epidemiology Spanish Society)	Activity (OECD classification)	2013 %
I. Directors and managers of workplaces with 10 or more remunerated workers and professionals traditionally linked to university degrees	1. Manager of companies and public administration	5,5
II. Directors and managers of workplaces with less than 10 remunerated workers, professionals traditionally linked to university degrees and other technical staff professional. Sportsmen and artists.	2. Technicians and scientific professionals and intellectuals	18,07
III. Intermediate positions and free lance workers	3. Support technicians and professionals	11,37
IV. Supervisors and workers in skilled technical positions	4. Workers in administrative tasks	8,05
V. Skilled workers from the primary sector and other semi-skilled workers.	5. Workers in services: restaurant, personal attention, protection and shop assistance in retail	18,13
VI. Unskilled workers	6. Skilled workers in agriculture and fishing	3,55
	7. Crafts and skilled workers in manufacturing industry, construction, mining except installation and machinery workers	14,17
	8. Installation and machinery workers	9,13
	9. Unskilled workers	11,11

Chart 22. Social class classification in INE database according to Epidemiology Spanish Society based on occupation following CNO-11 and OECD. Source: self elaboration from INE data

⁷⁴ For further information: Proposals for social class classification based on the Spanish National Classification of Occupations 2011 using neo-Weberian and neo-Marxist approaches
<http://www.gacetasanitaria.org/es/propuestas-clase-social-neoweberiana-neomarxista/articulo/S0213911112003457/>

The two INE tables divide people regarding job position and education, assuming that for each level in job position and education, a certain social stratum is achieved (with its correspondent level of income and standard of living). The most numerous groups are number 2, 5 and 7 while the less numerous are the 6 and 1.

Comparing to the G. Standing classification, it is much closer to the left column, even though both of them solely consider people working, what shows that the institution leaves apart great number of people when they developed certain statistics.

A more representative and close to the class division of G. Standing categorization can be seen in chart 23:

G. Standing class structure	INE Income resource	2013 %	2010	2007
1.billionaires	a. Rents from property, capital and other regular incomes	1,51	1,16	0,96
2.salariat	b. Self-employed	12,03	13,70	15,55
3.proficians	c. Employed (Working for others)	50,28	53,17	57,68
4.traditional working class	d. Contributory and non-contributory pensions (elder, disables, widows)	26,77	24,21	22,70
5.precariat	e. Subsidies and benefits (unemployment and social assistance)	9,07	7,03	2,28
6.unemployed	f. Not registered	0,34	0,72	0,83
7.detached group				

Chart 23. Home and people regarding main source of income. Source: self elaboration from INE data

Dividing society by source of income give us a more accurate view of what class division can mean in today's Spanish society, since labour is not anymore a permanent element but a temporal. It can be drawn certain similarity between the groups 1 and "a" and 6-7 to "d-e". While for "b. self- employed" and "c. employed" the borders are much more blurred: there can be 3.proficians as well as 5.precariat for the self-employed category; whereas for the c. employed we can find people from groups 2,3,4,and 5. Nevertheless what this table makes clear is the time impact of the crisis, increasing the number of people on capital rents, along with the transfers of workers to pensions and especially social benefits, becoming unemployment one of the greatest cleavages in society and benefits recipients are almost the 36% of total income earners.

Moreover, what statistics reflect has had its impact on the street, through social mobilizations and organization creation. Three moments can be distinguished: During the decade 2000s, before the crisis hit, people protested and organized themselves for an improvement of some of the foundations of precarity: housing, work conditions, high quality public services, etc. Examples of those movements are V for Housing (V de Vivienda), the Platform for dignified housing (Plataforma por una Vivienda Digna) and the movement against Bologna process.

Then, once the crisis was triggered, a large number of movements converged in the 15M movement (in May 2011, occupying squares along the country during weeks), one of the greatest movements in terms of participation seen in years. There was a pattern, from the pre-crisis moment in which protesters were focusing on specific aspects of life, to the post-crisis 15M in which complains were against the system as a whole.

Lately, the movements diversified coming back to the pattern of protest around specific issues, but being latent the demand of changing of model that initially was shown in the 15M. In that way, precarity as a term is situated in the first stage, during the previous moment of the crisis and it remains in a crossed or transverse way during the second and the third stages. However it can be argued that the most of the mobilizations have not been articulated around precarity and precariat itself, what can lessening to some extent its class nature.

Organizations and movements

In Spanish, the concept intern (becario) has its origin in the tertiary education world, to label those who were (and are) researching in the academic level. That is why the **Federation of Young Researchers/Precarious**⁷⁵ (FJI)(Federación de Jóvenes Investigadores/precarios) is one of the first organizations that fight against the precarity and for the improvement of working conditions, being formed in 2000.

As non-profit union of groups from different parts of the country ruled by a statute and regulations, they have developed a great number of reports about the state of science and R+D policies in the country, and also they have been interlocutors with the public administration when developing certain policies regarding its field.

⁷⁵ FJI webpage <http://precarios.org/Qui%C3%A9nes+somos>

However, when talking about the precarity feeling, we can observe that they built their demands and complains around their work/activity as researchers, and not as “precariat” itself, not feeling identified and not fighting for other demands of other groups within the society.

To continue, **the Assembly Against Precarity and for a Dignified Housing** (Asamblea Contra la Precariedad y por la Vivienda Digna⁷⁶), was an informal movement emerged in 2006, claiming against the difficulty to make ends meet, against job “in precarious” and against the high prices of housing during those years. Their collective action was taken through demonstrations, sits-in, rallies and occupations of the public space. This group and the movement for a dignified house can be said that were the cornerstones for later movements. Their fight against the precarity encircles a meaning of precarity related to work but also to essential needs as housing, being one of the first groups in which claims did not stick to a single issue.

Moreover, another important and well-known organization, at least in Madrid region, is the “**Precarious Office**”⁷⁷ (Oficina Precaria). Its origins are rooted on the 15M movement and Juventud Sin Futuro (Youth Without Future) however currently is working independently, located in the CSO Patio Maravillas (a squatter social centre). Consequently their organization is informal, fundraised through organization of events. Their main activities are labour and legal counselling and to offer information about cooperatives, and social economy in order to help precarious workers to fix their problematic situation. One of their last campaigns is “No+BecasXtrabajo” (no more internships for jobs) for solving the situation of people who work with an internship agreement in the same conditions as workers with contract.

Their identity is mainly based on precarious workers, addressing topics related to them as minimum salary, unemployment benefits, along with other more general claims as social rights and public services demands.

Also traditional trade unions as CCOO have paid special attention to interns and precarious workers through its campaign “sponsor an intern”⁷⁸ in order to promote labour rights in workplaces. Adding to them, some education based smaller groups as

⁷⁶ Source: Nodo50. Manifest <http://www.nodo50.org/codoacodo/junio/sentada.htm>

⁷⁷ Precarious Office webpage: <http://oficinaprecaria.org/>

⁷⁸ CCOO webpage <http://www.ccoo.es/cscceo/menu.do?Informacion:Campanas:39644>

“Asociación Estudiantil Contra la Precariedad” has their claims in the improvement of labour rights field.

Movements around an interclass change of society

However one of the main weaknesses of the precarious identity comes from its strengths. The deterioration of the economic situation along with the governmental policies has produced an impact on the whole society in one or the other way, through employment or public services. Adding to that, the anger and discontent have been capitalized by interclass-inclusive groups or movements who have define the situation as the struggle between the 99% of population against the 1%, deriving in claims against corruption and waste of public resource: from the 15M and Real Democracy Now(DRY Democracia Real Ya), Anonymous, Yayoflautas, to the Mareas movement (for high quality public services), and even new political parties as PODEMOS⁷⁹ (WE CAN).

Currently some of these interclass movements are gaining followers and supporters as the result of the European Parliament Elections in 2014 shows. Not solely precarity is leaving apart in the discourse and claims of some those new groups, but the class discourse itself that gained some importance during the first moments of the crisis, is nowadays becoming blurred, relegate to marginal positions.

⁷⁹ Source: PODEMOS webpage. Program <http://podemos.info/programa/> Precarity appears once in the 36pages of the party program.

5. Conclusion

Nowadays situation in Spain is the result of a series of changes in the model of society in which individuals are not considered as citizens anymore but as customers and clients of social services, obtained in exchange of tax paying. In that way the logic of the market, that it is encouraged by the state in order to foment the privatization of the public services endangers the viability of those.

In the first article of its constitution Spain is defined as “a social and democratic State, subject to the rule of law”, however this is in contradiction to the main trend that we have observed regarding social policies: the creation of denizens, both nationals and foreigners, between the most vulnerable social groups.

In that way, health care provision is provided to workers contributing to the Social Security system; housing policies are leading thousands of people to poverty and life precarity through house eviction and permanent indebtedness, while access to education is more restricted than ever in the democratic period. The model is changing from universal provision of social rights to a restricted one, in terms of contribution to the Social Security accounts.

Secondly, labour precarity has become universal in the country, with the general worsening of the material conditions for every kind of worker, especially after the 2012 reform; along with the worsening of the most intangible aspects of it for skilled workers who see their personal life and skills reduced to labour as a product of a great commitment to their positions. Even though that and the precarity trap, workers seems to be happy with their situation, as a result in a great extent of fear to unemployment, the true psychological cleavage within the society since precarity hits in some way or another to everybody.

Thirdly, as a result, youth accepts employments with shameful labour conditions as the unwritten rule of the current moment or even in non-paid internship basis, thinking that the situation will improve and change, although there is a certain feeling of exploitation amongst them.

Moreover and related to that, based on the evidence we can distinguish between labour precarity, as a product of temporality in jobs and degraded working conditions; and

precarity in life, understood as the double effect of labour precarity and social rights limitations, leading to a life of restrictions and deprivation of certain necessary elements for a decent life. Consequently, precarity in life is remarkably linked to welfare policies disappearance as shows that during the 2000s decade precarity did not lead to the social disequilibrium that we are currently witnessing in a massive way.

Besides, the increasing inequality, salary dispersion and the general impoverishment of people create a perception of injustice and generate discontent within wide part of population. Problems of material deprivation along with the interesting correlations between income levels and anti-depressant medicines make us to think that the current changes in the model of country have a strong impact in the mental stability of people of the poorest groups of the society.

In this way, the political articulation of this discontent is canalized mainly by institutional and non-violent means, through inclusive-identity parties and informal organizations far from class parties and organizations; including the precarious one, that is not a majority shared identity neither in the previous nor post crisis moment.

Finally, the change of social, economic and labour model is not understood by the most of the population in terms of precarity as a permanent condition, since precarity in labour is so widespread, but rather is read as a provisional situation. Therefore it would be difficult to find a common identity within this group since it is so varied, and consequently a common political articulation of it. However, people under life precarity share between them a number of similar material conditions that labour precarious do not have. In that way this common objective background along with a possible subjective base, and if their conditions of deprivation remains intact along years, could lead to a more fixed and tangible identity, forming the class of the precariat around their two main characteristics: temporality in work and limitation to access to public services, the engines of uncertainty, what differentiates them from working and middle classes.

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