Job Stability in Transition from Industrial Society to Service Society

Evidence from Germany

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1 Introduction[1]

(Not only) in Germany the historical period between the 1970s and the 1990s was especially linked with various far reaching social and economic changes. There has been a demographic shift that can be described as an "ageing society" (c.f. Johnson and Zimmerman 1993; Thon 1995). Furthermore an increasing labour market participation of women (c.f. Rubery 1998; Costa 2000) and – connected with that – a change in the general household structure has been taken place (c.f. Galler and Ott 1993; Lauterbach 1999). An educational expansion with an increase of formal qualifications could be observed as well (c.f. Reinberg and Hummel 1999; Bosch 2000). In addition, an increasing trend towards small firms and – connected with that – a change in the organisation of production have occurred (c.f. OECD 1985; Sengenberger, Loveman and Piore 1990; Leicht and Stockmann 1993). It is also said that all these fundamental political, technological, economic and social changes were caused and/or forced by all-embracing trends called "globalisation" and "individualisation" (c.f. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). Since all these changes were accompanied by an increasing tertiarisation (c.f. Haisken-DeNew et al. 1996; Bosch 2001) the period between the 1970s and the 1990s could be characterised as the period of transition from 'old' industrial to 'new' service society.

At least for about 20 years the impact of the transition to service society on the life course of men and women is of special interest within European sociology. In this respect, changing patterns of individual employment histories are of decisive importance for modern societies, not only because employment generates income as the main living resource but also because it constitutes a 'meaning of life' for most individuals. Up to now, it seems that a kind of European sociological mainstream has been established that disseminates the creed of post-modern labour market research: Many commentators start from the assumption of a long-established but now strengthening general trend towards a 'high-velocity labour market' that is increasingly shaping the 'future of work'. In such a turbulent labour market, individual employment histories will, over time, become increasingly unpredictable and chaotic compared with those of the past (Rogowski and Schmid 1997: 577; see also Rifkin 1995; Castells 1996; Sennett 1998; Bauman 1998). In addition, the concept of "risk society", formulated by Ulrich Beck in 1986, has become a kind of catalyst for the whole debate. With regard to individual employment histories, the notion of "risk society" does not only mean a speeding up of labour market events but also that labour markets in the 'risk society' are said to be characterised by a constantly advancing, all-embracing process of 'destructuring': "In this way a new division of the labor market is created between a uniform standard industrial society labor market and a flexible, plural risk society market for underemployment, where the second market is quantitatively expanding and increasingly dominating the first" (Beck 1992: 144-145). It is assumed that the old division between 'core' and 'peripheral' workforces (Doeringer and Piore 1971; Sengenberger 1987) dissolves into general employment instability. The consequence of this process is said to be a levelling out of employment opportunities and risks. Uncertainties that in industrial socie-

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ties were unevenly distributed along clearly defined socio-economic demarcation lines are expected to become increasingly generalised. "[U]nemployment and poverty under conditions of individualization are distributed not so much by group as by phase in a *person's life*. The conflicts associated with social inequality thus appear as conflicts *between parts of an individual biography*" (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002: 49). Today this 'de-structuring process' is hypothesised to be at a very advanced stage, as Bauman (1998: 77) has pointed out: "Nowadays we are all on the move". And Beck (2002; own translation) claims that the "previous principle of employment based on relative security and long lasting reliability belongs to the past. Today even the core of the 'employment society' is ruled by the risk regime".

If we take a closer look on the thesis of an individualised high-velocity labour market, it becomes obvious that there are actually two sub-theses. The first sub-thesis says that there must have been a general speeding up of labour market events during the last decades ("*High Velocity Labour Market Thesis*"). However, this thesis has come under pressure by some recent work done, for example, by Doogan (2001) for the UK, by Auer and Cazes (2000) in international perspective or by Erlinghagen (2002) for Germany. In addition to this research, the following paper aims only at the second sub-thesis that there must have been a growing levelling out of employment chances and risks in the course of transition to service society ("*De-Structuring Thesis*"). To test this thesis we will concentrate on job stability as a main feature of employment histories. Although some analyses about the individual and firm specific determinants of job stability has been already made (c.f. Bender, Konietzka and Sopp 2000), an analysis is standing out that investigates into the changing and/or stable socio-economic influences on job stability *in the course of time*. Therefore, to test the "de-structuring assumption" the following hypothesis has to be checked empirically:

Hypothesis: *Traditional socio-economic determinants have lost their impact on job stability during the transition into a service society.*

To test this thesis we will analyse the event history data of the German IAB Employment Subsample (IABES) by estimating some Cox proportional hazard rate models. *Section 2* will introduce the data and methods that will be used in the following investigations. *Section 3* will present our findings in detail. Finally the paper will end with some concluding remarks in *section 4*.

2 Data and method

For Germany the IAB Employment Subsample (IABES) is particularly well suited as a data set for the analysis of job stability. The IABES contains exact daily data on the employment careers of some 560,000 individuals over the period between 1975 and 1995. The data set is derived from a 1% sample of the insurance accounts that the Federal Labour Office (*Bundesanstalt für Arbeit*) maintained in respect of employees liable to pay social security contributions between 1975 and 1995.[2] These 'process-produced data' are supplemented by information on periods of unemployment during which a claimant received benefits and on certain char-

[2] Hence, the analysis is restricted to West-German employees and the self-employed, civil servants and those in marginal part-time employment are not included in the following analysis.

acteristics of the establishments that employed individuals in the subsample during the period of observation. This corresponds to about 7.8 million employment or benefit payment notifications, with each individual record containing 35 variables (cf. Bender, Haas and Klose 2000).

For our estimations we will use cox proportional hazard rate models ("cox models"). Compared with other parametric methods the semi-parametric cox model has one particular advantage to estimate transition rates: By using cox models we can certainly calculate the influences of the interesting covariates on the transition rate as a mathematical function, but we need no further assumptions about the time dependency of the transition rate. Therefore, the cox model is a very robust and flexible method to analyse transition processes (Blossfeld, Hamerle and Mayer 1986; Blossfeld and Rohwer 2002).

2.1 Specification of destination states

The main aim of this paper is to answer the question how job stability and its determinants have changed in the course of time. Therefore, cox proportional hazard rate models will be estimated for two different periods in time both including the same set of explanatory socio-economic variables. First, we will estimate an unspecified transition model for the general event of leaving a job. The end of an employment spell ('exit') is defined as the termination of an existing insurable job. Second, we will estimate a competing risk model in which we distinguish between different kinds of events (see figure 1):

(1) *new employment spell*: A direct or smooth transition from one employer to another is suggested if the subsequent employment spell follows immediately after the previous job spell has ended. In this respect, "immediately" means that the firm change must take place within a period of 30 days and that the sample member has not received any unemployment benefits in between. All other events are censored.

(2) *registration gap*: If there is a gap of more than 30 days between two employment spells without an unemployment spell during the following 90 days[3], we have a transition to a "registration gap". All other events are censored.

(3a) unemployment: If the employment spell is immediately followed by an unemployment spell, this is a transition into unemployment. In this respect, "immediate" means that the unemployment spell must follow the exit out of employment within a period of 90 days (see footnote 4) without any subsequent (short) job spell in between. All other events are censored.

(3b) long term unemployment (alternative to 3a): A transition into a period of long term unemployment is suggested if an unemployment spell starts "immediately" (within a period of 90 days; see footnote 4) after a preceding employment spell and if this unemployment spell lasts for more than 12 month.

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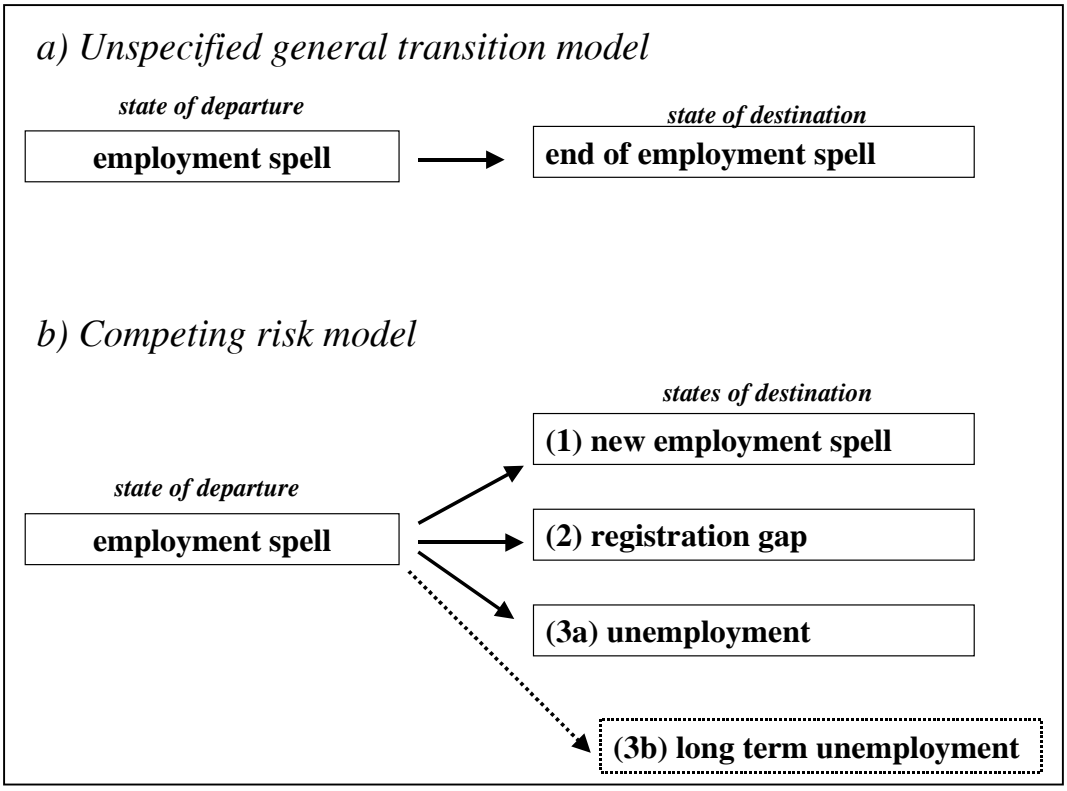
[3] We define this 90-day waiting period because of the possible maximum period of three month during which in Germany a sample member could be excluded from unemployment benefits legally because, for example, he/she has quit his/her job on his/her own and was not dismissed by the employer.

Figure 1: States of departure and of destination within the unspecified general transition model and the competing risk model



2.2 Construction of two analysis samples

The unspecific general transition model as well as the competing risk model is estimated to compare job stability in the 1980s and the 1990s. In addition, we have to be aware that the probability of job termination shrinks with increasing tenure. Therefore, separate estimations should be done for three groups of jobs:

estimation type (a): newly started jobs ("zero tenure")
estimation type (b): jobs with tenure between one and two years
estimation type (c): jobs with tenure of minimum five years

Comparing job stability for different historical periods and doing separate estimations with regard to three groups of jobs with different tenure both make great demand on the construction of the two analysis samples out of the raw data. On the one hand the labour market events of two periods with a sufficient time lag in between should be compared and on the other hand the analysis possibilities of the raw data is limited because of left and right censoring problems. For this reason, the two sub-samples (*sample 1* and *sample 2*) were selected as followed:

- *Sample 1* originally contains all individuals in the IABES who were in gainful employment on the reference date of April 1st 1983. But this does only work for jobs with no "zero tenure". Using only the method of selection by reference date new started jobs would be covered only insufficiently, because the number of jobs that accidentally began on April 1st 1983 is relatively small. Therefore, new started jobs were selected by definition of a reference period rather than a reference date. Thus, *sample 1* additionally includes all new job spells that have been started between April 1st 1983 and March 31st 1984.

- *Sample 2* contains originally all individuals with non-zero tenure in the IABES who were in gainful employment on April 1st 1990. Similar to *sample 1*, *sample 2* additionally includes all new job spells that have been started between April 1st 1990 and March 31st 1991.

2.3 Explanatory variables

There are several explanatory variables included into the model which can be distinguished, on the one hand, as time-constant and time-varying variables. On the other hand the explanatory variables can be divided into "labour supply information", "labour demand information", "intermediate information", "information about the previous employment history", "information about the ongoing employment history", and "macro economic information". *Table 1* gives a summary of all explanatory variables included into the estimation model.

Table 1: List of explanatory variables in the Cox-Proportional-Hazard-Rate-Model

Time constant Variables				**Time varying Variables**	
Labour supply	**Intermediate**	**Labour demand**	**past employment history**	**ongoing employment history**	**macro economic information**
gender	*kind of activity*	*firm size*	*number of prev. jobs*	*number of ongoing occup. changes*	*monthly unemployment rate*
age	*weekly working time*	*branch*	*number of prev. occup. changes*	*change of weekly working time*	
skills		*firm age*	*number of prev. unemployment spells*		
nationality		*share of stuff with occup. degree*	*number of prev. "registration gaps"*		
			experience of long-term unemployment		

It should be noted that despite the estimations of *type a* (new started jobs) not all explanatory variables in *table 1* can be included in the estimations of *type b* and *c*. This limitation is primarily related to the variables that contain information about the previous employment history. It becomes necessary because the propensity of previous events shrinks with increasing previous tenure. Therefore, in estimations of *type b* (jobs with one up to two years tenure) we just differentiate between three values ("no event", "one event" and "two or more events") rather than between four values ("no event", "one event", "two events" and "three or more events") like in estimations of *type a* (jobs with "zero tenure"). Hence, within the estimation of *type c* (jobs with tenure of minimum five years) it is not possible at all to include any information about the previous employment history of the sample members, because it is logically impossible, for instance, to have changed the employer during the last five years *and* to show a tenure of more than five years on the sampling date. A similar problem occurs with respect to information about firm age. Therefore, firm age related variables are not (all) included into the estimations of *type b* and *c*.

3 Results

3.1 Levelling out or polarisation of employment risks?

With regard to the main social and economic changes that have occurred during the transition to service society (see the introduction), the analysis in this section will concentrate especially

- *on the impact of gender, age and skills as main labour supply information.*
- *on the impact of firm size as main labour demand information.*
- *on the impact of the kind of activity as main intermediate information.*

In addition, the impact of the previous unemployment experiences will be of decisive importance. The other explanatory variables in our model (see *table 1* again) will function as control variables. To test the "De-Structuring-Thesis" a general model as well as competing risk models are separately estimated for three groups of jobs. As mentioned above theses three groups are (a) new started jobs, (b) jobs with one to two years of tenure, and (c) jobs with minimum tenure of five years. The estimated hazard ratios (HR) are reported in *table 3* to *5* (for the calculation and interpretation of hazard ratios see Hosmer and Lemshow 1999).

3.1.1 Gender

Overall in both periods of analysis there are significant gender specific differences in job stability that confirm former descriptive results (c.f. Erlinghagen and Knuth 2002; Knuth, Schräpler and Schumann 2001). Thus, new started jobs of women are more stable than those of men. But if we take a look at the jobs with minimum tenure of five years this difference turns the other way round and women show a significantly higher risk to leave their job during our analysis time of three years. Comparing the 1980s to the 1990s for this type of jobs, the female risk of transition is even increasing but this increase is caused in the main by the distinct growth of the female risk to face a transition into the heterogeneous state of "registration gap".
However, other gender specific differences that were very prominent in the 1980s have partly diminished noticeably in the course of time. Certainly even in the 1990s there is still a significant smaller chance for women to change a firm directly but the differences between men and women have approached. Looking at jobs with one to two years of tenure we see, for example, that women in the 1980s had an approximately 45 percent lower firm change "risk" than men. In the 1990s these difference lowers to about 16 percent. Even more obvious is this gender approach when analysing the transition to unemployment. In the 1980s women had on the one hand a significant lower unemployment risk comparing new started jobs and had on the other hand a significant higher unemployment risk comparing jobs with one to two years of tenure. These clear gender specific differences have totally disappeared in the 1990s. Only for jobs with minimum of five years tenure women show in both samples a higher unemployment risk than men but these differences have declined clearly.

Table 2: Hazard Ratios for new started jobs (Cox Model; type a), Sample 1 (1983/84) and Sample 2 (1990/91), general model and competing risk model

	all destinations		**firm change**		**unemploy-ment**		**long-term unempl.**		**registration gap**	
	Sample 1	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*
gender										
male	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
female	0,922***	0,902***	0,965	0,900**	0,889**	1,009	0,768*	0,913	0,915*	0,870***
age										
up to 24 years	1,262***	1,595***	1,509***	1,777***	1,299***	1,218***	0,892	0,760*	1,155*	1,706***
25-34 years	1,023	1,212***	1,168*	1,336***	0,965	1,031	0,934	0,898	1,011	1,266***
35-44 years	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
45-54 years	1,002	1,070	0,685***	0,901	1,100	1,131	1,370*	1,430***	1,074	1,110
>= 55 years	1,320***	1,300***	0,372***	0,535***	1,149	1,291*	2,000***	2,710***	2,130***	1,811***
skills										
unskilled	1,457***	1,597***	1,179**	1,275***	1,320***	1,440***	2,013***	1,584***	1,751***	1,890***
vocational degree	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
academic degree	1,024	0,970	1,265*	1,166	0,892	0,870	1,083	0,853	0,923	0,862
nationality										
German	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
main migrants	0,907*	1,076*	1,018	1,026	0,778***	1,046	0,495***	1,007	1,073	1,172***
other migrants	1,305***	1,167***	0,972	0,844*	1,056	0,902	1,266	0,904	1,658***	1,564***
kind of activity										
primary activity	1,210*	1,035	0,721	0,743	1,429***	1,642***	1,320	1,888**	1,116	0,783
manufacturing activity	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
service activity	0,768***	0,783***	0,880*	0,826***	0,724***	0,693***	0,888	0,723***	0,776***	0,792***
weekly working time										
full-time	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
part-time	0,978	1,060*	0,784***	0,851***	0,639***	0,728***	0,555***	0,566***	1,270***	1,370***
branch										
primary sector	1,079	1,191	1,052	0,782	1,137	0,958	1,052	0,798	1,219	1,958***
mining & steel ind.	1,032	0,819*	0,873	0,696*	0,887	0,699*	1,113	0,514	1,033	0,980
manufacturing ind.	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
construction ind.	1,419***	1,045	1,116	0,858*	1,735***	1,151*	1,647***	1,085	1,101	1,088
infrastructure & transport services	1,230***	1,216***	1,147	1,154*	0,928	0,988	0,802	1,009	1,561***	1,414***
production services	1,514***	1,503***	1,671***	1,810***	1,183	0,.992	1,372	1,131	1,701***	1,547***
econ. transact. serv.	1,113***	1,161***	1,135	1,159**	1,054	0,991	1,132	1,026	1,157*	1,273***
polit. transact. serv.	1,077	1,147***	1,167	0,899	1,314***	1,356***	1,609***	2,031***	0,835*	1,164*
pers. & househ. serv.	1,386***	1,358***	1,363***	1,325***	1,397***	1,164*	1,292	1,094	1,338***	1,487***
firm size										
1-19 employees	1,122***	1,016	1,196***	1,106*	1,414***	1,167**	1,304*	0,983	0,829***	0,867***
20-99 employees	1,058	1,067*	1,204***	1,167***	1,224***	1,093	1,181	1,026	0,852***	0,989
100-499 employees	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
>=500 employees	0,760***	0,900***	0,691***	0,783***	0,675***	0,845*	1,067	0,960	0,827***	1,010
firm age										
< 1 year	1,081	1,126***	0,834	1,108	1,024	1,164	1,341	1,404	1,348***	1,129
1-5 years	1,180***	1,120***	1,121	1,180***	1,085	1,081	1,292*	1,104	1,348***	1,105*
>= 5 years	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
firm's skill structure										
share of stuff with occup. degree (%)	1,001*	1,002***	1,000	1,001	1,001	1,000	1,002	0,996	1,001	1,002***

Table 2 (continued)

	all destinations		**firm change**		**unemploy-ment**		**long-term unempl.**		**registration gap**	
	Sample 1	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*
prev. unemployment experiences										
never unemployed	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
1 unemploy. spell	1,116***	1,007	1,138*	1,018	2,732***	2,616***	2,446***	1,793***	0,583***	0,629***
2 unemploy. spells	1,193***	1,102*	1,007	0,972	3,565***	3,722***	2,985***	2,185***	0,478***	0,564***
>= 3 unemploy. spell	1,326***	1,254***	0,889	0,852	4,271***	5,362***	3,057***	2,344***	0,406***	0,496***
prev. jobs										
no prev. jobs	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
1 prev. job	0,952	1,088***	0,900	0,958	1,013	1,328***	0,891	1,595***	0,746***	0,989
2 prev. jobs	1,022	1,056	0,891	0,884	1,029	1,095	1,001	1,064	0,772***	1,021
>= 3 prev jobs	1,227***	1,176***	1,071	1,032	1,281***	1,268***	1,205	0,915	0,780***	0,997
prev. registr. gap										
no gap	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
1 gap	1,130***	1,092***	1,127*	0,962	0,921*	0,963	1,296**	1,159	1,774***	1,501***
2 gaps	1,450***	1,424***	1,275**	1,103	1,023	0,958	1,391*	0,851	3,057***	2,539***
>= 3 gaps	2,014***	1,779***	1,341*	1,171	0,975	1,186	1,090	2,117***	5,475***	3,432***
prev. occup. changes										
no change	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
1 change	0,987	0,981	1,058	1,048	0,984	1,070	1,269	1,183	0,894*	0,841***
2 changes	0,994	1,073	1,108	1,409***	0,970	1,127	1,511**	1,531***	1,005	0,842**
>= 3 changes	1,073	1,130**	1,527***	1,605***	1,063	1,197*	2,212***	2,005***	1,066	0,914
prev. long-term unemployment										
no	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
yes	1,085*	1,026	0,947	0,887	1,209***	1,065	2,134***	1,872***	1,032	1,047
change in working time in ongoing job										
no	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
yes	0,829	0,873	1,010	0,801	1,021	0,839	1,367	0,805	0,678*	0,979
ongoing occupa-tional changes										
no changes	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
min. one change	0,654***	0,785***	0,604***	0,907	0,710*	0,696*	0,776	0,766	0,661***	0,718**
macro data										
unemployment rate	1,254***	1,317***	1,321***	1,570***	1,364***	1,212***	1,042	0,826*	0,946	1,129***
n	12.033	15.056	12.033	15.056	12.033	15.056	12.033	15.056	12.033	15.056
events	9.308	11.264	2.248	3.705	3.655	2.669	600	622	3.263	4.768
Pseudo R^2	0,0141	0,0131	0,0165	0,0189	0,0445	0,0438	0,0733	0,0679	0,0306	0,0237

**** : p <= 0,005 ** : 0,005 < p <= 0,01 *: 0,01 < p <= 0,05*

RG = reference group

source: IAB-Employment Subsample (own calculation)

Table 3: Hazard Ratios for jobs with 1-2 years of tenure (Cox Model; type b), Sample 1 (1983/84) and Sample 2 (1990/91), general model and competing risk model

	all destinations		**firm change**		**unemployment**		**long-term unempl.**		**registration gap**	
	Sample 1	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*
gender										
male	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
female	0,849***	1,028	0,688***	0,856***	1,197***	1,026	1,447***	0,955	0,766***	1,361***
age										
up to 24 years	1,478***	1,687***	1,483***	1,610***	1,217**	1,039	0,887	0,860	1,870***	2,718***
25-34 years	1,221***	1,384***	1,235***	1,270***	1,161*	1,002	1,009	1,032	1,253**	2,122***
35-44 years	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
45-54 years	0,920	0,939	0,834*	0,771***	0,862	1,068	1,088	1,821***	1,142	1,180
>= 55 years	1,970***	1,664***	0,561***	0,598***	1,222	2,030***	2,585***	5,819***	5,535***	4,007***
skills										
unskilled	1,071	1,041	0,959	0,897	1,194**	1,297***	1,383*	1,499***	1,053	1,052
with vocational degree	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
with academic degree	1,141*	1,217***	1,212	1,220**	0,865	1,257	1,099	1,079	1,245*	1,227*
nationality										
German	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
main migrants	1,109	1,127*	0,830	0,896	1,182	1,146	1,185	1,290	1,395***	1,481***
other migrants	1,343***	1,324***	0,911	1,168	1,398*	1,405*	1,415	1,717*	1,920***	1,550***
kind of activity										
primary activity	1,108	1,349*	0,772	0,697	1,705*	1,998***	1,940	1,320	0,995	1,812***
manufacturing activity	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
service activity	1,077	0,959	1,243***	1,083	0,962	0,721***	1,068	0,817	1,016	0,961
weekly working time										
full-time	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
part-time	0,988	0,959	0,872	0,892	0,775***	0,859	0,655*	0,973	1,320***	1,143*
branch										
primary sector	1,123	1,123	1,036	1,096	0,681	1,079	0,557	0,489	1,962**	1,079
mining & steel ind.	0,775***	0,819*	0,912	0,909	0,559***	0,707	0,647	0,822	0,817	0,798
manufacturing ind.	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
construction ind.	1,486***	1,089	1,484***	1,050	1,688***	1,080	0,691	0,772	1,277**	1,088
infrastructure & transport services	1,211***	1,283***	1,245*	1,481***	0,721*	0,866	0,582*	0,579*	1,720***	1,358***
production services	1,175*	1,315***	1,283*	1,568***	1,061	0,947	1,111	0,738	1,221	1,252*
econ. transact. serv.	1,083	1,247***	1,210**	1,422***	1,017	0,835*	0,977	0,704*	1,003	1,258***
polit. transact. serv.	0,771***	1,117	0,887	1,028	0,493***	1,017	0,454***	0,761	0,978	1,315***
pers. & househ. serv.	1,131*	1,271***	1,109	1,211***	0,973	1,025	0,855	0,710*	1,364***	1,525***
firm size										
1-19 employees	1,409***	1,216***	1,148*	1,155**	1,881***	1,397***	1,441*	1,237	1,304***	1,211***
20-99 employees	1,199***	1,082*	1,131	1,118*	1,412***	1,176*	1,431*	1,064	1,099	0,972
100-499 employees	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
>=500 employees	0,877***	0,836***	0,870	0,791***	0,757***	0,710***	1,081	0,987	0,969	0,972
firm age										
< 5 year	1,048	1,064	0,989	1,091	1,068	1,111	1,245	1,178	1,090	0,992
>= 5 years	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
firm's skill structure										
share of stuff with occup. degree (%)	0,999	0,998***	1,000	0,998*	1,000	0,998	1,001	0,998	0,998	0,997*

Table 3 (continued)

	all destinations		firm change		unemploy-ment		long-term unempl.		registration gap	
	Sample 1	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*
prev. unemployment experiences										
never unemployed	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
1 unemploy. spell	1,131***	1,038	0,833***	0,921	1,923***	1,728***	1,835***	1,316*	0,816**	0,878*
>= 2 unemploy. spells	1,136	1,164***	0,590***	0,903	2,187***	2,248***	1,865***	1,567*	0,892	1,014
prev. jobs										
no prev. jobs	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
1 prev. job	0,866***	0,980	1,156*	1,141**	0,895	0,792***	1,175	0,856	0,635***	0,949
>= 2 prev. jobs	0,962	1,079*	1,467***	1,343***	0,908	0,762***	1,183	0,723*	0,662***	1,001
prev. registr. gap										
no gap	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
1 gap	1,030	1,121***	0,845***	0,921	1,086	1,421***	1,156	1,738***	1,244***	1,286***
>= 2 gaps	1,464***	1,363***	0,789	1,114	2,067***	1,718***	2,037***	1,716*	1,725***	1,645***
prev. occup. changes										
no change	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
1 change	1,007	0,987	1,003	1,030	0,977	0,998	1,207	1,135	1,034	0,918
2 changes	0,968	1,120***	0,948	1,149*	1,008	1,139	1,318	1,399*	0,926	1,079
>= 3 changes	1,115*	1,193***	1,034	1,229***	1,366***	1,463***	2,064***	1,561*	0,954	0,973
prev. long-term unemployment										
no	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
yes	0,980	1,173***	1,035	1,003	0,936	1,566***	0,967	2,258***	1,025	0,990
change in working time in ongoing job										
no	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
yes	0,993	0,972	1,191	0,990	0,761	0,777	0,670	0,410	0,996	1,072
ongoing occupa-tional changes										
no changes	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
min. one change	0,753***	0,849*	0,733*	0,797	0,763	0,878	0,814	0,877	0,750	0,913
macro data										
unemployment rate	0,029***	0,000***	0,006***	0,000***	48,18***	0,042***	228,2***	0,006***	0,111***	0,001***
n	10.921	12.651	10.921	12.651	10.921	12.651	10.921	12.651	10.921	12.651
events	5.683	7.022	2.032	3.262	1.832	1.509	476	472	1.786	2,227
Pseudo R^2	0,0168	0,0211	0,0334	0,0349	0,0278	0,0288	0,0311	0,0480	0,0246	0,0243

**** : p <= 0,005 ** : 0,005 < p <= 0,01 *: 0,01 < p <= 0,05*

RG = reference group

source: IAB-Employment Subsample (own calculation)

Table 4: Hazard Ratios for jobs with minimum 5 years of tenure (Cox Model; type c), Sample 1 (1983/84) and Sample 2 (1990/91), general model and competing risk model

	all destinations		**firm change**		**unemploy-ment**		**long-term unempl.**		**registration gap**	
	Sample 1	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*
gender										
male	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
female	1,190***	1,300***	0,755***	0,841***	1,631***	1,488***	1,816***	1,467***	1,290***	1,677***
age										
up to 24 years	1,692***	1,712***	1,158	1,398*	2,830***	0,957	2,453***	1,267	1,350	2,991***
25-34 years	1,373***	1,755***	1,267***	1,422***	1,556***	1,301***	1,725***	0,990	1,359***	2,839***
35-44 years	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
45-54 years	1,045	1,026	0,769***	0,745***	1,167***	1,548***	2,083***	2,633***	1,380***	1,291***
>= 55 years	4,448***	3,542***	0,559***	0,432***	3,235***	6.069***	8,119***	13,02***	12,65***	8,966***
skills										
unskilled	1,112***	1,106***	1,032	0,961	1,169***	1,266***	1,137	1,296***	1,102***	1,087**
with vocational degree	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
with academic degree	1,040	1,110**	1,798***	1,419***	0,600***	0,685***	0,477***	0,570***	0,824***	1,045
nationality										
German	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
main migrants	1,430***	1,176***	0,810**	0,836**	1,417***	1,294***	1,329***	1,199*	1,968***	1,377***
other migrants	1,124	1,054	0,941	1,143	0,865	0,789	0,693	0,791	1,369***	1,097
kind of activity										
primary activity	1,396***	1,347***	1,191	1,408***	1,524**	0,735	0,632	0,563	1,535***	1,630***
manufacturing activity	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
service activity	0,910***	0,945**	0,945	1,055	0,784***	0,821***	0,863*	0,840***	0,958	0,936*
weekly working time										
full-time	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
part-time	0,954	1,001	0,947	0,986	0,799***	0,907	0,828	0,970	1,067	1,043
branch										
primary sector	0,924	0,814	0,876	0,823	0,711	0,457***	0,709	0,308*	1,169	1,170
mining & steel ind.	0,909*	0,888***	0,613***	0,862*	0,631***	0,597***	0,663***	0,613***	1,282***	1,172***
manufacturing ind.	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
construction ind.	1,294***	0,801***	1,093	0,998	1,349***	0,518***	0,580***	0,360***	1,375***	0,885
infrastructure & transport services	1,033	1,023	1,535***	1,368***	0,364***	0,350***	0,284***	0,284***	1,172**	1,372***
production services	1,140*	0,995	1,160	1,329***	0,837	0,478***	0,846	0,424***	1,342***	1,125
econ. transact. serv.	1,022	1,007	1,126*	1,255***	0,758***	0,543***	0,754***	0,484***	1,145***	1,193***
polit. transact. serv.	0,754***	0,838***	0,789***	0,929	0,175***	0,221***	0,158***	0,164***	1,084	1,287***
pers. & househ. serv.	0,902***	0,911***	1,114	0,936	0,549***	0,341***	0,416***	0,227***	1,048	1,369***
firm size										
1-19 employees	1,256***	1,138***	1,108	1,165***	1,991***	1,205***	1,449***	0,934	1,036	1,082*
20-99 employees	1,155***	1,037	1,266***	1,143***	1,448***	0,982	1,140	0,886	0,975	0,968
100-499 employees	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
>=500 employees	0,918***	1,010	0,709***	0,899***	1,151**	1,265***	1,416***	1,598***	0,954	0,981
firm's skill structure										
share of stuff with occup. degree (%)	1,002***	1,000	1,004***	0,998*	1,004***	1,001	1,004*	1,002	1,001	1,001

Table 4 (continued)

	all destinations		firm change		unemploy-ment		long-term unempl.		registration gap	
	Sample 1	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*	*Sample 1*	*Sample 2*
prev. occup. changes										
no change	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
1 change	1,048	1,024	1,012	1,087	1,083	1,053	1,226*	1,113	1,065	0,952
2 changes	1,010	1,075	0,989	1,018	1,082	0,881	0,967	0,857	0,992	1,196*
>= 3 changes	1,064	1,066	0,901	0,989	1,077	1,089	0,977	1,528	1,178	1,076
change in working time in ongoing job										
no	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
yes	1,014	0,996	1,013	0,924	0,959	0,952	0,840	0,9838	1,118	1,091
ongoing occupa-tional changes										
no changes	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG	RG
min. one change	1,010	0,950	0,870	0,936	1,062	0,937	1,188	0,912	1,098	0,965
macro data										
unemployment rate	0,008***	0,000***	0,001***	0,000***	0,033***	0,000***	0,029***	0,000***	0,029***	0,000***
n	44.698	46.441	44.698	46.441	44.698	46.441	44.698	46.441	44.698	46.441
events	13.304	15.654	3.608	5.166	3.357	3.476	1.486	2.373	6.311	6.990
Pseudo R^2	0,0390	0,0428	0,0653	0,0556	0,0342	0,0672	0,0488	0,1070	0,0647	0,0564

**** : p <= 0,005 ** : 0,005 < p <= 0,01 *: 0,01 < p <= 0,05*

RG = reference group

source: IAB-Employment Subsample (own calculation)

3.1.2 Age

The estimations of the general model confirm the assumption that the age specific hazard function is "u-shaped". This means that with increasing age job stability is initially growing, but shrinks again for older employees. In addition, especially the age specific analysis of job stability makes clear how important it is to estimate not only a general transition rate model but also a competing risk model. Thus, comparing the hazard ratios in the general model, the youngest age groups both showed a noticeable risk growth to leave their firms within the analysis time. For example, in *sample 1* the youngest age group firstly had a 25 percent higher risk of transition than the reference group. But looking at *sample 2* the corresponding hazard ratio had increased to 1.60. How should we interpret this risk growth? If we look at the competing risk model it becomes clear that the general risk growth was foremost caused by the growing chances to face a smooth transition into another firm. The firm change risk of employees with an age between 25 and 34 years and being with their current employer for minimum five years increased, for example, from a 27 percent (1980s) to a 42 percent (1990s) higher risk compared to the reference group. In contrast, the unemployment risk of younger employees shrank in the course of time – if there is any statistical evident age specific difference in *sample 2* at all.

Beneath the growing "risk" to face a smooth firm change, the youngest age groups both had a noticeably higher risk to experience the state of "registration gap" within the analysis time of three years. But even if the state of "registration gap" is generally very heterogeneous, it is not very likely for the two youngest age

groups that entering this state meant to face a economically precarious stage. To justify this interpretation we firstly have to remember that periods of "unemployment" are recorded within the IABES data only if the sample member received unemployment benefits. Secondly, it should be noted that in Germany every unemployed is entitled to receive unemployment benefits if he or she was gainful employed at least for minimum of one year. If we now look at the estimation results again it becomes obvious that they indicate no worsening of the social situation of younger employees. Especially for the younger employees with a tenure of more than one year we otherwise could expect an increasing transition into the state of "unemployment" which would guarantee the payment of unemployment benefits. Therefore, it is quite more plausible that the increasing risk to get out of employment and enter the state of "registration gap" is caused by "family reasons" (e.g. to care about a child) or is connected with subsequent episodes of improving formal qualifications (e.g. to start at university). In the end the higher chances to make a smooth transition to a new firm, the higher propensity to get into a "registration gap" and the simultaneously decreasing unemployment risk are arguments for growing mobility chances rather than for growing mobility risks for younger employees between the 1980s and the 1990s.

Since the mid 1980s the possible duration of periods for which older unemployed people could drawn benefits has been prolonged. As a result, the restructuring of the workforce took place in the form of an increasing number of layoffs of employees who were older than about 55 years. This seemed to be "socially acceptable" since the older unemployed received unemployment benefits for several years until they reach the age of final retirement. However, this policy has led to an enormous growth in long term unemployment of the older workforce (c.f. Knuth and Kalina 2002). And therefore, it is not really surprising, that this is exactly what we can see with regard to the results of our age specific competing risk model. The unemployment and respectively the long term unemployment risk for the oldest group increased enormously. At the same time the risk to face a change into a "registration gap" in the course of analysis time shrank for the oldest age group. We have to understand that the transition from employment to final retirement appears in our data as a transition into a "registration gap". Hence, the increasing long-term unemployment risk and the decreasing risk to face a transition into a "registration gap" indicate very clearly the change of retirement paradigm in Germany between the 1980s and 1990s with its vast impact on the share of long term unemployed among the older workforce.

3.1.3 Highest formal qualification level

Compared to the reference group (employees with an occupational degree) and independently of tenure the unemployment risk of unskilled employees increased between the 1980s and the 1990s. At first sight, these findings indicate a growing polarisation of employment chances and risks. To illustrate this we should have a closer look, for instance, on the employees with tenure of one up to two years. In contrast to the reference group, the unskilled showed a 19 percent higher unemployment risk in the 1980s. But in the 1990s this risk has increased to approximately 30 percent. However, there is also some evidence that does not support this assumed skill specific polarisation process. In opposite to the growing unemployment risk, the unskilled who had found a (new) job showed an increasing chance to make a smooth firm change, and their *long-term* unemployment risk did not increase as well. In addition, for both groups with a higher tenure there was no

statistical difference neither in the 1980s nor in the 1990s between unskilled and employees with an occupational degree with regard to their risk of firm change.
To understand what is going on we should combine these findings with some descriptive results of Erlinghagen and Knuth (2002). They have calculated entry and exit rates for unskilled employees and found – beneath the expected high exit rate *out of* employment – a surprisingly high entry rate *into new jobs* in the first half of the 1990s. Now the whole picture fits together: First, during the period between the 1970s and the mid 1990s unskilled employees had to face a growing risk to become (long term) unemployed. Therefore, at the end of our investigation period the main problem for unskilled was to find a (new) job and get out of unemployment. However, our findings show that – if the search process was successful – the risks of unskilled employees to leave their job (again) have not generally increased. There is also no obvious difference between unskilled and employees with an occupational degree with respect to their risk to face a direct firm change. Hence, within the unskilled workforce a certain segment of individuals was still "marketable" even in a more and more service oriented economy. And as a result all these findings can be interpret as an increasing polarisation *within* the group of unskilled labour market participants.

In contrast to the double polarisation of and within the group of unskilled employees we can find a moderate levelling out of employment chances and risks between the employees with an occupational degree (EOD) and with an academic degree. The cox estimations show a general tendency that job stability of academics is lower than for EODs. At least in the 1990s academics show a higher general transition rate as the reference group. However, behind these findings a more sophisticated picture is hidden:

(1) If we concentrate first on new started jobs there is rather no statistical difference between employees with an academic or with an occupational degree. Only in *sample 1* academics have a significantly higher firm change risk but these differences have disappeared in *sample 2*.
(2) Slightly different results can be found for the employees with one up to two years of tenure. In contrast to new started jobs higher firm change risks can be found here for employees with an academic degree only in the 1990s.

These results both are an indicator of a general stabilisation of academic jobs. But this stabilisation occurs more as a kind of timing effect rather than an shrinking effect of overall transition probability: Although academic employees showed significantly higher hazard ratios for changing to another firm in *sample 1* as well as in *sample 2*, the event of leaving the old firm was timely prolonged and occured later on comparing the 1980s with the 1990s. The same pattern can be found if we take a look on the estimation results for the jobs with minimum five years of tenure. In the 1980s academics had a 80 percent higher risk to face a firm change. Although there was still a higher hazard ratio in the 1990s, this risk has shrunk to about 40 percent compared with the risk of employees with an occupational degree. Further on, jobs of academics with a relatively high tenure have a significantly lower (long-term) unemployment risk than EODs.

3.1.4 Kind of activity and firm size

Firstly, the results of the different cox estimations shown in table 2 up to 4 make perfectly clear that the belief in a generally smaller job stability for service occupations is definitely not true. Compared to manufacturing occupations as the

reference group, the hazard ratios of service occupations are significantly lower in almost all models of *sample 1* and *sample 2*. In addition service occupations protect employees from unemployment, no matter if they are employed at the beginning of the 1980s or at the beginning of the 1990s. According to the three different groups of tenure, employees in service occupations in *sample 2*, for example, show a by 45 percent to 22 percent lower unemployment risk during the analysis time.

Secondly, the firm-size related estimation results mainly confirm the descriptive analyses done by Erlinghagen and Knuth (2002). In the 1980s firm size was a strong and definite determinant of job stability but this clear effect has diminished or even has partly almost disappeared in the 1990s. To illustrate this phenomenon we take a look on the general transition model for employees with minimum five years of tenure. In the 1980s the general transition risk of employees in small firms (1-19 employees) was by 26 percent higher then the risk of the reference group (working in firms with 100-499 employees). Even if there was still a significantly higher transition risk for employees working in very small firms in the 1990s this risk has been obviously reduced (14 percent higher risk than the reference group). For any other firm size the typical effect on job stability that could be still found in the 1980s has disappeared in the course of time. In the 1990s there was no statistical difference between job stability for employees in firms with 20 to 99 employees on the one hand and for employees in large firms with more than 500 employees each compared to the reference group.

However, as an exception of the general levelling out process we can also find some kind of increasing firm-size specific polarisation. Between the 1980s and the 1990s the (long-term) unemployment risk of employees with minimum five years of tenure and working in large firms with a stuff of more than 500 people increased clearly from 15 to 27 respectively from 42 to 60 percent compared to the reference group. Because the cox model controls all other variables these findings indicate a genuine negative effect for job stability in large scale enterprises. In the end, the changed impact of firm-size on job stability is no mono-causal and trivial effect. The main element of change was the increased job stability of employees working in small firms with a *parallel* de-stabilisation trend of jobs in large firms.

3.1.5 Previous unemployment experience

According to "signaling theory" (Spence 1973) (former) unemployed individuals could be expected to have a lower hire probability because employers interpret the unemployment experience as a negative signal for a relatively low productivity of the applicant. However, the findings of our cox estimations are particularly remarkable because it becomes quite obvious that previous unemployment experiences have also a negative impact on job stability even if the (former) unemployed have prevailed throughout the screening process and have got a job. Regardless of the actual tenure there is a clearly higher (long-term) unemployment risk for former unemployed employees. Thus, the unemployment risk for former unemployed people remains higher even if the usual trial period[4] was finished successfully. Evidence could be found especially within the competing risk estimations for employees with one up to two years of tenure. In fact behind the

[4] In Germany new stuff members are normally employed on six months' probation during which lower dismissal provisions exists.

feature “previous unemployment experience” personal characteristics seems to be hidden that really effect individual job stability.

Beside these timeless and general findings and similar to the results for unskilled people we can find some indication for a growing polarisation *within* the group of former unemployed employees. On the one hand the unemployment risk of people who had faced just one previous unemployment spell decreased. But on the other hand the unemployment risk of employees with repeated past unemployment spells increased between the 1980s and 1990s for new started jobs and jobs with one to two years of tenure. It seems as if still existing general negative impacts of previous unemployment experiences would not anymore increase employment risks per se, but that especially former multiple or long-term unemployed employees are the main losers of the transition process into service society.
But how can we explain these findings? There are two different explanations for the negative long term impacts of previous unemployment spells on job stability:

(1) *Employability*: A possible explanation could be that there is really something that could be called “employability” as an individual, relatively time constant but hardly observable trait. Therefore, employees with a lower employability are likely to cause intra-firm troubles, leave or lose their job and become unemployed again even if the screening process and the probation period has been finished successfully.

(2) *Path dependency of exclusion*: Another possible explanation could be: Who becomes unemployed by accident (for example because of mass dismissals or plant closure) faces a sustainable chance reduction to integrate durably into the working life of one firm again even if a new job will in the end last longer than one year. This explanation fits into the signaling theory because employers maybe select former unemployed for worse and more insecure jobs right from the start. Therefore, the higher unemployment risks of former unemployed employees is a kind of long term effect of employers’ selection in the past.

Based on the data of the IAB Employment Subsample it is unfortunately not possible to test whether the first or the second (or both) explanation is true. This must belong to future research efforts.

3.2 Does the “risk regime” rule?

The following section is asking if there are any indications that the traditional determinants of job stability have generally lost their ‘importance’ during the transition to service society. If this is true then the statistical model must significantly loose its overall explanatory power in the course of time because the estimations are done on basis of the same raw data and on the same explanatory variables in both samples. One possibility to indicate and compare the overall explanatory power and the goodness of fit of the multivariate estimations is to calculate a value called “Pseudo-R^2”. Following the calculation of the determination coefficient R^2 known from linear regression, the Pseudo-R^2 reports how much of the variance of the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables used in the model. Pseudo-R^2 can vary between ‘0’ (no explanatory power at all) and ‘1’ (complete explanatory power).

Before we can compare the various Pseudo-R^2, we have to subtract each value of *sample 1* from its corresponding value in *sample 2*:

$Pseudo\text{-}R^2_{sample\ 1} - Pseudo\text{-}R^2_{sample\ 2} = \Delta\ PR$

Despite this we have to define certain thresholds that indicates a growing or respectively shrinking explanatory power of our model in the course of time as follows:

$\lvert\Delta\ PR\rvert <= 0{,}005$	no change
$0{,}005 < \lvert\Delta\ PR\rvert <= 0{,}02$	moderate change
$0{,}02 < \lvert\Delta\ PR\rvert$	strong change

The direction of change is indicated by the sign of the subtraction result. A positive result stands for an increase of explanatory power and a negative result stands for a decrease of explanatory power of the estimated model in the course of time. Comparing the Pseudo-R^2 that are reported at the end of *table 3*, *4* and *5*, it becomes obvious that the De-Structuring-Thesis cannot be confirmed at all. As shown in *table 6* the explanatory power of our model did not generally decrease in the course of time. Comparing the 15 estimation pairs of *sample 1* and *sample 2* we can see on the one hand that the explanatory power of the model decreased only in respect of four comparisons. But on the other hand there are also three partly strong increases at the same time. However, the explanatory power of the model mostly remained very constant (8 estimation pairs).

Table 5: Deviation of the Pseudo-R^2 between sample 1 and sample 2 for each three types of cox estimations (a), (b) and (c)

	estimation (a): new jobs	**estimation (b): 1-2 years**	**estimation (c): >= 5 years**
all transitions	**0**	**0**	**0**
firm change	**0**	**0**	**-**
unemployment	**0**	**0**	**++**
long-term unemployment	**-**	**+**	**++**
registration gap	**-**	**0**	**-**
$\lvert\Delta\ PR\rvert <= 0{,}005$	0		
$0{,}005 < \lvert\Delta\ PR\rvert <= 0{,}02$	- / +		
$0{,}02 < \lvert\Delta\ PR\rvert$	-- / ++		

4 Conclusion

Using multivariate models where we control for a variety of cyclical influences on job stability, our analysis shows that job stability is not generally decreasing in the transition to service society. Therefore, the “Destablisation-Thesis” must be rejected. In our transition rate models, we also do not find any support for the “De-Structuring Thesis”. There is no general levelling out of employment chances or risks in the course of time. Of course there are partly some trends of levelling out, for example, in respect to the gender or firm size specific results. But on the other hand, there are also clear trends of increasing polarisation in other areas, if we remember, for example, the growing employment risks of unskilled employees. In addition, some kind of growing “double polarisation” can be found within the

discriminated groups of unskilled employees and of employees who had faced long term unemployment and/or several employment spells in the past.

The general social changes that took place in Germany between the 1970s and the 1990s are well reflected through the estimation results. Although the educational expansion has slowed down in the 1980s, its further growth is represented by the increasing risk for younger employees to make a transition into the state of "registration gap". The gender specific results must be interpreted against the background of a rapidly growing employment participation of women with its impact on the change of work organisation within private households. The trend of levelling out should be, therefore, interpreted as an indication of growing equality between men and women, although at the end of our investigation period there are still clear gender specific differences with regard to job stability that refer to still existing role differences.

The transition to service society that took place in Germany between the 1970s and the 1990s did not only result in purely quantitative changes, for example, in the share of employed women. Actually qualitative changes took place, too. However, the empirically observable changes are very different from the effects that has been assumed by a number of European mainstream sociologists who have always tried to push the "Destabilisation-Thesis" and the "De-structuring Thesis" without any empirical evidence. What we can find instead is no socio-economic de-structuring but rather a socio-economic *re*structuring process that has taken place during the transition to service society. In part this restructuring process has simultaneously led to an increasing polarisation as well as an increasing levelling out of employment chances and risks, whereas some socio-economic determinants of job stability have remained constant in the course of time.

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