Youth, agency and social change: objectives and results of the UP2YOUTH project

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The research project UP2YOUTH
Transition regimes as heuristic tool
Youth and social change
Youth and changes in the life course
Agency in comparative perspective
Conclusions
Coordinated Action - FP 6

18 teams - 15 countries

3 strands:

• Young parenthood
• Civic participation
• Transitions of young people from an ethnic minority or migration background
Core dimensions

Individuation

Learning

Culture

Policies
Sensitizing Concepts
## Transition Regimes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Derived from “welfare regimes” typologies</th>
<th>Heuristic rather than descriptive tool</th>
<th>‘Gestalt’ approach: socio-economic foundations, institutional rationales, cultural patterns</th>
<th>Deconstructing ‘normalities’</th>
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Youth – Actor of Social Change
Dimensions of Transition Regimes

- Structures of welfare policies
- Education and training systems
- Labour markets
- Policies against youth unemployment
- Mechanisms of doing gender
- Representations of ‘youth’
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Countries</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>• Anglo-Saxon countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universalistic</td>
<td>• Nordic countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-protective</td>
<td>• Mediterranean countries</td>
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<td>Employment-centred</td>
<td>• Continental countries</td>
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<td>Post-socialist</td>
<td>• Central and Eastern Europe</td>
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<td>Young parenthood</td>
<td>Civic participation</td>
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<td>University of Leiden (NL)</td>
<td>National School of Public Health (FR)</td>
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<td>University of Milano-Bicocca (IT)</td>
<td>University College Cork (IRL)</td>
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<td>NEC, Plovdiv (BG)</td>
<td>Austrian Youth Research Institute (AT)</td>
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<td>University of Dresden (DE)</td>
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<td>University of Belfast (UK)</td>
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Sensitizing Concepts
Youth and social change

Multi-faceted societal changes

Changing modes of social integration
Youth and changes in the life course

- De-standardisation
- Fragmentation
- Diversification of life course transitions
- Disappearance of adulthood?

Youth – Actor of Social Change

UP2YOUTH
YOYO transitions

Transition as a linear and homogeneous status passage

Transition as a life phase composed of prolonged and diversified status passages

Reversible and fragmented Yo-yo-transitions with uncertain perspectives

Age

Youth

Adulthood

Youth

Adulthood

Youth
Sensitizing Concepts

Youth – Actor of Social Change

UP2YOUTH

agency

social change

youth
Agency in youth research and policy:

Structure-angle

Choice-angle
Agency as an integrative concept

Whether or not? How much?

How?
Culture and learning as keys to agency

**Culture**
- partly shaping, partly resulting from young people’s agency

**Learning**
- situated, inventive, often related to risk-management
Conclusions 1: Benefits for research

• Subjectivity has gained so much importance for social integration processes that it cannot be separated from the more structure related strands of youth research
Conclusions 2: Integrated Transition Policies

- Youth as a life phase on its own
- Securing experimenting
- No target group containers
- Reflexivity and participation
Welcome to the UP2YOUTH Internet Portal

UP2YOUTH is an EU-funded research project concerned with the agency of young people in the context of social change. While their transitions to adulthood are structured by risks and uncertainty young men and women develop coping strategies which in turn affect social structures. This regards especially work, family and citizenship which are the key topics of UP2YOUTH. However, it depends on the scope of action that state policies provide them whether these strategies contribute to social integration and for subjectively meaningful biographical perspectives.

The UP2YOUTH Internet Portal not only serves to document the structure, progress and results of the project, but also to provide the European youth research community a platform for information and networking.

Thematic Workshop, 1–4 November, Lisbon

From 1 to 4 November 2007 the second UP2YOUTH thematic workshop will take place in Lisbon (Portugal). Researchers from all over Europe are invited to present their findings and to discuss them with regard to the research questions of UP2YOUTH and the draft thematic reports. A keynote speech will be given by Alex Phoenix (Open University, UK).

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