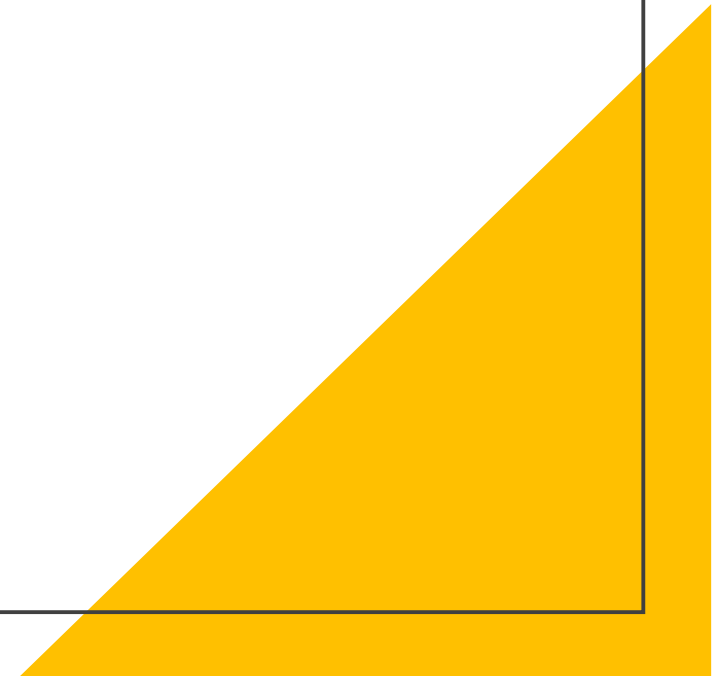


Rethinking Youth Transitions

Symposium: “Navigating transitions: adapting policies to young people's changing realities”

Tirana 22-23 June 2022



Youth Transitions Today

- the **experience of transitions to adulthood** is often an uncomfortable one for an increasing number of young people
- the **“lost” generation**, the **“threatened” generation**, the **“betrayed” generation**, the **“condemned” generation**
- **Unemployment**, economic instability, in-work poverty and devaluation of educational titles as widespread experiences
- **Limited opportunities** to risk investing in housing independence and family building

Effects of the Pandemic

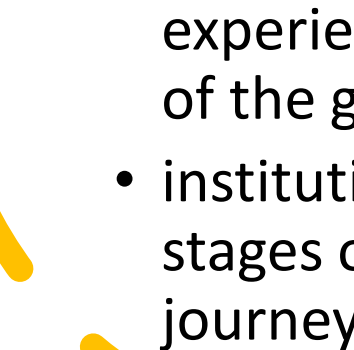
- Young people's difficulties in navigating their paths toward adulthood appears to have been **worsened by the pandemic**
- 180 countries from all continents enforced **school closures** during the pandemic, affecting over 1.5 billion students (Unesco 2021)
- more than one in six young people globally were made **redundant and ceased working** (ILO 2022)
- 2 millions of young Europeans (15-29) **lost their jobs** in 2020 (Eurostat 2021)
- **Youth employment** decreased of 2.2 pp. (general employment decreased of 1.4)
- 23% **reduction of working hours** (Global initiative for decent Jobs for Youth 2022)
- Consequences of lockdown and work difficulties on **mental health (OECD 2021)**

What About “Before” the Pandemic?

- “over the last couple of decades, **youth transitions have become increasingly protracted and, seemingly, more complex**. Routes which were once viewed as linear and predictable are seen as having been replaced by a set of movements which are less predictable and involve frequent breaks, backtracking and the blending of statuses” (Furlong 2003)
- **”Broken transitions”** (Chisholm 1995)
- **“fall of the traditional ways of moving from youth to adulthood”** (Buzzi 1984)



The Standard Model of Transitions to Adulthood

- unproblematized assessment of successful transitions to adulthood to the achievement of the **five markers of adulthood**: finishing school, the acquisition of stable employment, obtaining an independent residence, marriage, and parenthood
 - negates that young people have always **navigated adulthood in many different ways** by generalising a way of becoming and being adult that was experienced only by a small segment of the youth population of a small part of the globe for a short period of time.
 - institutionalizes a **cognitive hierarchy between youth and adulthood** as stages of the life course by giving more importance to the goal than to the journey.
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Can Transitions Be Reimagined?

- **Rediscovering and reclaiming the “true meaning” of transitions** by recognising in-betweenness, liminality, undefinition as key features of this age
- to **elaborate knowledge and policies** to help young people to reclaim their **right to be young**, that is also a right to experiment through the journey, a right to fail, a right to carefreeness, a right to messiness



Can Transitions Be Reimagined?



- **Giving visibility to alternative ways of navigating transitions** elaborated by contemporary young people
- New ideas of adulthood are emerging from **practices and spaces that we normally do not consider as related to transitions to adulthood.**
- These every day and political practices are **young people responses to their changed realities** that we need to acknowledge them in the elaboration of youth policies

Can Transitions Be Reimagined?

- **Elaborating new ways of assessing maturity**
- observation of **marginal segments of the youth population** that have never been able to reach adulthood, and thus maturity, in the way proposed by the standard model of adulthood
- Marginality “**a site of radical possibility, a space of resistance**” (bell hooks, 1985)



Thank You! 😊

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