

YOU- TH 2010

The social profile of young people in Slovenia

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FOREWORD

“I see no hope for the future of our people if they are dependent on the frivolous youth of today, for certainly all youth are reckless beyond words. When I was a boy, we were taught to be discreet and respectful of elders, but the present youth are exceedingly wise and impatient of restraint.”

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(Hesiod, Greek poet, around 700 BCE).

The Youth 2010 study is the first comprehensive research on Slovenian youth in a decade. Given the speed of change in society and in the status of young people, this is a very long time. At a time of relentless demographic trends, where indications are that between 2010 and 2020 the number of young people in Slovenia (15–29 years) will fall by over 20 percent, that in 2020 there will be almost a third fewer young people in Slovenia than in 1990, and that the proportion of youth in the overall population will decline in that period from 23 to 15 percent, the phrase “every young person counts” is taking on increasingly serious significance.

Thoughts of comprehensive research covering Slovenian youth had indeed been entertained for some time, since it was clear that such research was needed by decision-makers, researchers and young people themselves. And some time ago when the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth set out a new concept of analysis and research, and also provided the relevant funds, we placed at the forefront the Youth 2010 study.

We believe that the results of this research will allow us more easily to make sense of the importance of youth policy and youth work, and not just to present them more visibly to the general public, but also and most

importantly to place them on the agenda of the real (political) decision-makers, who frequently guard their sectoral policies carefully from any “encroachment” from youth dimensions. The research clearly illustrates which sectoral policies are involved.

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In 2010 the Office for Youth drafted the long-awaited Public Interest and Youth Sector Act, which is a legal basis for the preparation and adoption of a national programme for young people, the first such strategic document in Slovenia. The National Assembly adopted the act unanimously, lending special legitimacy to the principles behind its adoption. The research has also therefore been set out and conducted in such a way as to respond to the key challenges and issues encountered by young people in Slovenia. Its findings are therefore especially significant, since they will help the national programme identify appropriate strategic targets that will also be based in science. With a lack of all kinds of resources, it is indeed all the more important for key sets of issues in the national programme to be defined with a proper basis, and not in line with all the lumped-together judgements about the needs and problems of young people. The fact is, certain data indicate that the situation in specific areas can be viewed differently. A comparative look shows, for instance, that at first glance Slovenia is faring well in terms of youth employment, but this fact is rendered relative by the point that the number of unemployed graduates increased by 240 percent from 2000 to 2009, that there has been a sharp rise in Saturday, Sunday and night work performed by young people, that the share of young people aged 25 to 29 years with steady, permanent jobs has fallen from 52.4 percent in 2000 to 32.8 percent in 2010 and so on.

What about young people? The research shows that they have a solid set of values, that they are optimistic and that they want to assume responsibility for their own fate, and that they want independence and to be part of society. They also do this if the circumstances in society are right. This is good information. As with their European peers, among young people in Slovenia there has been a noted trend of individualisation and competitiveness, but sadly also a trend of growing rejection of the established forms of functioning in society, political participation, a disaffection with public (especially political) elites, a lack of faith in the system and society and a lack of interest in “major social issues”. This point might perhaps not be quite so worrying if we found at the same time that young people have a general lack of interest, that they are not engaged with their surroundings, that they are total egoists and they are not interested in

the fate of the world around them and so on. But this is not the case. For this reason their arm's-length relationship with society must give us all the more cause for concern, since it points to serious signs of a rupture between youth and the general social fabric.

So why is this the case? Here, too, the research offers an answer. Young people are increasingly sensing a gulf between them and society. They believe that in their most sensitive period they are being left high and dry. They do not feel called upon to take part. They see that stricter rules apply to them. Yet the answers as to how to pass through this situation should not be sought amongst young people. Undoubtedly the first step forward needs to be taken by the 'big brother'.

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Special thanks and congratulations are due to the selected research provider – to the head researcher Dr. Miran Lavrič and colleagues at the Faculty of Arts at the University of Maribor. Their cooperation, approach and quality can be assessed as more than outstanding. The research is very well presented and is supported with quantitative and qualitative data and statistics. Its added value lies in the comparison with data from previous studies (indicating trends) and in its extension to the European context (which adds internationally comparative weighting to specific aspects). We are especially pleased given the practical applicability and the addenda that the researchers provided on their own initiative in the form of recommendations for the Office for Youth and other decision-makers. We will of course make use of the recommendations to good effect.

And finally, we could return to the introductory thoughts of the Greek poet Hesiod. We can also hear similar assertions in present-day Slovenia, which suggests that the general, stereotyped perception of youth has not changed much since Antiquity. These antagonisms are logical. The framework of values and the lifestyles of young people are always at odds with those of the majority, which are usually also formally defined. Mature societies are able to harmonise this dynamic intergenerationally, and to take advantage of it. What about us?

Peter Debeljak

Director of the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth

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0 Introduction: Youth 2010 in the context of studying young people

This work was produced under the patronage of the Office for Youth, and is intended primarily to present the results of an empirical study of young people in Slovenia conducted jointly in 2010 by a group of researchers from the Faculty of Arts at the University of Maribor and the company Interstat, d. o. o.

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This study comes after a relatively long, ten-year break in national empirical research on young people. The group of researchers that collaborated in the study place their work in the tradition of researching Slovenian youth groups¹ over the past 25 years. The main reference framework for the research is the key research of Slovenian youth groups conducted by colleagues from what is now the Faculty of Social Sciences in Ljubljana, under the direction of Dr. Mirjana Ule. The studies published on the basis of that research are numerous, covering relatively well the topic of young people, and we should mention in particular: *Mladina in ideologija* (*Youth and Ideology*, Ule, 1988), *Vsakdanji svet mladih* (*The Everyday World of Young People*, Ule, 1995), *Pri(e)hodnost mladine* (*The Future/Mobility of Youth*, Ule and Miheljak, 1995), *Identiteta študentske mladine v Sloveniji* (*The Identity of Student Youth in Slovenia*, Ule, 1996), *Mladina v devetdesetih: Analiza stanja v Sloveniji* (*Youth in the Nineties: Analysis of the Situation in Slovenia*, Ule, 1996a), *Predah za študentsko mladino* (*Breather for Student Youth*, Ule, 1996c), *Prosti čas mladih v*

1 We use the plural term youth groups for the purpose of internal differentiation within the population we are researching. Youth is in no way a homogenous group. The breakdown relates to various categories, ranging from breakdown by age key, which divides young people into adolescents, post-adolescents and young adults (Ule, 1996a: 26-32), the geographical key, dividing them into urban and rural young people (ibid.: 33-34), and all the way to keys relating to the socio-economic status of young people (cp. Cohen, 1955), consumer samples (cp. Clark, 2000: 227-228), belonging to specific scenes (Irwin, 1970: 67), modern tribes (Maffesoli 1996 in Weinzierl and Muggleton, 2003, 5) and other forms of social worlds (cp. Lutters and Ackerman, 1996: 3-4).

Ljubljani (Leisure Time of Young People in Ljubljana, Ule and Renner, 1998), *Socialna ranljivost mladih (Social Vulnerability of Young People*, Ule, 2000), and especially the study *Mladina 2000 (Youth 2000*, Miheljak, 2002), which is a kind of forerunner to this study.

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We see the special methodological quality in these studies in the fact that in formulating the questionnaires for the quantitative part of the research, the research group was among the first to establish a link with German studies of youth (cp. Hurrelmann et al., 2002, 2006). In the Slovenian context this allowed an adaptation of the tried and tested tool of our German colleagues, while at the same time the authors in this way enabled the highly appropriate comparability of Slovenian and German youth groups. This link also spurred a less obvious quality, which nonetheless had an important influence on the development of youth research in Slovenia following the already conducted research of Yugoslav youth of 1985 (JUPIO)² (Ule and Vrcan, 1986). In this way, Slovenia, too, acquired a higher standard of sociological youth research, moreover a link was forged with the historical European tradition of sociological research (cp. Jahoda, Lazarsfeld and Zeisel, 1975) as well as a link with the concurrent research of German colleagues (cp. Hurrelmann et al. 2002, 2006), wherein the qualitative part became an equal part of their periodic research on young people.

Another important feature of these studies is that the interpretation of results is tied to the contemporary interpretive and theoretical concepts of European and world social sciences. The basis for this is chiefly that the authors, before their studies and during them, familiarised themselves very well with the theoretical foundations and with studies already conducted elsewhere in the world, and incorporated this acquired knowledge into their research here in Slovenia (cp. Ule, 1996a). Thus the Slovenian milieu gained not just an insight into the actual state of the country's youth groups, but also into the influx of ideas and concepts that researchers were developing elsewhere in the world. Yet what is probably the most important thing on the conceptual level, is the reflection that could be undertaken with confidence only on the basis of a good conceptual grounding. Based on the JUPIO research, a number of monographs were published in Yugoslavia, but only the one involving the collaboration of Dr. Ule contains any derived reflection, which in this area repre-

2 This is the Jupio I survey of Yugoslav youth of 1985, which also contained a survey of Slovenian youth groups. The Slovenian research report was published as a scientific monograph entitled *Mladina in ideologija (Youth and Ideology)*.

sents on the one hand a deviation, and on the other hand an invaluable bonus (cp. Ule, 1988).

Alongside the already mentioned research, the state of Slovenian youth groups is also covered in research projects that in fact focus directly on other thematic fields, but indirectly they nevertheless afford an insight into the state of that population group. Here mention should be made particularly of the research projects *Družbeni profil študentov Slovenije: poročilo o rezultatih raziskave v letu 2005* (*The Social Profile of Students in Slovenia: report on the results of research in 2005*, Flere, Fištravec, Tavčar Krajnc, Lavrič, Klenovšek, Klanjšek and Šipuš, 2005) and *Socialnoekonomski položaj študentov v Sloveniji: poročilo 2008* (*Socio-economic Position of Students in Slovenia: report 2008*, cp. Ule, Tivadar, Kurdija and Rajšp, 2008) and numerous others, mostly partial studies of youth groups that dealt with young people for instance on the basis of youth-centrism (cp. Fištravec and Musil, 2002), health and sexual habits (cp. Godina, Bernik and Hlebec, 1998) and from the viewpoint of other important fields.

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On the level of national youth research, the empirical “vacuum” was filled by various international and domestic studies that relied primarily on existing official statistical data. In this connection, mention should be made primarily of the studies *Mladi v Sloveniji* (*Young People in Slovenia*, Vertot, 2009) and *Med otroštvom in odraslostjo* (*Between Childhood and Adulthood*, Boljka and Rakar, 2009). In this period an important place is also occupied among domestic contributions by the in-depth and slightly more theoretical work *Za vedno mladi? – Socialna psihologija odraščanja* (*Forever Young? – The Social Psychology of Growing Up*, Ule, 2008). In the context of international research, Slovenian youth were dealt with in several studies, among which we should point out primarily the European Commission report on young people (*EU Youth Report*, 2009) and the special Eurobarometer research (2007) on the topic of young people.

In terms of the described context, this study is a conceptual and methodological continuation of the tradition of researching young people in Slovenia, with certain refinements. The basis for designing the methodological approach was the studies already made of youth in Germany (Hurrelmann et al., 2002, 2006) and the approaches and concepts that appear in research to date on youth in Slovenia since 1985. As regards refinement of the approach, the following in particular should be emphasised:

- (1) an applied orientation, which while taking account of the contexts of youth policy is apparent in the focused analyses and their clearly derived research conclusions;
- (2) emphasis on longitudinal and international comparisons, primarily in EU-27;
- (3) the special attention devoted during its preparation to the compatibility of the quantitative and qualitative approaches and, during processing, to the merging of quantitative and qualitative data into a whole.

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The main guideline was the pointers provided by the body commissioning the research, the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth, with the following fields being stressed as the fundamental research goals:

1. demographic changes and intergenerational cooperation,
2. education and training,
3. creativity, culture, leisure,
4. the virtualisation of everyday life,
5. employment and entrepreneurship,
6. a sustainable method of social functioning,
7. residential and housing conditions,
8. health and wellbeing,
9. participation and social inclusion,
10. voluntary activity,
11. the mobility of young people and globalisation.

These fields served also as a fundamental guideline for processing data and their classification in the final report. This study thus also analyses young people in Slovenia from the aspect of all key represented aspects,

wherein the scope of research with regard to the 11 fields that were set is in places significantly broader:

1. The first chapter provides a detailed description of the method (quantitative and qualitative) of collecting data. The importance of key analytical procedures is also explained.
2. Chapter two first defines and addresses the concept of youth, and also sets out the changes taking place in relation to the duration of being young and equating youth with the status of young person. There is then a presentation of the (expected) trends regarding the number of young people and the elderly in Slovenia and the EU. Deriving from this is an analysis of the views of young people regarding intergenerational cooperation. This is followed by a brief presentation of certain key and current demographic changes relating to young people in Slovenia.
3. Chapter three begins with an analysis of the issue of the (high) involvement of young people in the education system. Special attention is focused on the academic success of Slovenian young people and how they feel in school. There is a particular treatment of the views of young people regarding non-formal forms of education and their activities in this field.
4. Chapter four presents the status of young people in the labour market, where special attention is devoted to unemployment and temporary forms of work. In this connection there is a special treatment of the group of women and the group of university-educated young people. Special attention is also devoted to the attitude of young people to entrepreneurship and the recognition of barriers that block greater entrepreneurial initiative for young people.
5. The next chapter deals with the wider social inclusion and exclusion of young people. The first subchapter looks especially at their political participation together with their views of politics. The second subchapter is devoted to analysing the trends of youth involvement in voluntary activities. Subchapter three then deals especially with the group of young people that we define as the socially excluded group. All three subchapters analyse in detail

the socio-demographic factors and psychosocial correlates of all three concepts under discussion.

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6. In the chapter on young people's leisure activities, special attention is focused on creativity and cultural pursuits. In a similar way we analyse long-term changes regarding the frequency of everyday and leisure activities of young people, as well as their socio-demographic factors and psycho-social correlates.
7. This is followed by a chapter on the virtualisation of everyday life, in which we analyse in detail the relationship between personal forms of socialising and the use of ICT, and of course the frequency of individual computer activity. There is a precise analysis of the socio-demographic factors and psychosocial correlates of using ICT for entertainment and information purposes.
8. Chapter eight discusses health and wellbeing among young people. The state of health of Slovenian youth is presented according to various indicators from the aspects of European comparison and time. There then follows an analysis of the satisfaction of young people with their health and life in general. We also analyse in detail the behaviours of young people that risk their health.
9. The chapter on the material standing of young people analyses primarily the available income of young people and their key resources. Special attention is devoted to the issue of poverty.
10. Chapter ten discusses the residential and housing conditions for young people, with major attention being focused on analysing the most important factors that contribute to the increasing postponement of young people leaving the parental home.
11. Chapter eleven looks at the attitude of young people to globalisation, and deals especially with their geographical mobility. We discuss especially the barriers that block young people from greater mobility.
12. This is followed by a generalised discussion of the value orientations of young people in the wider sense. Here we analyse in particular the sustainable way that young people function, as well as the trends relating to young people's attitude to the environment.

There is also a special discussion of the vision young people have of their social and personal future.

13. The final thematic chapter presents the personality traits of the young people used in chapter two as psycho-social correlates of the various concepts being discussed. These are concepts such as authoritarianism, social intolerance, alienation, anonymity, deviance and so forth. The chapter also aims to present the psychometric properties of the scales with which we measured these traits.
14. The report is rounded off by three chapters focusing on the results of qualitative research. In the first of these (*Portraits of interview participants*) we provide a similar presentation of the views of 25 young people who participated in the qualitative part of the research as interviewees. The chapter Synthesis of the findings of qualitative research is designed to provide a focused analysis of the key thematic areas of life of young people that were discussed in the entire research. This is then followed by a chapter on the *Zeitgeist* or “spirit of the times of young people”, as seen by the interview conductor and chapter author.
15. The final chapter in the report is intended to provide a brief summary of the main findings of the entire study and to place these findings in the wider social and theoretical contexts.

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1 Research methods

The Youth 2010 research is based on a merging of three methods of collecting sociological data. The most important and comprehensive part of the research is based on the survey of youth in Slovenia.

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1.1 Survey of youth living in Slovenia

In this chapter we present briefly the sampling plan and the method of sampling for the requirements of the Youth 2010 research. We describe the progress of field surveys by household, and then analyse in detail the level of response and the reasons for non-participation in the research. We also describe and explain the process of weighting the data. Through weighting, we have harmonised the sample data with the composition of the target population according to key demographic variables. At the end of the chapter we also discuss the sample error and set out a calculation of standard evaluation errors and confidence intervals.

1.1.1 Sampling plan

The target population for the Youth 2010 survey is all people with permanent residence in the Republic of Slovenia aged between 15 and 29 years on 26 July 2010. Sampling was conducted on the basis of data from the central population register of Slovenia, and the target population was first stratified into 12 statistical regions and six types of settlement (1: non-farming settlement of less than 2,000 inhabitants, 2: farming settlement of less than 2,000 inhabitants, 3: settlement of between 2,000 and 10,000 inhabitants, 4: settlement of more than 10,000 inhabitants, 5: Maribor, 6: Ljubljana). This means that in each statistical region we sampled on the basis of all represented types of settlement (46 strata in all).

Persons/sampling units were selected for the sample by means of two-level sampling. On the first level, based on a cluster of enumeration areas (CEA) we selected 200 primary sampling units (PSU) or sampling points available from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia for making up samples. The primary sampling units (PSU) were selected at random, with a probability proportionate to the size of the CEA depending on the definition of the target population and previously stratified by region and type of settlement.

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On the second level, in each of the selected PSUs 10 persons/sampling units were selected through simple random sampling. The sample is therefore composed of 2,000 persons (200 PSU x 10 persons = 2,000 persons). Since we had to provide at least 1,200 completed surveys, with an expected 60-percent response level (realisation) we needed a slightly bigger sample, in other words at least 2,000 persons.

For each person in the sample we obtained the following data: name and surname, street and house number, code and name of settlement, post-code and postal name, code and name of municipality, code and name of settlement type, code and name of statistical region, age bracket of person (15-18 years, 19-24 years, 25-29 years).

1.1.2 Conducting the survey

Data collection was conducted in the form of personal surveying in the field. This began on 27 July 2010 and ended on 24 September 2010. Interviewers received precise instructions for the survey at preliminary induction seminars (in Maribor, Ljubljana and Divača). Prior to the start of surveying in the field, all persons included in the sample were informed in writing of the survey and invited to participate.

We requested the interviewers to go out into the field immediately after the induction seminar, and to be available for at least four weeks from the start. They had to visit each person on the record sheet (10 persons per individual PSU) and to try to perform as many surveys as possible. Where necessary, they were required to make five visits to the individual person. In order to improve the survey, interviewers visited their allocated persons at different times. When a person was not at home, they were left a notification letter with the interviewer's details for easier coordination of the date and time of surveying. If even on the fifth visit it

was not possible to establish contact with the person, interviewers could then mark that sampling unit as unreachable. In September 2010 we sent to individual sampling points additional interviewers, who again visited those persons with whom previously (in five visits) it had been impossible to establish contact. In this way we succeeded in reaching those interviewees that had been absent for a long time in the summer months.

Interviewers had to make precise records of individual visits and the success of those visits. Moreover they were required to check in weekly from the field and report on progress, possible problems and other activities. If a person was not reachable at the given address, the interviewer attempted to find out the new address and visit the person there. If the new address was too far away, it would be allocated to the nearest interviewer.

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If two persons from the same household (e.g. two brothers or a brother and sister, as indicated by the surname and residential address) were given at one PSU, interviewers received the instruction to interview just one person from that household, which is customary in surveying given the similarity of sampling units from the same household. There were in fact few such cases, amounting to around 1 percent of all sampling units.

When the interviewing was completed, we checked the validity of the survey by means of a check-up letter and/or telephone call. Interviewers obtained from each surveyed person their telephone number, exclusively for checking the quality of the work of interviewers in the field.

In order to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of the collected data, the personal data of interviewees and contact data were kept separately from their responses to survey questions.

1.1.3 Level of participation in the research

The level of participation or response was 62.9 percent. This means that of 2,000 persons selected for the sample, we interviewed 1,257 persons. This response rate is at the level that is usual for this kind of field survey in Slovenia,³ and from the methodological aspect it can be regarded as

3 In the latest EVS (European Values Survey, 2008), on the Slovenian level, for instance, the sample selected 2,250 inhabitants of Slovenia aged over 15 years; the realised sample amounted to N = 1286. The level of sample realisation in this case was 57.2 percent. A

good⁴. In all probability the level of response would have been significantly higher if the surveying had not been conducted in the summer months, in other words during people’s holidays.

Although the reasons for non-participation differ, for the most part they can be categorised into two levels (Vehovar and Kalton, 2001: 80). The first is non-participation in the survey owing to the poor locating of the unit (inappropriate or wrong address, absence of interviewee during survey, interviewer did not make contact with person). The second is unwillingness to participate or refusal to participate for various reasons (e.g. illness, language barrier, uninteresting subject, lack of trust and so forth). Around 20 percent of persons in the sample were the type that the interviewers could not reach even after five or more visits, while over 15 percent declined participation in the survey (Table 1). Details of the reasons for non-participation in the survey are broken down below.

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Table 1: Level of participation in the Youth 2010 survey

	N	%
Fully completed survey	1257	62.9
Other reason (partly completed survey, appointment, other)	40	2.0
Contact not established with interviewee	391	19.5
Refusal (survey declined by interviewee or someone else)	312	15.6
Total	2000	100.0

Where it was not possible to establish contact with persons (19.5 percent of the entire sample), in the majority of cases (55.8 percent) there was no one home. Other reasons for non-participation in this group (N = 391) include absence of interviewee owing to moving away to some other location or to an unknown location (total 24.3 percent) and inappropriate or wrong address (12.5 percent).

slightly higher response level of 66.2 percent was achieved for Slovenia in the survey of national and international security (2009).

4 Earl Babbie, one of the current leading methodologists in the world, used a review of methodological literature to assess a response rate above 50% as satisfactory, above 60% as good and above 70% as very good (Babbie, 2007: 289).

Of those who declined participation in the survey (15.6 percent of the entire sample), the great majority (84.6 percent) personally declined, while for the others someone else declined on their behalf. The main reason for their refusal was the lack of interest among interviewees, or rather their explicit wish not to participate without giving any particular reason (56.1 percent). The second most frequent reason for refusal was the belief that participating in the survey was a waste of time (18.3 percent). The reasons for refusal are set out in detail in Table 2.

Table 2: Detailed breakdown of category of non-participation

	Other reason (partly completed survey, appointment)		Contact not established with interviewee		Refusal (survey declined by interviewee or someone else)		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Fully completed survey							1257	62.9
Partly completed survey (interrupted in mid-survey)	1	2.5					1	0.1
Appointment	6	15.0					6	0.3
Interviewee not at home			29	7.4			29	1.4
Interviewee not reachable during survey (lives in another country, moved to unknown location etc.)			45	11.5			45	2.2
Interviewee moved to a different part of Slovenia			50	12.8			50	2.5
No one home, no one answers the door			218	55.8			218	10.9
Inappropriate, wrong address			49	12.5			49	2.5
Survey declined by interviewee or someone else					48	15.4	48	2.4
Survey declined by interviewee					264	84.6	264	13.2
Other*	33	82.5					33	1.6
Total	40	100.0	391	100.0	312	100.0	2000	100.0

NOTE: *Other: mentally disabled person, two persons in same household.

Table 3: Reasons for refusal to participate

	Reasons for refusal (N)	Percentage of all refusals (%)	Percentage of entire sample (N = 2000)
Not interested, don't want to	175	56.1	8.8
Inappropriate subject (don't know enough about this, no opinion, it is too difficult etc.)	7	2.2	0.4
Seems a waste of time	57	18.3	2.9
Intrusion of my privacy, not giving personal data	12	3.8	0.6
Never take part in surveys	18	5.8	0.9
Don't trust surveys	7	2.2	0.4
I get too many surveys	8	2.6	0.4
I have had previous experiences with surveys	6	1.9	0.3
Family/household member or members won't let me take part	5	1.6	0.3
Other*	17	5.5	0.9
Total	312	100.0	15.6

NOTE: *Other: person housed in an institution, death in the family, person not able to participate owing to illness.

Table 4: Participation in survey by gender and age

	Gender		Age		
	female (%)	male (%)	15 to 18 years (%)	18 to 24 (%)	25 to 29 (%)
	N = 967	N=1033	N=429	N=807	N=764
Fully completed survey	65.7	60.2	72.3	63.3	57.1
Contact not established with interviewee	18.8	20.3	15.2	20.2	21.3
Refusal (survey declined by interviewee or someone else)	14.2	16.9	10.5	14.8	19.4
Other reason (partly completed survey, appointment)	1.3	2.6	2.2	1.7	2.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The response level was slightly higher among females than among males. Equally, Table 4 shows that the response level falls linearly as age

increases. Among persons aged between 15 and 18 years, the response was even higher than 70 percent, while among persons aged between 25 and 29 years the response level was only a little over 57 percent. The reason for the higher response level among younger interviewees is that the older the interviewee, the higher the probability of them no longer living at their parents' address. This includes a large number of students residing in large towns and cities, or those that have moved away for some other reason. Among those over 18 years old, contact could not be established with one out of five persons. It is also interesting to note that as age increases, so does the probability of participation in the survey being declined. Indeed the oldest age group yielded a refusal rate almost twice that of the youngest group.

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Table 5: Participation in survey by type of settlement

	Non-farming settlement of less than 2,000 inhabitants (%)	Farming settlement of less than 2,000 inhabitants (%)	Settlement of between 2,000 and 10,000 inhabitants (%)	Settlement of more than 10,000 inhabitants (%)	Maribor (%)	Ljubljana (%)
	N=580	N=540	N=330	N=270	N=60	N=220
Fully completed survey	66.6	67.2	56.1	57.0	45.0	64.5
Contact not established with interviewee	16.0	2.6	26.6	22.7	48.3	23.7
Refusal (survey declined by interviewee or someone else)	16.2	12.6	15.5	15.9	5.0	11.8
Other reason (partly completed survey, appointment)	1.2	17.6	1.8	4.4	1.7	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

In line with expectations, interviewers working in bigger urban centres experienced more problems than interviewers in rural areas. The highest response level was thus in settlements with less than 2,000 inhabitants. We identified the worst response rate in Maribor, where less than half of the 60 persons selected for the sample agreed to participate in the survey. There was not actually a high level of refusal, the problem seemed mainly to be that nearly half the persons in that area could not be reached. We actually recorded a satisfactory response level in Ljubljana, but we had to

work for this much harder than elsewhere, and despite this we were still not able to establish contact with one out of four interviewees.

Table 6: Participation in survey by statistical region

	Pomurje (%)	Podravje (%)	Koroška (%)	Savinja (%)	Zasavje (%)	Lower Posavje (%)	Southeast Slovenia (%)	Central Slovenia (%)	Gorenjska (%)	Notranjska-Karst (%)	Goriško (%)	Coastal-Karst (%)
N =	130	300	70	280	40	80	150	490	210	50	110	90
Fully completed survey	70.8	67.0	61.4	61.1	75.0	50.0	63.3	63.3	63.3	58.0	70.0	40.0
Contact not established with interviewee	15.4	18.7	25.8	14.3	12.5	23.8	14.7	20.2	19.5	20.0	13.6	51.1
Refusal (survey declined by interviewee or someone else)	12.3	12.6	11.4	23.2	7.5	23.7	17.3	15.5	13.4	22.0	14.5	6.7
Other reason (partly completed survey, appointment)	1.5	1.7	1.4	1.4	5.0	2.5	4.7	1.0	3.8	0.0	1.9	2.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

The highest response level, at 75 percent, was achieved in the Zasavje region. There were also high levels of willingness to participate in the Pomurje and Goriško regions. On the other hand the response level was by far the lowest in the Coastal-Karst region (mainly because of the large proportion of selected persons with whom contact could not be established) and in the Lower Posavje region.

1.1.4 Weighting

Since persons were selected with varying probabilities, and also owing to non-participation, refusal and other 'errors', the demographic characteristics of the selected sample are to some extent at variance with the characteristics of the target population. In order to make the sample more representative, therefore, the data must be weighted and thereby approximated to the data for the entire target population. The weighting gives some parts of the sample greater weight than others and vice versa.

We ensured that the sample is representative on the basis of gender, age (three age groups: 15–18, 19–24, 25–29 years), type of settlement and statistical region.

Firstly we performed poststratification based on a combination of gender and the three age groups, then used a raking method to adjust the weighting further relative to type of settlement and statistical region.

The data prior to and after weighting are shown in Table 7. The data show that we selected a good sample, since the variance of the sample from the target population is relatively small. This is also confirmed by the small range between weights, with the smallest weight amounting to 0.69 and the biggest to 1.92.

Table 7: Comparison of demographic characteristics of the population with weighted and non-weighted sample

	Population 15–29 years	Sample	Selected sample without weights	Selected sample with weights
Gender	N = 332,211	N = 2,000	N = 1,257	N = 1,257
male	51.6	51.6	49.5	51.2
female	48.4	48.4	50.5	48.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Age				
15–18 years	22.0	21.5	21.9	22.0
19–24 years	40.5	40.4	44.3	40.5
25–29 years	37.5	38.2	33.8	37.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Region				
Pomurje	6.4	6.5	6.8	6.4
Podravje	15.1	15.0	16.5	15.1
Koroška	3.9	3.5	3.4	3.9
Savinja	13.6	14.0	13.6	13.6
Zasavje	2.3	2.0	2.4	2.3
Lower Posavje	3.6	4.0	3.2	3.7
Southeast	7.7	7.5	7.6	7.7
Central Slovenia	24.4	24.5	24.7	24.4
Gorenjska	10.4	10.5	10.6	10.4
Notranjska-Karst	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.5
Goriško	5.6	5.5	6.1	5.7
Coastal-Karst	4.4	4.5	2.9	4.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Type of settlement				
non-farming settlement of less than 2,000 inhabitants	29.0	29.0	30.7	29.0
farming settlement of less than 2,000 inhabitants	27.2	27.0	28.9	27.1
settlement of between 2,000 and 10,000 inhabitants	16.5	16.5	14.7	16.5
settlement of more than 10,000 inhabitants	12.6	13.5	12.3	12.6
Maribor	3.6	3.0	2.1	3.6
Ljubljana	11.1	11.0	11.3	11.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

1.1.5 Sample error

Below we present the values of standard errors of sample estimates in certain selected questions. The standard error of the estimate shows a variance in the sample value from the population value. This signifies the basis for calculating the confidence interval, which shows the range in which the population value varies with 95-percent certainty.

The standard error of estimating the share SE (p) was calculated according to the formula:

$SE(p) = (p \cdot (100 - p) / N)^{1/2}$, where p means the weighted percentage of given responses, and N the sample size (N = 1,257).

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Since this formula for calculating the standard estimate error applies only to a simple random sample, and we used a two-level sample or sampling in groups (selection of PSUs according to previously determined criteria and random selection of interviewees within the PSU), the standard estimate error needs to be corrected with the design effect (deff) according to the formula:

$\text{corrected } SE(p) = (\text{deff} \cdot p \cdot (100 - p) / N)^{1/2}$

The design effect is the consequence of sampling in groups, which in comparison with the simple random sample on the one hand significantly eases the surveying process, but on the other hand it also reduces the variability of the data. In certain characteristics, especially those that are more strongly tied to the place of residence, interviewees within a PSU are more similar to each other than the representatives of the target population (which can be seen in the lower variability of the data). This means that the sample does not “capture” the overall variability in the population, which can be seen in the less precise estimates of population values (greater standard estimate error and wider confidence interval than in the simple random sample). The table below shows, for instance, that the corrected SE(p) is higher than the SE(p) in all cases. We calculated the 95-percent confidence interval on the basis of corrected values of the standard estimate error according to the formulae:

$\text{lower limit} = p - \text{corrected } SE(p) \cdot 1.96$

$\text{upper limit} = p + \text{corrected } SE(p) \cdot 1.96$

The size of the design effect $deff$ was calculated for each variable (question) separately according to the formula:

$deff = 1 + (n - 1) * ICC$ (Leskošek, 2009), where n is the average number of interviews performed per individual PSU ($n = 6.69$), and ICC is the intraclass correlation coefficient.

56 The greater the intraclass correlation coefficient, and the greater the number of interviewed persons within the PSU, the greater is the design effect. The intraclass correlation coefficient is the measure of similarity of interviewees within the PSU, and shows how far the overall variability in the data can be explained by belonging to a group. In the simple random sample $ICC = 0$, in other words the size of the design effect amounts to $deff = 1$ and does not affect the calculation of $SE(p)$.

We calculated the intraclass correlation coefficient according to the formula:

$ICC = (MS_{MED} - MS_{ZN}) / (MS_{MED} + (k - 1) * MS_{ZN})$, where MS_{MED} is the measure of variability between groups (between PSUs), MS_{ZN} is the measure of variability within groups (PSU), and k is the number of interviewed individuals in the group (PSU).⁵

5 Since k differed in different groups, we used the average number of interviewees per group, $k = 6.69$. MS_{MED} and MS_{ZN} were calculated using one-way analyses of variance.

Table 8: Standard error of estimate and confidence intervals for selected variables

Variable	Percent- age without weights	Percent- age with weights	SE (p)	Corrected SE (p)	95-percent confidence interval	
					lower limit	upper limit
Q36 COMPUTER USE (How many such courses did you participate in over the past 12 months?); deff = 1.28						
1 None	83.0	82.8	1.1	1.2	80.5	85.2
2 Once	9.5	9.6	0.8	0.9	7.8	11.4
3 2-3 times	3.0	3.0	0.5	0.5	2.0	4.1
4 more than 3 times	4.0	4.1	0.6	0.6	2.8	5.3
No response	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.9
Q57 INTERESTING WORK (How important to you are each of the following things when you think about work?); deff = 1.84						
1 Not important at all	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.6
2 Of little importance	1.4	1.4	0.3	0.5	0.5	2.3
3 Of average importance	6.4	6.1	0.7	0.9	4.3	7.9
4 Quite important	28.6	28.8	1.3	1.7	25.4	32.2
5 Very important	63.2	63.1	1.4	1.8	59.5	66.8
No response	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.7
Q68 PUBLIC EMPLOYEES (What is your opinion of the following groups of people?); deff = 1.34						
1 Generally bad	14.1	14.2	1.0	1.1	12.0	16.4
2 Neutral	54.2	54.4	1.4	1.6	51.3	57.6
3 Generally good	31.7	31.4	1.3	1.5	28.4	34.3
Q76 I HAVE TO COMPETE WITH OTHERS TO SEE HOW GOOD I AM.; deff = 1.46						
1 Don't agree at all	15.4	15.7	1.0	1.2	13.3	18.1
2 Don't agree	23.8	23.4	1.2	1.4	20.5	26.2
3 Neither agree nor disagree	29.1	28.6	1.3	1.5	25.6	31.7
4 Agree	25.3	26.0	1.2	1.5	23.0	28.9
5 Agree entirely	6.0	6.0	0.7	0.8	4.4	7.6
No response	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.6
Q187 I KEEP MYSELF INFORMED OF EVENTS IN THE WORLD.; deff = 1.49						
0 Not at all	12.4	12.6	0.9	1.1	10.3	14.8
1 Up to 15 minutes	33.3	33.1	1.3	1.6	29.9	36.2
2 15-30 minutes	26.9	26.6	1.2	1.5	23.7	29.6
3 30 minutes to 1 hour	17.4	17.7	1.1	1.3	15.1	20.3
4 1-2 hours	6.2	6.3	0.7	0.8	4.7	8.0
5 2-3 hours	1.4	1.4	0.3	0.4	0.6	2.1

6 More than 3 hours	1.1	1.1	0.3	0.4	0.4	1.8
No response	1.2	1.2	0.3	0.4	0.5	2.0
Q250 HOW OFTEN DO YOU EAT FRUIT AND VEGETABLES?; deff = 1.47						
1 A few times a month or never	4.1	4.1	0.6	0.7	2.7	5.4
2 Once a week	10.3	10.3	0.9	1.0	8.3	12.4
3 Several times a week	26.8	27.0	1.3	1.5	24.0	29.9
4 Almost every day	35.2	34.9	1.3	1.6	31.7	38.1
5 Twice a day	16.8	17.0	1.1	1.3	14.5	19.5
6 Three or more times a day	6.3	6.3	0.7	0.8	4.7	7.9
No response	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.9
Q255 I HAVE THE FEELING MY PARENTS LOVE ME VERY MUCH.; deff = 1.70						
1 Not true at all	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.9
2 Not true	1.3	1.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	1.9
3 Fairly true	9.5	9.6	0.8	1.1	7.5	11.8
4 True	37.1	37.0	1.4	1.8	33.6	40.5
5 Very true	50.9	50.9	1.4	1.8	47.3	54.5
No response	0.8	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.2	1.5
Q345 HOW OFTEN DO YOU DRINK ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES?; deff = 1.44						
1 Never	10.0	10.4	0.9	1.0	8.3	12.4
2 Rarely	40.7	40.5	1.4	1.7	37.2	43.7
3 Sometimes	44.8	44.3	1.4	1.7	41.0	47.6
4 Regularly	3.3	3.5	0.5	0.6	2.3	4.7
No response	1.2	1.3	0.3	0.4	0.6	2.1

1.2 Interviews with typical representatives of young people

The interviews, which were used as the basic method of collecting qualitative data, comprised two parts, non-structured and partly structured, while the design and application of the interviews were based on the concept of the directed interview (Flick, 2002: 77-80). The directed, partly structured interview comprised and was conducted in a series of questions where the structured nature in the interview gradually increased (ibid.: 75). So for instance the first series of questions, the aim of which was to lead the interviewee into the interview and to set out the discursive field, was non-structured. The other series of questions, the purpose of which was to focus on elements expressed in response to the first group of questions, was partly structured. The third series

of questions had a structured form, and was aimed at ensuring a clear response to the survey questions (ibid.). The structure of interviews was centred on thematic areas that the survey client emphasised as the main research fields or that the research group stressed as important, specifically: demographics; family, partnership, friends; intergenerational cooperation; education and training; health and wellbeing; employment, entrepreneurship, mobility and globalisation; political participation and voluntary activities; free time, culture, virtualisation; sustainable approaches; values and expectations regarding the personal and social future. Once the interviews were completed, these fields were used as the fundamental guidelines for classifying and categorising data and for performing syntheses (see 15. Synthesis), specifically in the subchapters Demographics and intergenerational cooperation; Education and training; Health and wellbeing; Employment, entrepreneurship, mobility and globalisation; Political participation and voluntary activities; Free time, culture, virtualisation; Sustainable way of functioning and Values and expectations regarding the personal and social future.

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The profiles of young people that are presented in detail in the qualitative part of the report, and especially in Chapter 14. Research sample, were designed on the basis of the envisaged socio-economic characteristics of young people in Slovenia, and help in designing the sample was provided through a review of comparable European research (Shell, 2002; Lecardi, 2005; Shell, 2006). Special attention was focused on appropriate gender and geographical diffusion, although an ideal distribution could not be ensured. Of the originally designed 32 profiles, 25 were included in the actual implementation; some profiles, owing to their good compatibility or large overlap, were merged into the general profile, while some were abandoned owing to inaccessibility of interviewees:

Table 9: Survey sample in the context of qualitative interviews, Youth 2010

Interviewee	Age	Profile
Špela	25	young waitress
Andreja	25	unemployed young mother
Enver	20	young Roma
Helena	18	excellent grammar school student
Afrodita	21	young disabled woman
Jona	25	visitor to the Pekarna youth gathering place
Uroš	22	young farmer
Matjaž	29	unemployed youth
Dominik	16	young musician
Tasim	22	young prisoner
Gašper	23	young sportsman
Stane	26	young entrepreneur
Davor	22	young politician
Vali	23	representative of Hungarian minority
Grega	25	young dropout
Maja	30	unemployed graduate
Oto	28	employed in a garage
Nejc	26	reluctant employee
Mateja	29	employed in parliament
Natalija	25	young religious believer
Sabina	22	former addict
Barbara	29	representative of minority in Italy
Mojca	23	successful psychology student
Dani	24	successfully in unregulated employment
Aleš	20	virtualised youth

The interviews lasted 90 to 160 minutes. Before starting, the interviewees were familiarised with the conditions of participation in the interview and its progress, and they were also asked to sign a consent statement. By signing the consent they declared that they were participating in the interview voluntarily and that they authorised the compilers and authors of the report to collect the relevant data and use it for the survey. The interviews were not entirely anonymous; the personal data collected and for which the interviewees consented to their use, included personal name, photograph and region or town of residence. If the interviewees

demanded absolute anonymity as a condition for participation, one of these three pieces of information was left out.⁶

The interviews were audio recorded. The tape recordings made using dictaphones were intended for making up transcripts, which were later partly reformulated into individual portraits (see 14. Portraits), and partly in line with the thematic fields they were categorised and quantified as well as formed into a thematic synthesis of qualitative data (see 15. Synthesis).

1.3 Collecting and analysing secondary data

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The third source of data is databases created earlier by other researchers or institutions. Here we relied primarily on these resources:

1. data from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, which we obtained for the most part on the web portal SI-STAT;
2. data from Eurostat, which we obtained on the web portal enabling access to the database;
3. other sources of official statistics and various collective reports;
4. databases from the collection of various surveys, specifically:
 - a. previous surveys of youth in Slovenia (from 1985, 1993, 1995, 1998 and 2000),
 - b. Survey of German youth (Shell 2010),
 - c. Slovenian Public Opinion survey (SJM),
 - d. World (and European) Value Surveys (WVS/EVS),
 - e. European Social Surveys (ESS),
 - f. Other surveys.

6 As an example we give the interviewee Dani, who consented to the interview on condition that we ensured a higher level of anonymity. Indeed he believed that given the content of the interview he would feel a lot better if the report did not show his photograph, while publication of his name (without photo) did not bother him.

In comparing the Youth 2010 survey sample with other survey samples, special attention was focused on ensuring the compatibility of age groups and other demographic characteristics. Key adjustments in this regard were:

- in comparisons with the sample of Slovenian youth from 1985, in both files we limited ourselves to the age group of 15-24 years, since the 1985 sample contained few young people from the 25-29 age group;
- in comparisons with the results of the Youth 1993 survey we limited ourselves just to secondary school pupils aged 15 to 18, since the sample from 1993 contained only secondary school youth;
- in comparisons with the results of the Youth 1995 survey we limited ourselves just to students, since the sample from 1993 contained only student youth;
- in comparisons with the results of the German youth survey (Shell 2010) we limited ourselves to youths between 15 and 25 years old, since the German survey sample contained young people aged 12 to 25, and our sample contained the age group of 15 to 29 years;
- in all other comparisons (unless specifically stated and reasoned) we limited ourselves to youth aged 15 to 29.

All sources used are cited on use.

1.4 Statistical analysis procedures used

This study used the statistical methods and indicators that are most widespread in sociological research, and that are at the same time sufficiently understandable to a wide circle of readers.

The fundamental level of analysis is of course frequency distributions, which we regularly present in a bivariate form, in other words in the context of contingency tables (crosstabs). The main – and in the authors' opinion the most interesting – distributions are presented in the report itself in the form of graphs.

The next frequently used statistical indicators are arithmetic means attained by individual ordinal or interval variables. The values of the mean values thus calculated within the analysed sample are primarily simplified indicators of the level of presence of a given phenomenon (for instance: agreeing with individual assertions).

We arrived at what are sociologically more interesting conclusions by means of the coefficients of the statistical correlation of two variables. Here we were interested most commonly in the statistical links between socio-demographic and psychological factors (we dealt with them mainly as independent variables) on the one hand and other analysed (dependent) variables on the other hand. For links between variables where there at least one is nominal and it has at the same time more than two values, we used the contingency coefficient (C), and for pairs of ordinal and interval variables we used the Pearson correlation coefficient (r).

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A number of times we also used the tool of factor analysis, by means of which we sought hidden and latent variables – factors with which we can interpret the mutual links of several variables under discussion. We used the method of fundamental components, which is not a part of factor analysis in the strict sense, but given its various advantages is most frequently used for such analysis. Andy Field recommends this analysis because it involves a psychometrically solid process that is conceptually less complex than factor analysis in the strict sense (which is based on a range of assumptions regarding the analysed data), while at the same time it yields almost the same results as the classical factor techniques (Field, 2005: 631). In all such analyses we also used factor rotation, specifically the form of oblique rotation, which permits the mutual correlation of factors. Field believes that in the humanities and social sciences there are practically no cases where the use of a different (orthogonal) rotation technique would make sense (ibid. 637). In specific terms we used *Promax*, a slightly simpler procedure. In separating out (extracting) factors we observed the classical Kaiser criterion and excluded those factors whose own (eigen-) value is greater than 1. In the analysis of rotated matrices we limited ourselves to the pattern matrix, which is the most appropriate and most commonly used for interpreting factors (ibid. 680). In interpreting factor loadings, in line with Stevens' recommendation (1992) we limited ourselves to factor loadings with an absolute value of at least 0.4.

Analysis of fundamental components was also a tool for obtaining new variables (factors), which represented indicators for various theoretical concepts. We calculated the new variables on the basis of the arithmetic means of all variables of the individual factor for each individual interviewee. Furthermore, we checked the validity of such a merging of variables by means of the Cronbach (α) coefficient of the internal consistency of scales.

Whenever it made sense to the authors, we also used regression analysis, by means of which we determined the relative power of the links between the selected dependent variable on the one hand and the individual independent variable on the other hand, where the strength (and statistical significance) of the links between variables was monitored in a connection between the dependent and other independent variables in the analysis.

1.5 Sources used

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2 Demographic changes and intergenerational cooperation

2.1 Defining youth and milestones of reaching adulthood

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2.1.1 Introduction:

The issue of youth as a subject of sociological interest arose in the 1960s, when youth were viewed primarily as a potential factor of revolution and upheaval. Researchers frequently calmed down politicians who were anxious about the unrest of 1968 and the opinions of certain sociologists about the great revolutionary power of youth (Marcuse, 1969). Some researchers even claimed that young people were a distinct social class that in terms of exploitation and repression was similar to the working class (cp. Feuer, 1969). This was followed by a gradual reorientation of scientific interest towards youth subcultures, the adolescent search for identity, youth as a transition period and towards the problems young people face while integrating into adult society (cp. K. Keniston, 1968; Hebdige, 1979).

More recent research and discussion of youth have been dominated by different issues. On the one hand there are J.J. Arnett (2000, 2006) and those who share his thinking. Their view is clearly indicated in the rejection of the scientific significance of the concept of youth, and instead of this they propose using the term *emerging adulthood*. Arnett excludes from the social group usually treated as youth the age group (from 10) up to 17, which involves in his categorisation the period of adolescence, marked by involvement in secondary education and living with one's parents. The real period of transition, which Arnett labels the "long period between biological maturity and the entrance into stable adult roles" (2006: 119), begins at 18 and lasts until the age of 25 or 29. According to Arnett, this period is marked by an exploration of identity, evident

in instability and frequent changes in school, employment and love life, expressing a sense of transition between adolescence and adulthood. Arnett sees the transition to adulthood primarily as a period of personal freedom and self-focus: "This is a time of possibilities, when emerging adults are very optimistic about how their life will unfold" (2006: 114).

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On the other hand, a significant section of youth researchers do not follow such an optimistic vision of youth in modern Western societies. These researchers emphasise in particular the difficulties inherent in the increasing uncertainty encountered by young people in the labour market (cp. Furlong, 2000). Numerous findings indicate that in the historical sense, the social status of young people in the last two to three decades has undergone a pronounced deterioration (cp. Cote and Bynner, 2008). On the one hand there are rising levels of youth unemployment, and on the other hand there are increasingly non-permanent and lower quality forms of employment (casual jobs and "McJobs"). Furthermore the change in the personal circumstances of young people coupled with uncertainty in their employment is increasing their uncertainty and the time frame for starting their own families. Youth can longer therefore be conceptualised as a period of relatively predictable transition from the certainty of childhood to the certainty of adulthood, with stable employment and a newly started family. Youth researchers are in fact united on the fact that in the last three decades in the developed Western countries, the transitions of young people to the labour market have become increasingly lengthy and unpredictable. Some authors even doubt the justification of the term transition, since for growing numbers of young people, stable employment is unattainable even in the long term (Dwyer and Wyn, 2001; Furlong and Kelly, 2005).

These general tendencies are being realised to a different degree and in different ways in different societies. Walther et al. (2009) have used extensive analysis to identify five basic models of transition to adulthood:

The liberal transition model, which is typical of Anglo-Saxon countries, is based primarily on the individual responsibility of young people to enter a very flexible labour market as quickly and successfully as possible. The logical consequence of such a regime is the great possibility for the social exclusion of youth, since in addition to broad and varied employment possibilities, the flexible labour market also means a high level of unemployment risk.

The universalistic transition model is typical of Nordic countries and is based on an extensive and flexible education system that combines general and vocational education. Young people over 18 who are involved in the education system receive a special education income. Activational policies geared towards the labour market offer young people a relatively wide choice of jobs and thereby ensure individual motivation.

The sub-protective model is typical of the Mediterranean countries. Owing to the weak link between education and the labour market, young people secure employment late and with difficulty (transitions are uncertain and can last until their mid-30s). Since young people are not entitled to state support, they depend primarily on families of orientation, which in this sense perform the key role of *social mitigator*. Owing to their long dependence on families of orientation, young people have a relatively low social status. For this reason higher education represents an opportunity to raise their social status, while also sometimes enabling the acquisition of a certain level of material independence.

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The employment-centred transition model is typical of continental countries such as Austria, Germany and France. They are characterised by a differentiated education system, which includes a rigid and standardised system of vocational education. Depending on their success to date, young people are streamed very early on (between the ages of 10 and 12) into various educational and vocational paths. The system stimulates young people strongly to become successfully socialised for their occupational and social status, mainly through practical vocational training and education. This can be clearly seen in the method of ensuring social assistance, which is distinctly generous towards young people who have already been on work experience or employed, while it provides to others only reduced and stigmatised forms of support. This system steers youth primarily into a working life; young people must above all learn how important work is and what working signifies.

The models of post-communist countries differ from each other widely and are rapidly changing, so it is impossible to define a recognisable model of transitions that would at least approximately serve as a good description of the situation in all the European post-communist countries. At first glance, however, these countries are similar to those with the sub-protective transition model. Yet precisely because of the socialist past, to a differing extent these countries provide (at least on the conceptual and perceptual level) universalistic guarantees of social sta-

tus that are tied primarily to the expectations of a kind of certainty of employment.

68 According to Kuhar (2009: 8), given the social privileges thus far retained, Slovenia is still closest to a universalistic transition model. Here Slovenia's placement in the above four models can be undertaken by means of various analysis, while it also needs to be considered that the situation is changing relatively quickly. With regard to our analysis, it seems that Slovenia is shifting primarily towards the sub-protective model, since we have determined the pronounced growth of young people depending on family support (especially in terms of extended living with parents) along with a pronounced growth of young people enrolling in tertiary education, for which it seems that it is linked primarily to the possibility (at least temporarily) of improving social status and acquiring partial material independence through student employment. All of this is closely linked to the marked decline in the stable and long-term forms of employment available to young people. We are witnessing a pronounced increase in the flexibility of the labour market for young people, which is in part bringing us close to the liberal transition model.

In this light the Italian sociologist Carmen Leccardi (2005) has identified the strengthening of the family as the "anchor of stability" in general conditions of what are otherwise high levels of uncertainty. Another, perhaps more problematic dimension of the response to the described situation is "presentification" (ibid. 141). This is the absence (or low presence) of long-term planning and self-placement in some logical continuum between the present and the future, which is replaced by an equating with the present as the reference period of time. In Leccardi's opinion this involves primarily a "pragmatic way of getting to grips with rapid changes and the uncertainties that accompany them" (ibid. 142).

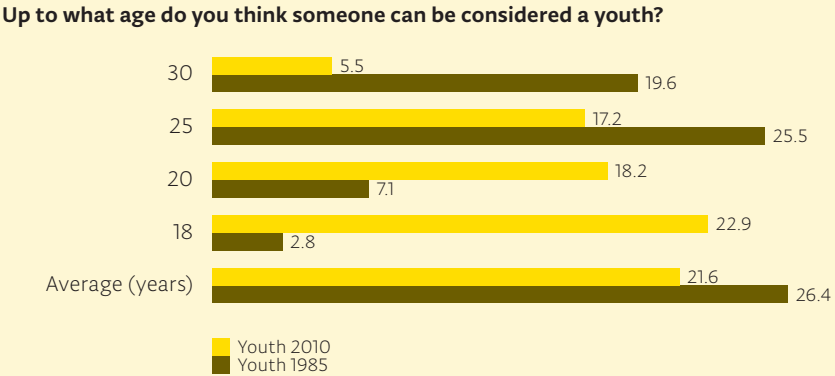
2.1.2 Analysis of data for Slovenia

This report uses the definition of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, under which anyone aged between 15 and 29 years falls within the youth group. A review of the age limits in defining youth in other European countries (Vertot, 2009: 11) shows that this definition is somewhere in the middle of what are actually surprisingly different definitions in different countries.

The wide variation in defining youth is also evident in the assessments of the age up to which someone is considered a young person, as quoted by the interviewees in our research. These assessments range from 10 to 50 years. A major portion of this range is in fact relatively unimportant, since few interviewees opted for extreme assessments (frequently just one each). There is, however, a clear identification of the four most commonly defined values: 19.3 percent of interviewees selected the value of 18, 17.9 percent chose 20 years, the same proportion chose the age of 25 years, while 7.8 percent of interviewees believe that anyone under 30 can consider themselves to be a young person. The average value of all responses is 22.3 years, where the standard deviation is relatively large ($SD = 5.2$).

The available data enable an interesting comparison with the situation in 1985. In the comparison we had to limit ourselves to the distribution of responses only for young people in the 15-24 age bracket. Only in this way could we ensure comparability with data from the Slovenian youth survey of 1985 (Ule and Vrcan, 1985). The graph below shows the relative shares of the four most common selections in both periods, as well as the average value for both periods.

Graph 1: Assessments of upper age limit for youth, Youth 1985 and Youth 2010



NOTE: Figures given are percentages of interviewees that selected one of the most commonly selected age limits (18, 20, 25 or 30).

It is clear that young people today set the limit of youth significantly lower than 25 years ago. The average assessment of the boundary between youth and adulthood has fallen by almost five years. An interpretation of this finding will be easier if we look at two more related indicators.

70

Our data enable a comparison of today's secondary school youth aged 15 to 18 with the same group in 1993, regarding the question of how quickly would young people like to become adults. On a scale of 1 (very slowly) to 10 (very quickly) the value between 8 and 10 (indicating a desire for rapid attainment of adulthood) was selected by 11.2 percent in 1993 and by 20.3 percent in 2010. The average value of the responses rose in the observed period from 4.7 to 5.7 percent. In other words everything points to secondary school youth today wanting to transition to adulthood much more quickly than in 1993.

Here it is significant that, judging from the results of our qualitative research, the understanding of adulthood among young people is distinctly subjective. It is particularly important to realise that young people generally do not link adulthood to leaving the parental home:

When are you an adult (A.N.)?

"When you act like an adult. That means that you've functionally grown up. For instance, you've got a job and you're responsible, you accept the consequences of your decisions... you're an adult when you feel psychologically adult."

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to the Pekarna youth centre)

"When you're mature spiritually, emotionally, materially and in your personality. You take care of yourself and are responsible for your actions."

(Mateja, 29, employed in the parliament)

"In my opinion, when you have a family and your own income, when you can take care of yourself materially and are not dependent on your parents."

(Uroš, 22, young farmer)

We also asked young people how close they felt to adulthood. On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 meant that the interviewee felt like a child, and 10 that they felt like an adult. In the comparison we limited ourselves just to interviewees 18 years old, since that is only age with which (given the available data) we can perform a time comparison, and at the same time it is one of the frequently selected values demarcating the periods of youth and adulthood. The share of those that circled the value between 8 and 10 grew from 19.5 percent in 1993 to 34.5 percent in 2010. The average value of the responses in the observed period rose from 6.2 percent to 7 percent. We may conclude, therefore, that an 18 year-old secondary school student today feels significantly closer to adulthood than in 1993.

Typical responses from participants in our interviews to the question “Do you feel like an adult?” were:

“Yes. Because I’m responsible for myself and to myself.”

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to the Pekarna youth centre)

“Yes, in a way I’m an adult. I see myself as responsible, I could take care of myself, I have enough income to provide for my own child, I have an apartment and so on.”

(Gašper, 23, young sportsman)

“Both: young because I’m young in age and because I haven’t yet experienced everything in life that adults are involved in (family, job...). Adult, because I have my own formed conviction about myself and the world.”

(Davor, 22, young politician)

We may summarise by saying that the age group we could categorise as young (15-29 years) has the tendency to deviate from being equated with adolescence as a social status. In line with Arnett’s conceptualisation, young people actually increasingly identify their position in society as a state of transition to adulthood. Soon after the age of 20 they start feeling like “young adults”: according to our data, for instance, of those aged 24, on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = like a child, 10 = like an adult), as many as 60 percent opted for responses between 8 and 10. There are certainly a number of reasons for such a shift, and of these at least two should be highlighted.

- (1) *The desire for and feeling of an earlier transition into a state that could be called adulthood can be understood as an **expression of the process of individualisation** of life in modern (post)industrial societies. In shaping their own destinies, individuals are increasingly left to themselves, and collective forms of identity and action are losing their importance. In the young person age group a part is also played by the education system, which together with various forms of employment offers young people right from primary school on an increasingly wide choice, thereby increasing the feeling that their future depends precisely on these choices and their fulfilment.*
- (2) At the same time as the described transfer of responsibility to the shoulders of the individual, young people may also be steered towards earlier feelings of adulthood by the **growing uncertainty and difficulty of transitions** to adulthood. The modern “society of risk” (Beck, 1999) additionally increases the crucial nature of decisions by young people. It is becoming increasingly clear that bad decisions (and their implementation) can have serious as well as far-reaching consequences in the transition to adulthood.⁷

Young people are thus forced to make key decisions regarding their future,⁸ and that in relatively uncertain circumstances in which the threat of long-term marginalisation is very real. For this reason young people at a relatively early age view their life as a project for which they themselves are primarily responsible. This understanding is also confirmed by certain statements from our interviewees:

“So we got a capitalist and democratic Slovenia. Now you can say what you want, and no one cares... but job, housing and pension are now your own worry.”

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

⁷ In terms of the theory of rational choice, it is possible to support the argument that the perception of a long lifetime also influences the decisions of young people. Life expectancy projections show that young people today can count in all seriousness on reaching an age of between 80 and 90 years old. In this respect, decisions made during the transition to adulthood have increasingly far-reaching consequences. From the perspective of the adolescent, his decisions and actions in the transition to adulthood will decisively mark a long lifetime (40-50 years) after the transition to adulthood.

⁸ Even non-acceptance of this responsibility is in truth a choice that has long-term consequences for the individual's future.

"...I don't like it when young people sigh and blame the state for their own failure."

(Mateja, 29, employed in the parliament)

In their thinking, young people are already in their adult period, at least more so than their counterparts of earlier decades. One participant of our interviews, aged 23, has this to say:

When are you an adult (A.N.)?

"When you can be independent and when you can take responsibility for your actions."

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How do you feel (A. N.)?

"Yes, in a way I'm an adult. I see myself as responsible, I could take care of myself, I have enough income to provide for my own child, I have an apartment and so on."

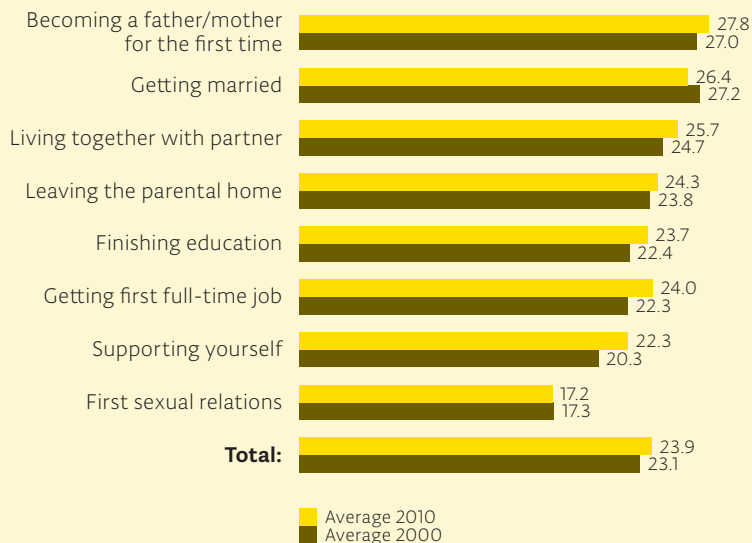
(Gašper, 23)

So if we understand adulthood primarily as the acceptance of individual responsibility for one's fate, we may understand the feeling of young people that they are entering the adult world earlier.

These findings would at first glance appear to be countered by the findings of research to date regarding the extended period of transition from childhood to adulthood (Dwyer and Wyn, 2001; Furlong and Kelly, 2005). Clearly the realisation that differing criteria can be applied for these transitions is key to our discussion. Ule and Kuhar (2003) stress four key transitions: (1) stable full-time employment, (2) leaving the original family home, (3) stable partnership and (4) parenthood.

Graph 2: Milestones of reaching adulthood, Youth 2000 and Youth 2010

How old were you when you experienced the following situations, or how old do you think you will be when these happen?



In the perception of young people, the above graph clearly shows a trend of postponing transitions, since the average age at which young people fulfil the transitions or anticipate their fulfilment has risen for pretty much all indicators (the exceptions being first sexual relations and marriage). Over the past decade the average age for all those selected has risen by a little less than a year.

Here it should be stressed that the most pronounced increases were in those indicators measuring the onset of material independence. The average estimated age at the start of earning money to support oneself has thus risen by a full two years, and there have also been above-average shifts in terms of finishing school and first full-time employment. It should be added that the modest delay in starting one's own family can at least partly be ascribed to the perceived delay in material independence. The reasons for this can be sought with considerable certainty in the flourishing of tertiary education, which keeps young people longer in education.

It is interesting to note here that young people gain/plan earnings to support themselves approximately two years before their actual/anticipated full time employment, which points to the gradual nature of the transition from education to a regular job, specifically via various forms of temporary and occasional employment.

A synthesis of what has been established regarding the transitions of young people offers this conclusion:

Young people in Slovenia are identifying themselves with adulthood increasingly early, while at the same time they are increasingly late in fulfilling their actual transitions such as leaving the parental home, establishing material independence and starting their own families.

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Although these would appear to be opposing trends, a convincing reason can be found for them coinciding. On the one hand young people are taking responsibility for their personal “life projects” at a relatively early stage, and in this sense they are acting and making decisions as responsible adults, while on the other hand structural conditions such as extending education and the (low) prospects for employment are shifting key milestones of attaining adulthood to later years.

For a more precise analysis of the factors that affect the time dimension of transitions to adulthood, it makes sense to limit the number of observed variables. A factor analysis shows us that in the framework of the given transition variables, two factors can be formed.

Table 10: Factor structure of indicators of transition to adulthood, Youth 2010

	Factor	
	Starting a family	Material independence
First becoming a father/mother	0.856	
Marrying	0.852	
Living together with a partner	0.664	
Finishing education		0.855
First full-time employment		0.800
Earning money to support oneself		0.789

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Based on the results of factor analysis, we formulated two new variables, by calculating for each interviewee the arithmetic mean of responses to three questions. Below we analyse various factors that might influence the assessed age of transitions.

It has been shown that women want to start a family noticeably earlier ($M=26.0$ years) than men ($M=27.3$ years). Men, meanwhile, want material independence somewhat earlier ($M=23.0$) than women (who average 23.6).

A relatively strong influence on material independence is exerted by the father's education ($r = 0.228$; $p < 0.01$) and mother's education ($r = 0.228$; $p < 0.01$). It seems logical that the children of more educated parents plan to study longer/are studying longer, which pushes access to one's own earnings back to slightly later years.

Tied to this is the association ($r = 0.149$, $p < 0.01$) between the size of residential settlement and the anticipated age of material independence. Among young people in Ljubljana and Maribor, for instance, the average is 24.1 years, while among those living in the countryside it is just 22.9 years.

The age of interviewees has only a modest effect in yielding a slightly higher age with material independence ($r = 0.078$; $p < 0.01$) and starting a family ($r = 0.077$; $p < 0.05$). The direction of influence is logical and indicates that young people on average succeed in making their transitions somewhat later than first imagined.

It is also interesting to note the influence of psychological factors on the time frame for transitions to adulthood. For this purpose it makes sense to limit ourselves to the older group of young people (25-29 years), since they have already completed some transitions, and those that they have not, are closer, so they can give them a more realistic time assessment.

On average, material independence is achieved sooner (or sought sooner) by individuals who are more authoritarian ($r = -0.158$; $p < 0.01$), socially intolerant ($r = -0.202$; $p < 0.01$) and fatalistically focused on the present ($r = -0.133$; $p < 0.01$). These are all qualities that are tied tendentially to lower levels of education, which is logically associated with more rapid entry into the labour market. Material independence is sought or attained somewhat later by young people with a grandiose level of narcissism, in other words a distinctly high opinion of themselves ($r = 0.128$; $p < 0.01$). This can be linked at least in part to the fact that such grandiosity is associated with higher levels of education ($r = 0.180$; $p < 0.01$), which logically delays entry into the labour market to later years.

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In the transitions of young people an especially interesting issue is the (later) leaving of the parental home, which we discuss in more detail in the chapter on youth housing conditions.

2.2 Number and proportion of young people in Slovenia

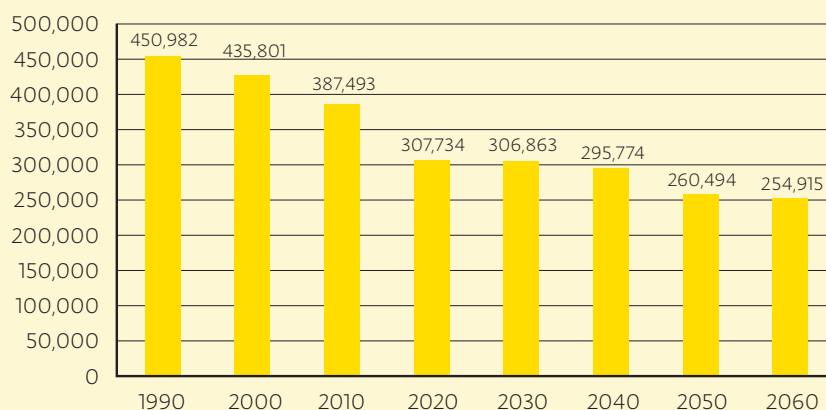
Irrespective of the differing perceptions of what the term youth means, we will use primarily the definition from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, whereby all those aged between 15 and 29 years are classed as youth (Vertot, 2009).

One of the basic demographic trends that will undoubtedly frame youth policy in the coming decade is the marked decline in the numbers of young people.

In the period from 2010 to 2020, the number of young people (15-29 years) in Slovenia will fall by over 20 percent.

This reduction is an intensification of the long-term demographic trend that Slovenia has witnessed ever since 1980. So in 2020 Slovenia will have almost a third less young people than it had in 1990. In this period the proportion of young people in the entire population will fall from 23 to 15 percent.

Graph 3: Number of young people (15-29 years) in Slovenia, selected years



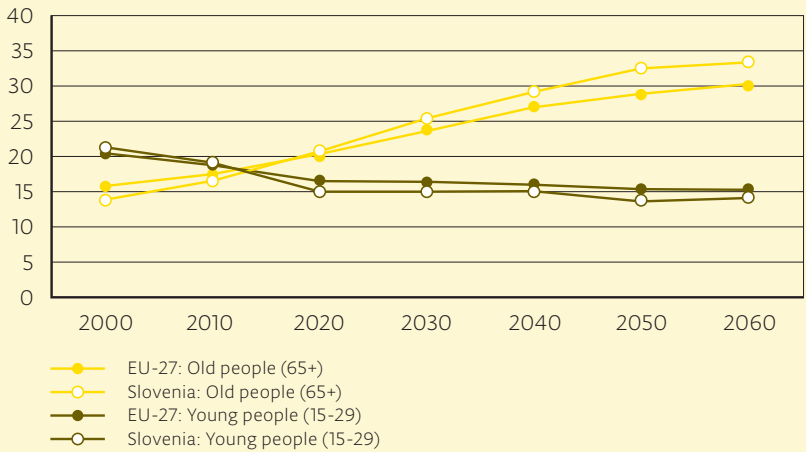
NOTE: * Data are obtained from the SI-STAT database. They have been obtained for 1990-2010 on the basis of currently updated population data, and data for subsequent years on the basis of the EUROPOP 2008 population projection, middle variant.

SOURCE: SORS*

A decline in the numbers and proportion of young people is in fact the general trend in EU Member States. A feature peculiar to Slovenia is the pronounced (20.6-percent) anticipated decline in the period 2010-2020, which according to Eurostat projections significantly exceeds the anticipated 8.9-percent drop across the EU-27 and also the anticipated decline in neighbouring EU countries. Up to 2020, therefore, by share of young people Slovenia will shift away from the EU average, along with Italy, which had the lowest share of young people of all the Member States in 2008 (Vertot, 2009: 20).

The decline in the proportion of young people is especially interesting in view of the increasing number of older inhabitants in modern industrialised societies.

Graph 4: Proportions of young (15-29 years) and older (65+) inhabitants in Slovenia and EU-27, selected years



NOTE: * Data for 2000 have been obtained on the basis of currently updated Eurostat population data, and data for subsequent years on the basis of the EUROPOP 2008 population projection, middle variant.

SOURCE: Eurostat*

The above graph shows how the phenomenon of the ageing population is actually characteristic of the whole of Europe, with Slovenia expected to show an above-average exacerbation of the demographic ratio of young to older inhabitants. Where Slovenia had a slightly higher proportion of young people and slightly lower proportion of older people in 2000 compared to the EU-27, in 2020 the picture will most probably be turned around: the proportion of young people will be below the EU average, and the proportion of older people above it.

The number of older (65+) inhabitants per young person should be almost trebled in Slovenia by 2050.

80

Where there were 87 older inhabitants to every 100 young people in Slovenia in 2010, in 2020 there will be 137 and in 2050 as many as 234. The effects of these trends on young people will be seen in various areas. Of especial interest in these areas will be the labour market, in which the growing share of older inhabitants on the one hand is forcing the state to extend the number of years worked before retirement, which in turn reduces the number of job vacancies for younger generations, while on the other hand the number of young people is falling, which reduces the number of candidates for existing jobs. A major challenge in the future for the governments of Slovenia and other European countries will be harmonising the two trends so as to improve the situation of young people in the labour market or (given the extended employment of older generations) at least not to make it significantly worse.

In the labour market there is thus a clearly discernible sharpening of competition between the young and older generations in the distribution of (very) rare resources, such as in this case, employment. We may expect a similar situation regarding public spending. In the future, any change in average pensions will have a significantly more powerful impact on the available funds (including) for young people. To put it in slightly simplified terms: a reduction in the average pension of 10 euros would today free up 8.70 euros, and in 2050 as much as 23.40 euros in additional available state funds per young inhabitant of Slovenia.

It is clear, therefore, that the issue of dialogue and social accord between generations is becoming increasingly important. From the perspective of our research, something of related importance is the issue of the willingness of young people to become involved in intergenerational dialogue and cooperation, and this was nicely indicated in the opinion of one of our interviewees:

“This is worrying. First and foremost, on an entirely practical level, there will be a problem with pensions and wages. The young and able

population will not be capable of providing pensions for the older people.”

(Mateja, 29, employed in the parliament)

2.3 **Openness of young people to intergenerational cooperation**

Our survey offers the chance of an insight into the state and trends in the area of young people's attitudes to the older generations and society as a whole, and especially into their willingness to engage in intergenerational cooperation.

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Here we put several questions to young people from the concurrent survey of German youth (Hurrelmann, 2010). To ensure comparability of responses with the German survey, in both cases we limited ourselves to the age group of 15 to 25 years. First of all we asked the young people, how big a problem did it seem to them that in the near future there would be increasing numbers of old people and fewer and fewer young people. The average value in the range from 1 (no problem at all) to 4 (very big problem) amounted in Slovenia to 3.0 (SD = 0.8), and in Germany to 2.82 (SD = 0.9). This was seen as a big or very big problem by 77 percent of youths in Slovenia and 70.4 percent of youths in Germany.

So Slovenian young people are slightly more worried about the ageing population, something also confirmed by the fact that as much as 67.1 percent of young people in Slovenia assess relations between young and old people as relatively tense, while this share was (just) 54.7 percent in Germany. As regards the future of these relations, young people in Slovenia are a little less pessimistic than their German peers, with (just) 22.9 percent taking the view that relations between young and old people will get even worse in the future, while the share among German respondents was as high as 41.8 percent. On the other hand a little less than 12 percent in both samples believe in an improvement in relations. In general, therefore, the majority of young people in Slovenia assess relations with older people as being tense, and they do not expect them to improve in the future.

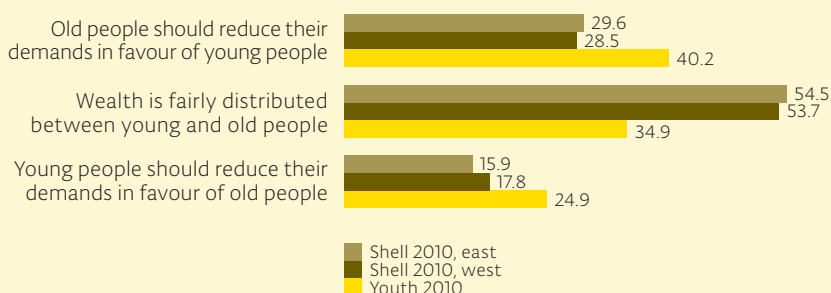
The great majority of young people in Slovenia view the ageing of the population as a serious problem, and they assess relations between young and old people as tense, while also anticipating no change for the better in this regard.

82

We also asked young people how they assess the distribution of wealth among generations.

Graph 5: Views of the distribution of wealth among generations, Youth 2010 and Shell 2010

How is wealth divided among generations today?



Compared to German youths, by this yardstick young people in Slovenia are also notably more critical in their attitudes to older generations. Even independently of comparison with the German sample, the finding that over 40 percent of young people have the expectation that older people should reduce their demands in favour of younger people appears to merit special attention.

In this connection we formulated an even more direct question, where we asked young people whether in their opinion there is better provision in our society for young people or old people. The view that there is better pro-

vision for young people was indicated by 13.1 percent of respondents, while the opposing view was indicated by as much as 40.5 percent of respondents.

More than 40 percent of young people believe that in Slovenia there is better provision for old people than for young people, and that old people should give up part of their prosperity in favour of young people.

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This perception is typified by the assessment of one of our interviewees:

“Society should manage these resources fairly... if they can collect taxes, they should ensure that people are properly employed and occupied. And instead of extending the working years of old people, they should give young people work... and there would be something left for pensions. Now there won't be work for young people or pensions for old people.”

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

An analysis of other interviews also indicates clearly that young people expect from society/the state primarily conditions in which they will be able to attain stable employment that can provide them with a material basis for fulfilling their transition into adulthood.

Now let us look at how young people chose from four assertions that express four perhaps typical attitudes of young people to society. A special value of this question is that we can frame the data in a time perspective. The graph below shows the distribution of responses only for young people in the 15-24 years age bracket. Only in this way we could ensure comparability with data from the survey of Slovenian youth of 1985 (Ule and Vrcan, 1985).

Graph 6: Perception of the attitude of society to young people, Youth 1985 and Youth 2010, ages 15-24 years

Young people are talked about in different ways.

Below are some views. Select the one you agree with most.



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Although it might seem worrying to note that one of two negatively tinged assertions in the attitude of society to young people was selected by a total of 62 percent of young people, there is some consolation in the finding that 25 years ago there was a significantly higher proportion (78.1 percent). It should be mentioned that the share of dissatisfied respondents actually increases to 63.6 percent, if we take all those surveyed in 2010 (15-29 years).

Almost two thirds of those surveyed express dissatisfaction with the general attitude of Slovenian society to young people.

This described perception of young people is also seen clearly in the qualitative interviews:

“Young people are viewed too strictly. There are too many generalisations about the negative qualities of young people. But there isn’t much about the good things young people have achieved, for instance what about young sports people representing Slovenia and so on. In

this way young people could be shown what you can achieve, even when you're young."

(Gašper, 23, young sportsman)

"Sometimes I think that the view of young people is skewed. For instance a lot of people think that us young people just lay around at home, smoking and drinking. I know a lot of people who have to work a lot at home. I have a lot of work at home, too. I help in the household and on the farm. I have a lot of work with the animals... I absolutely don't booze or lay about. There are some who do, but they aren't the majority of young people. A lot of young people think with their heads and find their feet, they're independent and are thinking about their future."

85

(Helena, 18, excellent grammar school student)

"Old people think that young people are lazy and disrespectful... But some young people are good and they work, they do holiday jobs and go to school."

(Uroš, 22, young farmer)

Alongside these views we may recall that the cross-country skier and current Slovenian superhero Petra Majdič, who is now over 30, is still living with her parents, which ranks her high above the Slovenian average for women. Living with one's parents can clearly be associated with great achievements by young people. Often living with one's parents is actually essential (the only realistic possibility) for such achievements. Public moralising and exaggerated generalisations about postponing transitions such as leaving the parental home, can therefore in truth be seriously amiss, and can unnecessarily impede intergenerational dialogue. Particularly since our analysis, which we present in detail later in this report, indicates that primarily social (and less so psychological) factors are responsible for these trends.

It makes sense to ask what demographic factors have a more significant impact on the perceived dissatisfaction of young people. One of the key factors appears to be statistical region, where there is notably high dissatisfaction in the Goriška region (77.4 percent) and in the regions of Zasavje and Lower Posavje, each with 76 percent levels of youth dissat-

isfaction. The lowest levels of dissatisfaction are found in Gorenjska (54.3 percent) and in the Coastal-Karst region (58 percent).

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Such a distribution raises the suspicion that feelings of dissatisfaction may be associated with difficulties in employment. The differences depending on predominant work involvement are telling. The greatest (71.4 percent) dissatisfaction is among those who are employed part-time, followed by the unemployed (70.1 percent) and students (68.2 percent). Students are not (yet) actually in an unfavourable situation in the labour market, as we will show in the chapter on employment, but there is a growing likelihood that they will find themselves in such a situation once they finish studying (here it should also be considered that students are generally a somewhat more socially critical section of young people, irrespective of the special conditions in the labour market).

Factors such as gender, age and type of settlement have a negligible or just a small influence on the observed variable, so it seems appropriate to conclude:

Those most dissatisfied with the attitude of society to young people are those who have difficulty gaining employment or who may anticipate having such difficulty.

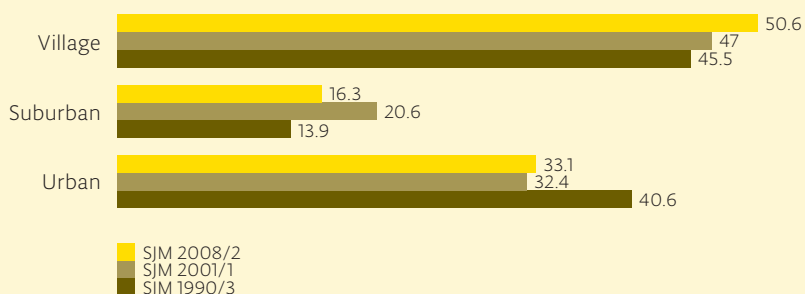
It should be added here that there is a statistically significant link between dissatisfaction with the attitude of society to young people and deviance ($r = 0.103$; $p = 0.01$). The correlation is not surprising, but indicates that a critical attitude to society may also be linked to personal difficulties in an individual's adjustment to the demands and conditions of society.

2.4 Young people in urban areas and in the countryside

According to available data, some notable changes are taking place in the numerical ratio of urban to rural youth. A basic estimate of the trend may be deduced using the Slovenian public opinion survey, which is car-

ried out on a representative sample of Slovenian inhabitants over 15 years old. If we limit ourselves to the age group of 15 to 30 (this framework is offered by the formulated categories in the file), we can make a rough estimate of the basic trend.

Graph 7: Structure of young people (15-30 years) by type of permanent residence settlement, public opinion survey (SJM), selected years

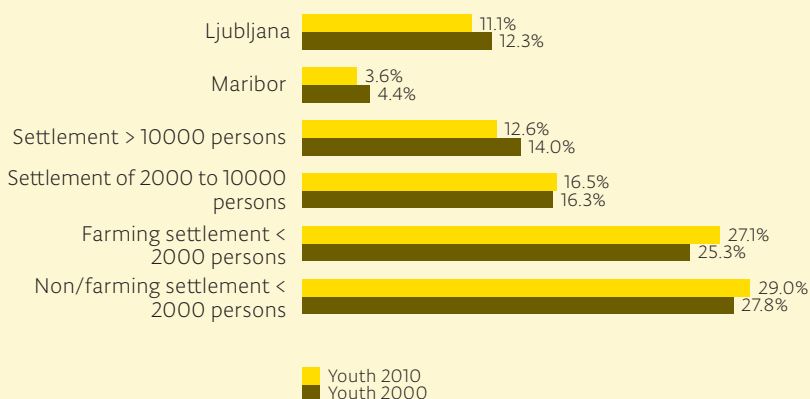


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The above graph shows how from 1990 to 2008 there was a marked increase in the proportion of young people living in the countryside, while the proportion of urban youth fell.

This finding is also confirmed by a comparison of the structure of young people (15-29 years) by type of settlement as part of the data captured by the last two Slovenian youth surveys:

Graph 8: Structure of young people by type of settlement, Youth 2000 and Youth 2010



The proportion of young people living in settlements of less than 2,000 inhabitants increased from 53.1 to 56.2 percent, while the proportion of young people living in settlements and cities with more than 10,000 inhabitants fell from 30.7 to 27.3 percent.

Based on the available data we may therefore conclude:

In the last two decades there has been a marked increase in the proportion of young people living in villages and small settlements, and a reduction in the proportion of young people from urban environments.

These trends could be tied primarily to the differences between urban and rural environments in terms of the fertility rate. Indeed demographic trends of previous decades show a relatively higher decline in fertility in urban environments (cp. Josipovič, 2003). Here it is worth noting that in Slovenia the boundaries between cities and countryside have been

largely erased, and that in the assessment of Uršič and Hočevar (2007) this difference continues to dwindle, with the countryside becoming increasingly urbanised and cities losing their original role as centres.

In terms of youth policy it is important to consider that this does not, therefore, involve a shift in the sense of the advancement of the rural cultural pattern, but chiefly a higher degree of geographical dispersal of young people.

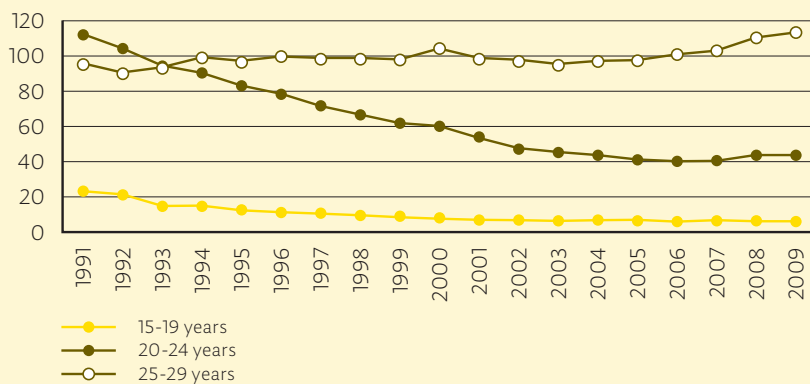
2.5 Summary of key demographic changes in other areas

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Below we summarise certain major demographic changes, of which we deal in more detail with the first three later in this report.

1. The proportion of young people (15-24 years) involved in education increased right up to 2008, and in 2008 it was markedly higher than the EU-27 average.
2. The proportion of students (full-time, part-time without employment and those on hiatus) in the age group 19-24 years increased from 38.5 to 53.5 percent from 2000 to 2010.
3. The proportion of employed and self-employed young people (15-29 years) fell from 47.9 to 32.8 percent from 2000 to 2010.
4. The graph below shows how after years of declining fertility among young people, since 2005 we have observed a marked trend of increase in the age group between 25 and 29 years, while among the youngest group, fertility has stagnated at a relatively low level. The trends presented allow us to conclude that the changes associated with fertility are slowing down, and alongside a falling fertility rate the last few decades have seen primarily a shift in having children to after the age of 25 in women.

Graph 9: Age-specific rate of general fertility,* Slovenia, annual

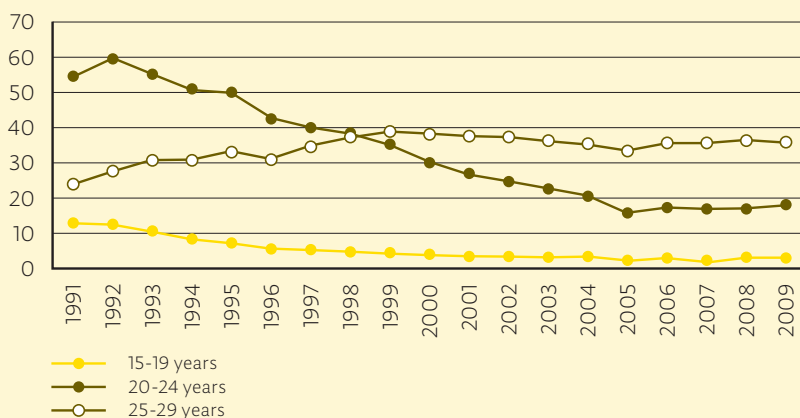


NOTE: * The age-specific rate of general fertility is the ratio of live-born children born in a calendar year to a mother of a specific age, to the number of women of that age in the middle of the same year, multiplied by 1,000.

SOURCE: SORS, 2010

5. The average age of mothers on the birth of their first child continues to grow, and in the period from 2000 to 2009 rose from 26.5 to 28.5 years (in 1990 it was still at just 23.9 years) (SORS, 2010). According to this indicator, Slovenia is in fact somewhere around the EU-27 average (Boljka, 2010).
6. The graph below shows that the declining marriage trend among young people was halted in 2005 and even turned around slightly, and among all three age groups we have observed a slight growth from 2005 to 2009.

Graph 10: Age-specific rate of first marriage for women, Slovenia, annual



SOURCE: SORS, 2010

7. It is interesting to note here that the proportion of young people cohabiting has shown a marked decline over the past decade, according to data from the Youth 2000 and Youth 2010 surveys. This decline has been greatest in the 25-29 age group, with the share of such young people falling from 58.4 to 40.1 percent. The above graph shows that the rate of marriage for this age group has remained practically unchanged from 2000 to 2010. We may therefore conclude that fewer and fewer young people are cohabiting with their partners, while on the other hand there is a growing proportion of them that are getting married.

From the above we may bring to the fore two key points:

In the past decade there has been a pronounced increase in the proportion of young people studying, which ranks Slovenia well above the EU-27 average for the involvement of young people in education. At the same time there

has been a major reduction in the proportion of young people with any form of full-time employment.

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The changes in the area of marriage, fertility and mother's age on the birth of the first child are slowing down. In the last five years, chiefly in the 25-29 age group, shifts have even been noted towards a slight growth in the rates of marriage and fertility.

2.6 Key findings

The key findings from this chapter, together with recommendations for the implementation of youth policy, may be condensed into the following points:

1. Young people in Slovenia are identifying themselves with adulthood increasingly early, while at the same time they are increasingly late in fulfilling their actual transitions such as leaving the parental home, establishing material independence and starting their own families.
2. In the period from 2010 to 2020, the number of young people (15-29 years) in Slovenia will fall by over 20 percent.
3. The number of older (65+) inhabitants per young person should be almost trebled in Slovenia by 2050.
4. The great majority of young people in Slovenia view the ageing of the population as a serious issue, and they assess relations between young and old people as tense, while also anticipating no change for the better in this regard.

5. More than 40 percent of young people believe that in Slovenia there is better provision for old people than for young people, and that old people should give up part of their prosperity in favour of young people.
6. Almost two thirds of those surveyed express dissatisfaction with the general attitude of Slovenian society to young people.
7. Those most dissatisfied with the attitude of society to young people are those who have difficulty gaining employment or who may anticipate having such difficulty.
8. In the last two decades there has been a marked increase in the proportion of young people living in villages and small settlements, and a reduction in the proportion of young people from urban environments.
9. In the past decade there has been a pronounced increase in the proportion of young people studying, which ranks Slovenia well above the EU-27 average for the involvement of young people in education. At the same time there has been a major reduction in the proportion of young people with any form of full-time employment.
10. The changes in the area of marriage, fertility and mother's age on the birth of the first child are slowing down. In the last five years, chiefly in the 25-29 age group, shifts have even been noted towards a slight growth in the rates of marriage and fertility.

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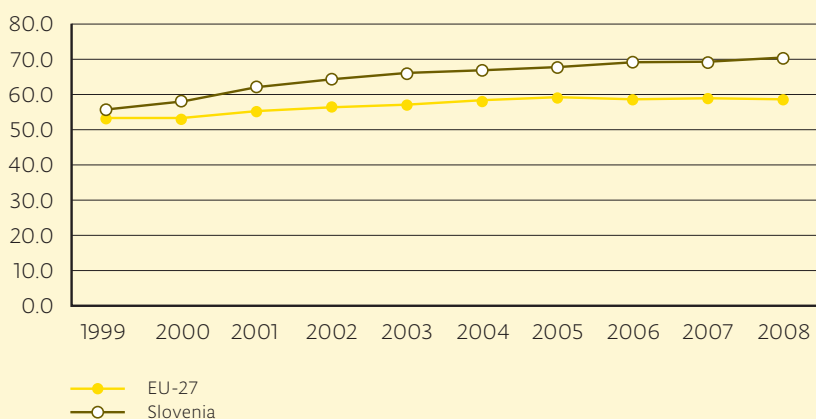
3 Education and training

3.1 Involvement of Slovenian youth in education

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Institutional education takes up an increasing part of people's lives today, and has become a universal societal means of preparing for adulthood and of socialising children and adolescents. For several decades the fundamental finding of all statistical reviews in the sphere of education has been that education has been expanding and on aggregate it is being extended. The mass nature of full-time education has also grown significantly in Slovenia over the last 10 years compared to the EU-27 average.

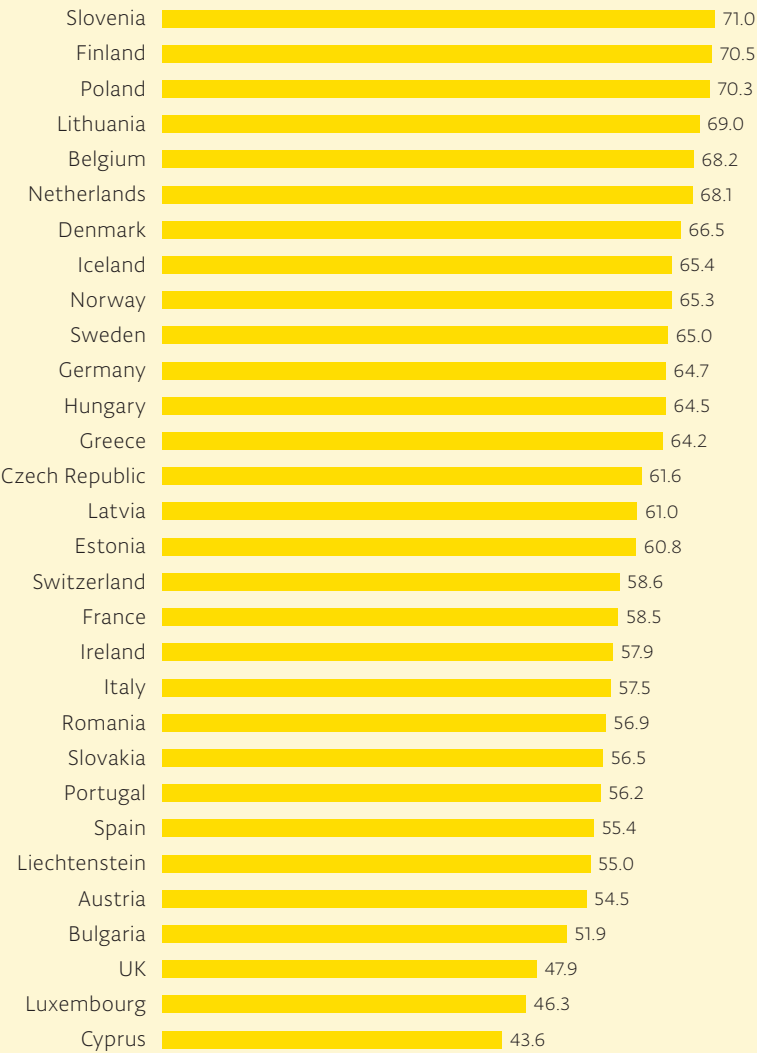
Graph 11: Involvement of young people (15-24 years) in full-time education, 1999-2008, Slovenia and EU-27



SOURCE: Eurostat

Furthermore, with 71 percent of young people aged 15-24 involved in full-time education in 2008, Slovenia is in first place among EU-27 Member States.

Graph 12: Involvement of the 15-24 years age group in full-time education, EU-27 Member States, 2008



SOURCE: Eurostat

The above graph relates to an age group that is in fact diverse in terms of the level of education involved. In view of the almost full universalisation of secondary education, the differences stem chiefly from the involvement of young people in tertiary education.

The expansion of education throughout the EU, including in Slovenia, over the last 50 years has been exceptional, and signifies one of the greatest social changes of all. Education is becoming a fixed feature for a major part of the lifecycle of the average Slovenian, just as it is for the average European. In essence this growth is associated with modernisation, but at the same time we must allow the possibility that it involves partly a postponement of young people entering the labour market.

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When we observe the whole of post-primary education, a range of questions arises, of course, regarding the point of such expansion: What significance does it have for the individual? Is it necessary in societal terms? How is it linked to entry into the world of adulthood and involvement in work? On the one hand, education and the knowledge acquired within it are taken as a fundamental characteristic of our civilisation. Emphasis is placed on the emancipatory facet of education and also on its role as a driving force of the economy, from which the most is expected⁹ (Bell, 1971).

Others doubt such effects of modern (mass) education. They criticise the expansion of education as well as its substantive features. Another subject of criticism is the “managerialisation” of education, and the incorporation of concepts and practices of liberal economics into public education, which is thought to belittle the essence of enlightening education (Hill, 2003; Levy, 2009, Trnavcevic, 2008). The point that an expansion of education may tend to be economically unjustified is also indicated by some surveys that have found the growth of tertiary education, as well as secondary, exceeds the growth of demand for a labour force educated in that way (Chevalier, 2003, McGuinness and Bennett, 2009). Findings also indicate that the available jobs do not entirely dovetail with people’s education (although this is never completely possible), that employees are “over-educated” and that an expansion of education is no guarantee of anticipated individual gains and economic growth for society (Denison, 1971). In more recent scientific literature, a prominent

9 The Lisbon Strategy of 2000 envisaged the EU becoming in 2010 the biggest world economy, based at the same time on knowledge (see http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/00100-r1.en0.htm).

place is taken by Wolf's assertions that the link between economic and educational growth is a myth (2003). In such circumstances we may start to be convinced more by the Marxist points that expansion of education is a means of preventing pressure on the labour market, a means of segmenting the working class, a means of ideologisation and so forth. (Gintis and Bowles, 1975).

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Irrespective of the fact that the question of the point for society and personally of education goes beyond the purpose of this report, it should be mentioned that the EU, while it no longer advocates such grand aims as in the Lisbon Strategy, gives major priority to education in the latest programming document Europe 2020 (European Council, March 2010). Among the priorities the aim is to maintain "improvement of the level of education, especially through efforts to reduce the level of dropping out in schools and to increase the share of the population with tertiary or equivalent education" (see http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/SL/ec/113616.pdf). This objective is subordinate to the goal of maintaining high employment, meaning that the aim of education policy and education is somewhat modified and more modest.

Despite the fact that there is still a good deal of currency in the assessment that in circumstances of mass education, solutions to pretty much all social issues are sought in education, as if it was some 'magic potion' for solving social issues, from economic growth to delinquency and family solidity (Depaepe and Smeyers, 2008).

3.2 Higher education

In the period of 90 years coinciding with the age of the first university in Slovenia (University of Ljubljana), the share of students among young people has grown steeply. A look back shows that in 1961 there were 12,971 tertiary "listeners" (*Statistical Yearbook of the SR Slovenia 1964*), which at that time represented just 6.5 percent of the age group 19-26 years, while in 2008 students accounted for as much as 41 percent of the same age group (SORS data). This indicates that the proportion of students in that age group has grown more than six times. In the period from 1996 to 2008, the share of students in the age group from 19 to 26 almost doubled (from 22 to 41 percent). Such a change cannot be just

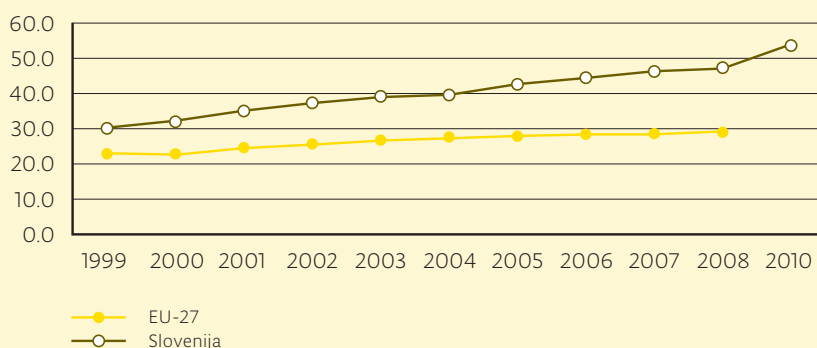
quantitative, but necessarily also qualitative: this of course indicates a change from an elite to a mass group.

Major growth in the number of students in the generation is also indicated by our research findings. In 2010 students (full-time, part-time but not employed and those on hiatus) accounted for almost 70 percent of the 19-24 age group, which is approximately 30 percent higher than a decade earlier. An even more pronounced increase may be observed in the 19-29 age group (from 25.5 percent to 41 percent). This indicates not just the low effectiveness of studying, but also the systemic (dis)organisation of studying, which contributes to lengthening it.

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The dimensions of these changes appear even more clearly when we compare Slovenia with the EU average (somewhat differently defined data are available).

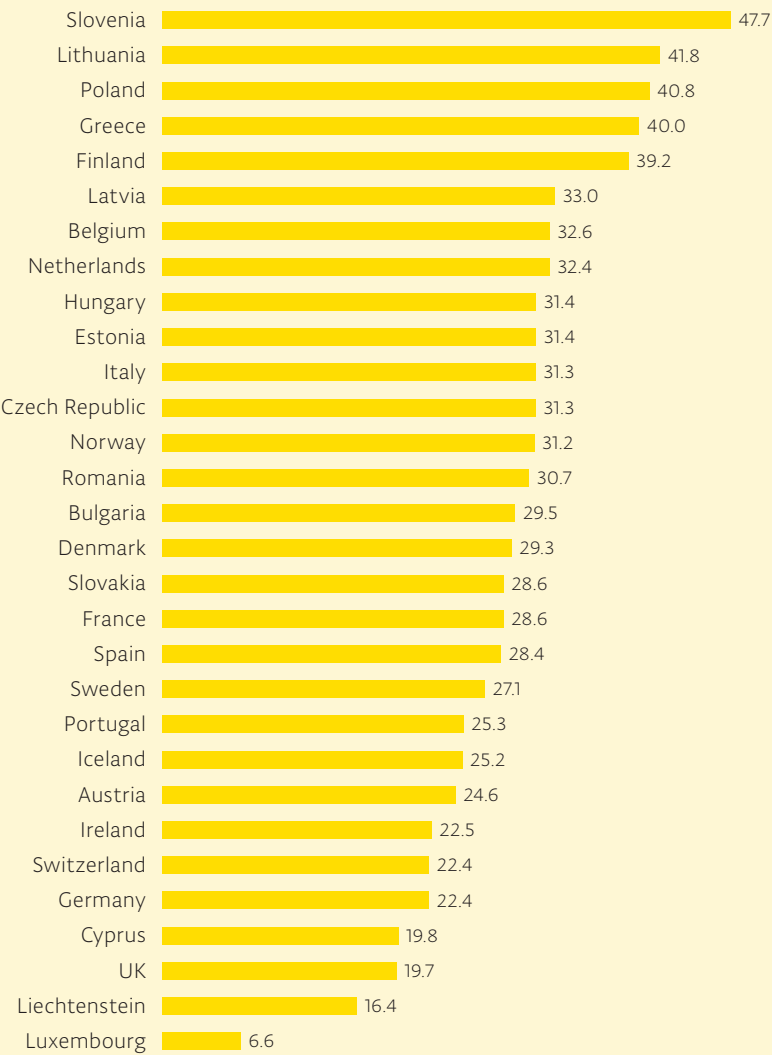
Graph 13: Involvement of the 20-24 year-old generation in tertiary education, 1999-2010, Slovenia and EU-27



SOURCE: Eurostat and Youth 2010

The above graph relates to the generation group that approximately matches the envisaged duration of tertiary education. Put simply, in this Slovenia has 'run away' from the European Union. A European comparison for 2008 tells us even more:

Graph 14: Involvement of the 20-24 year-old age group in tertiary education, EU-27 Member States, 2008



SOURCE: Eurostat

In 2008 the proportion of young people aged between 20 and 24 years in Slovenia who were studying was by far the highest among the EU-27 countries.

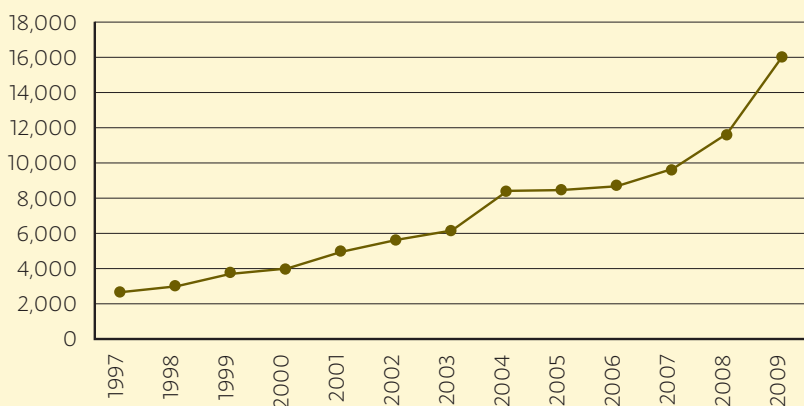
It is interesting, for instance, that the proportion in Slovenia is approximately twice that of Germany or Austria. The Slovenian proportion is considerably higher than the most advanced EU Member States of the Nordic group.

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Slovenia's position here should at least in part be linked to the lack of steady employment, alongside the social benefits of having the status of student, including the predominantly free tuition, student work schemes and state grants.

The growth in tertiary education is greatest in the most challenging segment, in postgraduate studies (graph below).

Graph 15: Number of postgraduate students in Slovenia, 1997-2009



SOURCE: SORS

In the 13-year observation period, the number of postgraduate students has shown an extraordinary increase, if we take into account the classical (pre-Bologna) understanding that this level of study is in preparation for scientific work and that to date its applicability has remained of secondary importance.¹⁰

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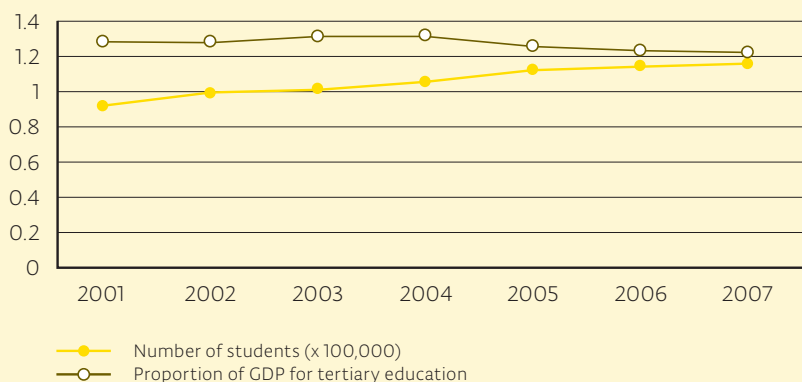
In different ways the above data point towards the same thing: That there has been an exceptional growth in the involvement of youth in tertiary education in Slovenia. From the viewpoint of enlightenment principles, there would be nothing amiss here. It would seem that the dreams of Humboldt, Helvetius and Zois have come true. But a look at the actual state of affairs shows that this development has been spurred significantly by efforts to reduce the pressure on the labour market from young people. This, too, would be justified, if it was followed by 'appropriate' employment, which would reflect the study investment, the investment of the state and the efforts of the youth involved. But here in particular we can see that there is no proper connection, and sometimes no connection at all (we discuss this in greater detail in the chapter on employment).¹¹

The socially questionable nature of the growth in tertiary education, especially in terms of quality, is indicated by the concurrent trend of a *decline in its funding*. Public funds intended for tertiary education are being reduced, not just in terms of funds provided per individual student, but also in absolute terms (as a proportion of GDP).

10 We should also bear in mind another aspect, that postgraduate study in Slovenia has undergone an important institutional change, that in the Bologna system the first level is set generally as three years of study, that postgraduate study on the second level has become professionally and no longer scientifically oriented, and that in 2005 a three-year single doctoral course was introduced, replacing the previous doctoral projects. Nevertheless the growth in postgraduate studies should be analysed in terms of employability.

11 We might also seek the role of university-level education in the area of human emancipation, in the area of qualified political involvement and similar.

Graph 16: Number of students in tertiary education and proportion of public funds (GDP) allocated for tertiary education in Slovenia, 2001-2007



SOURCE: SORS

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The pronounced increase in the number of students in the period from 2001 to 2007 coincides with a decline in the proportion of GDP allocated to tertiary education, which raises doubts about the substantive quality of such education.

The graph clearly indicates that parallel to the steep growth in the number of students in Slovenia, there has been a decline in the share of public funds from GDP allocated to tertiary education. Even taking account of a possible growth in private funding, it is quite clear that the funding of tertiary education (especially in terms of funds per student) is declining.¹² This will not be without consequences for the actual process of learning and study in tertiary education and for its institutionalisation, and especially not for

¹² The actual reduction in the proportion of GDP does not necessarily mean a reduction in the absolute amount of funds, although the trends are indicated.

its quality and effectiveness. Of course these are negative consequences that cannot be mitigated or even prevented by the great commitment of teachers and students.

3.2.1 **Tangent: Debate on the expansion of tertiary education**

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Numerous questions surround the issue of tertiary education. Apart from the fact that it is underfunded, it may also be asserted that it is overextended in view of the largest extent in the EU, and this does not match the level of economic development in Slovenia by this criterion. We may also assert that in the future this situation will be reflected in discrepancies that will be apparent in part as unemployment and the dequalification of graduates in gaining employment. Doubts also arise about the quality of tertiary education, especially regarding its funding, the duration of courses and regarding the linking of study to social transfers and benefits (but not to adequate employment).

Viewed in the most general terms, Slovenian education as seen by Enlightenment figures such as Condorcet, Helvetius or Žiga Zois is a dream come true, and even goes beyond the dream. All children, and almost all youths are involved in education, and we can find numerous indicators of the quality of that education. So Slovenians should be enlightened, scientifically “geared up” and emancipated. In the views of those advocating the economic usefulness of education, such as Denison, they should be satisfied, since the scope and content of the education are clearly expressed.

And if not from the Enlightenment figures, we could in any event expect Weber to be critical towards the circumstances in which we have found ourselves, since he predicted a competition for certificates and diplomas, not from a “thirst for education”, but rather for privileges and earnings. Weber did not trust the immanent value of education per se. He took the view that education, especially in the tangible form of certificates and diplomas, is a means for ensuring a privileged position and for creating closed, privileged groups (Weber, 1978).¹³

13 “If we hear from all sides demands for the implementation of standardised curricula, ending in specialised exams, the reason for this is of course not a suddenly awakened “thirst for education”, rather the purpose is to limit the range of candidates for these (privileged) positions and the monopolisation of these positions by those holding educational documents. Since the curriculum required to obtain academic standing demands considerable costs and a lengthy period of time... intellectual costs... decline with the increased scope (of certificates)” (Weber, 1978: 1000).

Until recently, theories of the social relevance of education were dominated by the theory of human capital and its associated interpretation (credentialism), which postulates a certain economic benefit from education. On the societal and individual level, education is dealt with as an economically profitable investment. Clearly at the current time moment this theory would find scant support in the lives of Slovenian youths (and older people, too). Meanwhile G. Becker (1975) made the assumption that the theory of human capital applies in a situation where the labour market is balanced, and as can be seen from the chapters below, herein lies the problem, which is not simply of a market forces nature.

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3.3 Secondary education

Completing *secondary education* has become the educational norm for young people. Secondary education nowadays involves practically the entire cohort (98 percent) (Vertot, 2009: 43). Half a century ago, attendance at secondary school was far from automatic: in 1961 all types of secondary school were attended by just 47.3 percent of the generational cohort aged 15–18 years (*Statistical Yearbook of the SR Slovenia 1964, 1964*, 394–6). So we are not merely talking about an expansion of tertiary education, for in the longer term there has been a similar growth on the secondary education level.

This does not mean that all pupils successfully complete secondary education. The rate of early dropping out of full-time education in Slovenia rose from 2.4 to 3.2 percent between 2004 and 2009 (Eurostat). Here the statistical report on young people in the EU (Domžalska, 2009: 92) yields a noteworthy finding:

In 2007 the proportion of individuals in EU-27 that dropped out of education early was lowest in Slovenia.

In 2007 this proportion¹⁴ amounted to 4.3 percent in Slovenia, while the average for EU-27 was 15 percent. Given the big difference, we might ask whether the cognitive effectiveness of Slovenian secondary education is adequate. Data from the PISA research give Slovenian education a relatively favourable assessment, with data from the 2006 research indicating that Slovenian school pupils ranked eighth out of the 56 countries surveyed in their scientific explanation of phenomena, their performance in maths was also in the top half of countries, as was their reading, albeit to a lesser extent.¹⁵ This points to the relative quality of primary and partly also secondary education in Slovenia.

3.3.1 Academic success

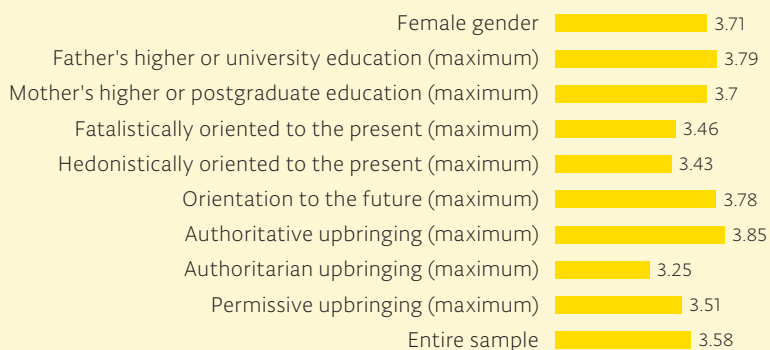
3.3.1.1 General sociodemographic factors

In this survey we studied the factors that explain the academic success of Slovenian youths, but we had at our disposal a limited number of explanatory variables, which we tested. Apart from the standard demographic factors, these did not match those we tested in earlier research (Flere et al., 2009): the time orientation (Zimbardo and Boyd, 1999), which supposedly predicts academic success, since it contains the planning and postponing of satisfying needs, and educational styles (authoritative, authoritarian and permissive in this research, the concept of leading according to Lewin, 1963). All these observed variables have appeared on the level of associations as significant, specifically in the direction that was theoretically anticipated. An orientation to the present (hedonistic and fatalistic), the authoritarian and permissive educational styles have turned out to be typically negative, while others (authoritative or democratic) as having typically positive associations. The same goes for gender, material standing of the family and education of each parent.

14 The proportion of individuals who drop out of education early relates to persons between 18 and 24 years old, whose highest educational attainment is ISCED 0, 1 or 3c and currently they are not enrolled in any education or training programmes.

15 See <http://pisacountry.acer.edu.au>.

Graph 17: Average academic success at the end of secondary school, Youth 2010



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When we performed a test of robustness through regression analysis, it was shown that time orientation is not a potent factor compared to the educational styles of the parents (although these two constructs are associated, such that authoritative (democratic) education is associated with an orientation to the future and vice versa). It appears that a fatalistic orientation to the present regarding academic success is clearly negative, and there is a distinct absence of the “saving grace” of an orientation to the future. The introduction of demographic variables into regression analysis provides a much clearer explanation of academic success: girls enjoy significantly greater success, and there is confirmation of the major influence of the parents’ education, especially the influence of the mother’s education, which is somewhat greater than the influence of the father’s education. The interviewee assessment of the family’s material standing joins the time orientations, which are less significant.

Relative academic success for young people is positively influenced to a significant extent by being female, by parental education (especially that of the mother) and by appropriate (authoritative or democratic) socialisation styles.

3.3.1.2 Regional distribution

The regional distribution of academic success is important, since systematic economic and developmental discrepancies appear from region to region. We looked at primary and secondary school achievement (young people aged 19 years and more) and overall academic achievement (ages 24 and over).

Table 11: Average academic success by region, Youth 2010

	Average academic success in the final grade of primary school*	Average academic success in the final grade of secondary school**	Average academic achievement***
Pomurje	4.02 (02–03)	3.42 (4–5)	5.76 (08)
Podravje	4.01 (04)	3.45 (03)	5.84 (07)
Koroška	4.04 (01)	3.74 (01)	5.71 (09)
Savinja	3.85 (07)	3.35 (9)	6.03 (04)
Zasavje	3.76 (11)	3.36 (7)	5.63 (10)
Lower Posavje	4.00 (05)	3.29 (10)	5.53 (11)
Southeast Slovenia	3.84 (08)	3.41 (6)	5.97 (05–6)
Central Slovenia	4.02 (02–03)	3.38 (7)	6.13 (03)
Gorenjska	3.79 (10)	3.18 (11)	5.97 (05–6)
Goriško	3.39 (12)	3.30 (10)	5.35 (12)
Coastal-Karst	3.82 (09)	3.46 (02)	6.48 (01)
Notranjska-Karst	3.95 (06)	3.42 (4–5)	6.45 (02)
Total	3.92	3.39	5.97

* Success in the final grade of primary school ranges from failure (did not pass), marked as 0, through other marks on a scale of 2 (satisfactory) to 5 (excellent). The numbers in parentheses are the rankings of the regions for the observed indicator.

** In final grade performance at secondary school, failure (did not pass) is marked as 0. In calculating academic success, an additional point is given to pupils that completed a four-year school. Only interviewees that have reached majority are taken into consideration. Scale: 0 (did not pass) to 5 (excellent performance in final grade). The numbers in parentheses are the rankings of the regions for the observed indicator.

*** Only interviewees aged 24 and over have been included. Scale: 1 (incomplete primary schooling) to 9 (postgraduate course completed). The numbers in parentheses are the rankings of the regions for the observed indicator. In ascribing validity in column 3, we need to take account of the possibility that interviewees have changed residence, and the smaller number of interviewees in some regions.

In the table above we have not traced certain systemic differences that would indicate the non-uniform functioning of the Slovenian education system. The region of Central Slovenia ranks quite highly in average primary school success, but not in secondary school success. Pomurje, which has been singled out as academically the least successful region in the economic sense (see column 3 of the table above), shows no clear downward deviation in primary and secondary school performance. The pattern can be traced only in column 3, where the three regions with the highest indications of economic development also show the highest academic achievement.¹⁶

3.3.2 How students feel in school (subjective perception of education)

It is important how young people perceive school, and how they feel in it. J. Dewey determined a century ago that “school is not preparation for life, but school is life”. Here school cannot be left merely to the wishes of school-going youth, since it has objectively set goals. In conditions of the established concept of permissive education, there is the danger of school being adjusted excessively to its “consumers”, with lowered standards and requirements. This opinion can also be traced among young people:

“... I don't know where this idea comes from that school should be fun. In school we're supposed to learn, and only if there's time and energy left we get to have fun.”

(Helena, 18, excellent grammar school student)

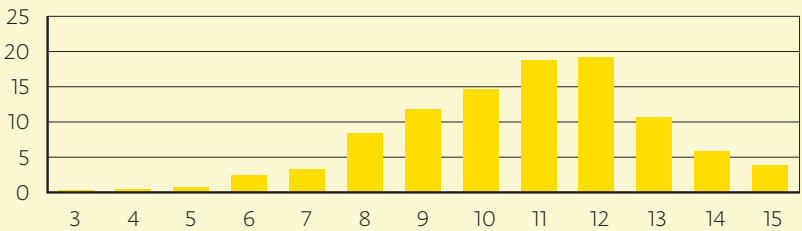
We measured the feeling in school using a summarised scale containing three assertions: “In school I have a great time”, “In my class/grade the atmosphere is/was very relaxed” and “The teachers respect/respected the opinions of pupils and encourage/encouraged us to express ourselves in lessons” (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.60$).

The experience of secondary school is actually diverse among interviewees, but positive assessments clearly predominated over negative ones.

¹⁶ In reading the above table, certain reservations in its interpretation need to be logically observed. On the one hand because particularly interviewees in the oldest group have tended to move their home. Moreover the data do not allow any insight into final exams, which are perhaps more decisive. Our analyses (not shown) did not indicate samples of variance in external academic success by region (school leaving exam in 2010).

The validity of this assessment confirms that a negative feeling overlaps significantly with a general experience of stress ($r = 0.178$; $p < 0.01$).

Graph 18: The feeling of young people in secondary school, Youth 2010



NOTE: 1 = very bad feeling, 15 = very good feeling.

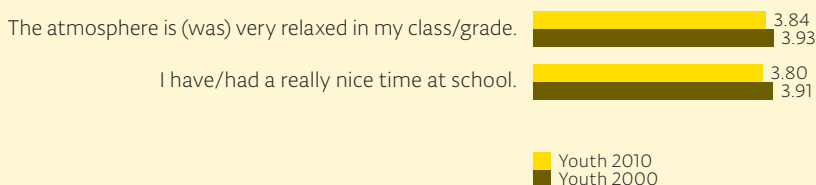
If we assert that those who in the described interval attained 11-15 points feel good in school, then we may conclude:

The majority (more than 60 percent) of Slovenian adolescents describe their feeling in secondary school as mainly favourable.

Among interviewees, the level of satisfaction with school shows no appreciable difference relative to their educational attainment. This means that a subjective experiencing of their own time at school is not decisive in the continuation of education.

As is evident from the graph below, compared to 2000 the feeling in school has deteriorated slightly, but is for the most part favourable.

Graph 19: The atmosphere in school, Youth 2010 and Youth 2000



NOTE: The lowest is 1 (bad atmosphere), the highest 5 (good atmosphere).

The extent of satisfaction with school indicates that the finding of Mencin Čeplak still applies today: there are “exaggerations in the public discourse about how hated school is among pupils in Slovenia” (Mencin Čeplak, 2002: 172). The percentage of those who believe that the atmosphere in their class is relaxed is actually a little lower than in the 2000 survey, but closer scrutiny here shows that it does not involve an increase in the number of negative opinions, but simply a slight increase in the number of neutral responses.

Moreover the young people involved in the qualitative part of our survey described their experience with (primary and secondary) school for the most part as positive:

“Grammar school was an excellent experience for me. I had teachers who taught me how to learn. Uni was different story. There was too much theoretical overload and too little interesting practical work.”

(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

“School is no longer instructional and academic, just academic. Whether this is good or bad, I don’t know. If you have instruction at home, then it’s fine, but if you don’t there’s a problem. I always enjoyed school. I came out of grammar school with a basic breadth of knowledge, in part because of the critical perspective they gave us.”

(Davor, 22, young politician)

“It was great, I would go the same way again. Mostly because of the company of my schoolmates. I grew up with those people, and we got

along very well. The same interests and views of the world. We still hang out together.”

(Gašper, 23, young sportsman)

“...I liked going to school, because I knew that my schoolmates were there and that I could hang out with friends there... If I had the chance, I would go to secondary school again... Everything, the subjects, teachers, everything... It was great, they really worked hard with us... Especially if you're interested in what you enrolled in.”

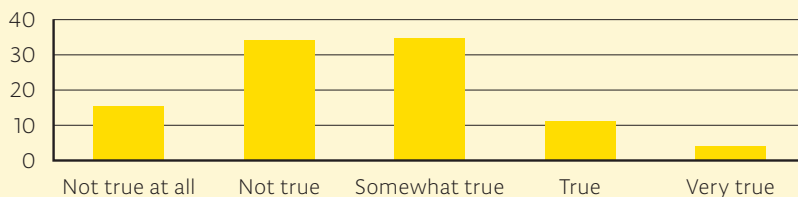
(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

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How pupils feel in school is linked to parental demands. Given that the expectation of the decisive influence of school on becoming established in one's career and in society is the rule, we may expect parents to have clear demands on their children, and these tend to go beyond their capacity and achievements. The demands parents place on adolescents is of course a very important factor in the life of those adolescents, and may serve as an incentive or obstacle in their school work. This is contextualised by the closeness, supervision and support of each parent separately and both of them together, and a major influence comes from the mother and the family's social position (see Klanjšek, 2010). So we asked interviewees whether their parents were too demanding in their demands for academic success.

Graph 20: Expectations of parents regarding their children's academic success (subjective views of youths)

Parents demand/demanded too much from me regarding school.



NOTE: 1 = not true at all, 5 = very true.

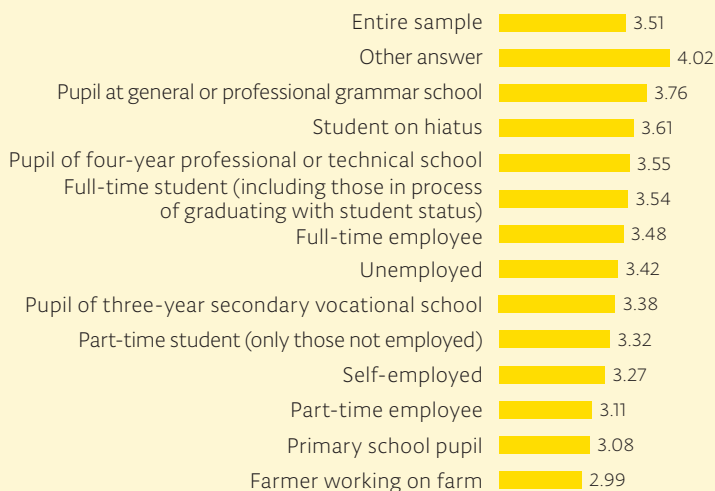
On average, Slovenian youths do not believe that their parents have (or had) excessive demands regarding their academic success. Only 15 percent of interviewees believe that this applies to their parents (in other words that the assertion is “true” and “very true”). This is actually more than in 2000, when just one tenth of interviewees responded in that way (Mihelj, 2002: 244). This increase could be interpreted as a response of parents to the changing circumstances, which involve greater competition in finding jobs, but it does not point to any especially pronounced pressure on their part. On the contrary, in none of the educational classes of the parents does the value of their demands reach the parametric average of 3. We have also found that excessive demands are positively associated with permissive ($r = 0.136$; $p < 0.01$) and authoritarian socialisation ($r = 0.185$; $p < 0.01$), but negatively with authoritative or democratic socialisation ($r = -0.064$; $p < 0.05$). Judging from the perceptions of our interviewees, authoritarian and permissive socialisation patterns of parents produce excessive demands on children, and are associated with inappropriate styles of parenting. The youngest category of interviewees (under 18 years old) identifies the demands of their parents as on average the highest, but here, too, the average does not reach the parametric value of 3.

In layman’s terms, we could say that relatively low demands from parents perhaps indicate their perception of the low importance of school for the future lives of their children, as well as the futility of forcing excessive demands on them.

3.4 Assessment of the quality of full-time education

Every young person has to a certain extent a formed opinion on the quality of the education they have received. This is not necessarily an objective perception, so below we emphasise in particular those that we may deem to be more competent. Interviewees were asked to assess the quality of the last course of education they received, with marks from 1 (unsatisfactory) to 5 (excellent). For the entire sample the average mark is 3.51, meaning that there are predominantly positive marks, which are linked with statistical significance to academic success in primary ($r = 0.163$; $p < 0.01$) and secondary school ($r = 0.120$; $p < 0.01$) and to an orientation to the future ($r = 0.193$; $p < 0.01$), but linked negatively to an orientation to the present. This gives additional weight to the general positive assessment of the quality of education.

Graph 21: Subjective assessment of the quality of formal education last attended by young people, by predominant activity, Youth 2010



The above graph also shows that groups with the freshest experience of education are especially satisfied with education. Above-average satisfaction is expressed chiefly by grammar school pupils, by pupils of other four-year secondary schools and by university students. Of the groups with a downward deviation, pupils of three-year vocational secondary schools are particularly noteworthy.

This can be linked to the general problem of the association between the education system and the labour market, which is recognised in official policies,¹⁷ and it is also recognised by many of the young people we interviewed:

“At school, for instance, they fill your head with useless stuff instead of preparing you for life.”

(Vali, 23, young representative of the Hungarian minority)

17 www.mss.si/datoteke/dokumenti/MSS-131-10-PP_izobrazevanje mladih.pdf

“When they finish college, people are unemployable, because the faculty system pumps them full of knowledge which in the real economy accounts for 10 percent of useful knowledge. The state should therefore create a system so that young people get as much experience as possible and can get into their first job more easily.”

(Davor, 22, young politician)

“Maybe some top-grade student would like to work with wood, but they don’t let him and push him into grammar school... I’d almost have preferred to go to vocational school, I’d be a cook... But my parents pushed me into grammar school.”

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

“I’ll probably never finish my studies, for the practical part of the course made me realise this wasn’t for me. It’s sad when after four years of studying you realise that you’ve made the wrong decision. If they showed us in the first year what it was like to be a teacher, you could switch to something else, but at the end of the course it’s impossible. I actually had a good time in practical work, the kids liked me, but I couldn’t imagine that at 60 I’d still be writing on the blackboard. I’d like to do something dynamic, something that keeps changing... I don’t think the teaching profession is like that.”

(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

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Among the problems that young people identify in Slovenian education, we should point out the (excessively) weak link between the education system and the labour market.

3.5 Non-formal forms of education

The established education system has never been entirely adequate, but in the modern, complex economy and with ever accelerating changes to

employment relations, sectoral structures and so forth, alternative forms of education are becoming increasingly important. This is emphasised in the publication *Youth in Europe 2009*, which finds that in EU-27, involvement in non-formal forms of education does not exceed 10 percent of any age group, but there are major differences in its scope. The identified level for all groups in Slovenia is around one tenth (data relate to 2007, see Domžalska, 2009: 99). It is stressed that non-formal education is pursued especially by those who have already completed higher education. Here it should be pointed out that there are thoughts of “formalising” non-formal education, and about how it can be recognised in the formal system (Toth, 2007: 109).

3.5.1 Participation in non-formal education

We asked interviewees what types of non-formal education, by content, they participated in during the past 12 months.

- The most common involvement among our interviewees was in courses to prepare for the driving test. The test involved 31.5 percent of interviewees. Given that a driving licence is an essential requirement for many jobs, and that it has become in effect a requirement for involvement in everyday communication, this figure does not seem high. An unfavourable material situation of the family has a limiting effect on this variable.
- Foreign language courses were attended by 18.5 percent of interviewees (4.4 percent of them were involved in three or more courses). These courses were much more commonly attended by girls, and by interviewees whose parents were more highly educated. In this case, too, an unfavourable material situation of the family has a limiting effect.
- Computer courses involved the participation of 16.5 percent of interviewees (4.2 percent of them more than three times). Participation is more common among males, but the difference is not significant. Parental education shows no major influence, but material situation of the family has an unfavourable influence.
- The most widespread involvement among interviewees was in courses associated with knowledge and skills that are directly

useful to their current or future occupation. They involved 43.7 percent of interviewees. The question is, whether interviewees might not have been too lax in their interpretation of this. It can involve just a few hours of work induction or courses lasting several months.

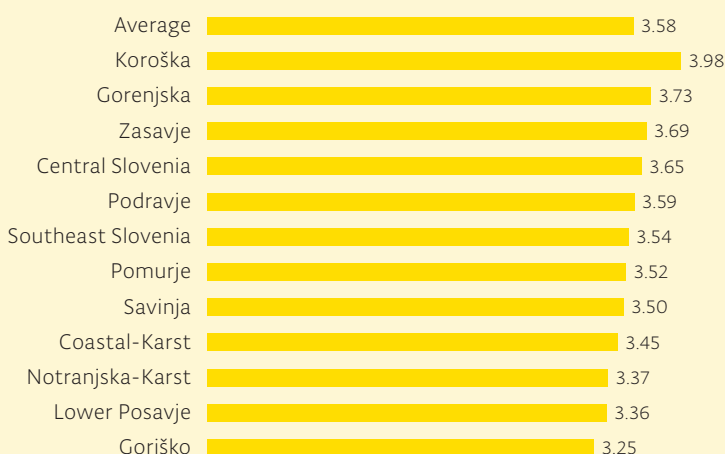
- Quite a few interviewees took part in courses in the area of culture and the arts – this involved more than a fifth of interviewees (22.5 percent). They involved much more commonly girls and those interviewees whose parents have a higher level of education.
- 4 percent of interviewees participated in various other courses.

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3.5.2 Satisfaction of young people with the range of non-formal education offered

We asked interviewees how satisfied they were with the non-formal forms of education they were involved in. Just 12 percent of them did not answer this question, which indicates a high level of interest in this form of education.

Graph 22: Perception of the quality of non-formal education involving young people, Youth 2010



NOTE: 1 = very dissatisfied, 5 = very satisfied.

Participants gave predominantly positive responses regarding their satisfaction with non-formal education. In all regions the actual averages were above the parametric average of 3.

3.5.3 **Extent of need for non-formal education**

More than a fifth (22.5 percent) of interviewees responded to the question about the perception of their own needs for alternative forms of education and thereby expressed an interest in it. The responses do not point to any structural patterns.

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Given the possibility of indicating three types of alternative education, the most commonly mentioned were foreign language courses (75 responses). There were also frequent responses about computing courses (42). We also found a wide selection of other responses: dance, music, entrepreneurship, vocational guidance, cooking, photography, diving, environmental protection, sewing, welding, graphic design and a range of other things stemming from private and leisure interests. There were few responses indicating an orientation towards economics, business or inventing.

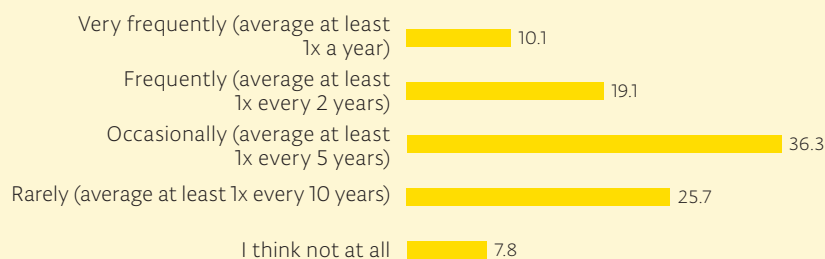
Slovenian youths are aware of the importance of non-formal education, but apart from foreign languages and computing they make scant mention of components relating to entrepreneurship, self-employment and inventing.

We put to interviewees a question about their own readiness for future non-formal education. Responses ranged from 1 (I think not at all) to 5 (very frequently – on average at least once a year). Given the current circumstances, posing this question seemed to us essential, although it cannot be found in other research. In earlier surveys of students we asked the question, what were interviewees prepared to do for occupational

success. In a 2005 student sample of Slovenian youth, 80 percent said that they were prepared to pursue additional education (Flere et al., 2005: 55). In the study *Youth in Europe 2009*, young people indicate just the frequency of their participation in non-formal education by age group. The findings indicate that Slovenia is close to the EU average, with around one tenth enrolled, and that there are not such pronounced differences between age groups as there are in some other countries (Domžalska, 2009: 99). Data on the responses to the related question in Youth 2010 are shown in the graph below.

Graph 23: Planned frequency of non-formal education of young people, Youth 2010

How frequently in your life do you think you will pursue various forms of non-formal education?



The data show that the extent of readiness to participate in non-formal education is high, and higher than among students in 2005 (see Flere et al., 2005: 55). They point, therefore, to a general increase in the readiness to pursue non-formal education, since in Youth 2010 there are virtually no students that would not be prepared to pursue non-formal education.

More than 92 percent of young people believe that in the future they will participate in non-formal forms of education.

There are nevertheless some major differences among young people, with girls showing a greater readiness than boys (M females = 4.16; M males = 3.83). No significant differences could be discerned for age groups, but there are clear differences related to the interviewee's level of education. A low average (less than 2.5) is shown by interviewees who have completed at most vocational secondary school, while all other interviewees observed in terms of level of academic education show an average above 4. This difference points to a lack of awareness about the need for additional non-formal education precisely among those for whom it would appear to be most important. This, meanwhile, matches the findings of other surveys, which show that those with higher formal education more frequently participate in non-formal education (Smith and Smith, 2008; Domžalska, 2009). The existing state of affairs of course demands attention and action in terms of the preparation, offering and profiling of non-formal education for these groups, which are likely to overlap with those who are also socially excluded.¹⁸

3.5.4 Assessment

We have found that interviewees demonstrate an interest in non-formal education, and that young people in Slovenia are familiar with these forms of education. They participate in these forms in large numbers, and will do so in the future. On this basis, however, we may also conclude that interviewees do not entirely grasp the importance and potential of non-formal education in relation to work and changes in the labour market. Thus for instance there were no demands for courses in Excel, which ranks as a component of modern-day literacy (although it is present in some full-time education programmes).

We can state, however, that there is a prevalent opinion that non-formal education cannot be ordered from the top down, and that it must stem primarily from local initiatives, although these must maintain their critical judgement. Some people in the EU take the view that non-formal education should fall within the competence of local authorities (Low, 2010: 40). It can also be pointed out without any reservations that non-formal education should incorporate relatively "tiny" and "neglected" topics and levels of difficulty: concern for specific marginal groups (for various forms of work with the elderly, disabled, Roma and other minority groups; see Toth, 2007), neglected forms of handicraft and specific, especially traditional, farming activities and organisational forms of social entrepreneurship (such as those

18 More details on social exclusion in the chapter Participation.

being pursued in Murska Sobota). Finally, non-formal education should also involve the use of new media, including the web (such as *Facebook*, see Freishtat and Sandlin, 2010).

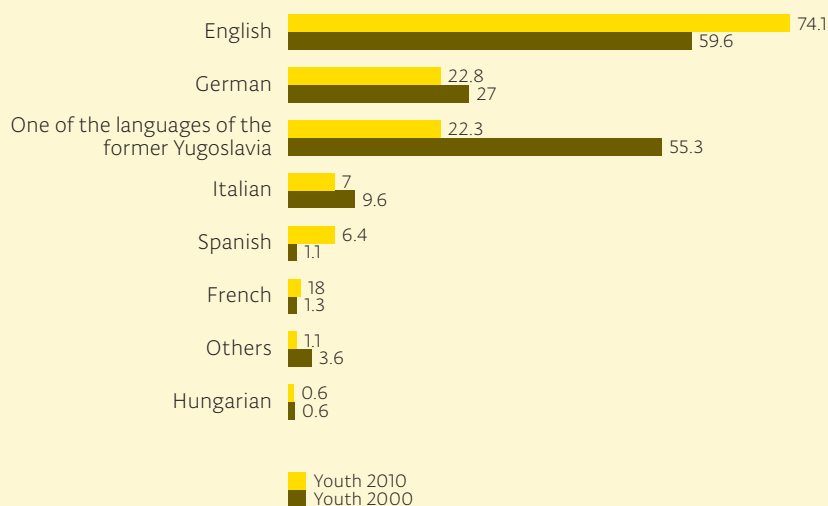
3.6 Foreign languages

There is no need to discuss specifically the importance of learning foreign languages in today's world. This is especially true of a country like Slovenia. It involves various options for using linguistic skills, from geographical mobility to everyday occupational and domestic life, where the possibilities are very limited without a knowledge of several foreign languages. The European Union has set itself the target of its inhabitants mastering several languages, where the practical aspect is considered as well as the aspect of principle. This would mean that young people, especially in primary and secondary school, will have to learn one or more foreign languages. The findings of the study *Youth in Europe 2009* show that Slovenian youths are involved more than the average in learning foreign languages. Where an average of 46.6 percent of adolescents in four-year secondary schools and 27.8 percent in vocational schools were learning two foreign languages in EU-27 in 2006, data for Slovenia showed that 92.5 percent of pupils in four-year secondary schools and 35.3 percent of pupils in vocational schools were learning two foreign languages. This proportion is much smaller in the United Kingdom (less need owing to the established use of English around the world) and in Portugal, indicating that it is not just a question of the use of one's native language around the world, but also of education policy. In some countries, pupils in secondary vocational schools did not learn foreign languages at all (Domžalska, 2009: 82).

Slovenian secondary school pupils (four-year schools) learn two foreign languages twice as frequently as the EU average (in Slovenia 92.5 percent of pupils learn two languages, compared to 46.6 percent of pupils in the same group in the EU), but this does not mean that the upper threshold has been attained. A total of 6.4 percent of secondary school pupils in Slovenia learn three languages, compared to the EU average of 8.4 percent (Domžalska, 2009: 82).

The data in the Youth 2010 survey are entirely comparable to the survey conducted a decade earlier, with an identically defined population (Youth 2000). It is clear that Slovenian youth today has a better mastery of foreign languages (graph below).

Graph 24: Proportion of young people with good or very good knowledge of foreign languages, Youth 2010 and Youth 2000



Three quarters of young people aged 15-29 years have a command of English, which is significantly higher than in 2000 (60 percent). Fewer and fewer young people in Slovenia have a command of other foreign languages.

The graph points to an interesting situation. Young people have a command of English that they themselves perceive to be “very good” and “good”, which is an important advance compared to knowledge a decade ago. In all other foreign languages a major reversal has been observed. This decline applies to the minority languages and especially to the languages of the former Yugoslavia. Despite the growing influence of English and its use, there are still other things that Slovenian youths need to know. In 2000 19.2 percent of young people had a command (good or very good) of two languages, but in 2010 the comparable group declined

to 17.2 percent. Meanwhile the small group of those with a command of three or more languages has not increased. This is linked primarily to a reduction in the knowledge of languages of the former Yugoslavia, but in any event it does not indicate any improvement in the linguistic competence of Slovenian youths overall. This does not align with the requirements of a knowledge-based society and with the possibilities for employment, where other languages apart from English tend to be required. It seems that in this respect there has been no shift towards multiculturalism, but rather towards the predominance of English.

3.7 Education abroad

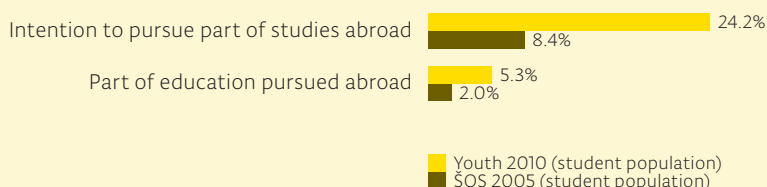
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Modern circumstances of mobility, and especially the Bologna system of tertiary education, encourage the pursuit of part of one's education abroad. This can be very important, not just in terms of academic benefit, but also as a life experience in terms of multicultural experiences and perfecting foreign languages. This can of course serve to raise the quality of education, but of course it can work the other way around (if, for instance, it makes it easier to gain the necessary ECTS points). Below we present an analysis of Youth 2010 data regarding education abroad. We have used responses obtained from current Slovenian students (full-time, part-time and those on hiatus).

In response to the question whether they had already gained such experience, 16.3 percent of surveyed students answered in the affirmative. Taking into account the fact that they included first and second-year students (who had fewer such opportunities), it shows that such experience is widespread, but far from predominant. We should also note the fact that just 5.3 percent of students pursued education abroad for three months or more, something that facilitates more significant and longer-lasting influence. In this respect it is very much a minority experience, although there has been an increase compared to 2005, when just 2 percent of students said that they had completed part of their courses abroad (research at that time also showed a trend of growth, but survey data for comparison were obtained only from the University of Maribor (see Flere et al., 2005: 72). At that time it was also found that there were major differences among the universities, and especially among faculties, and that students with better grades made greater use of this form of gaining knowledge and experience.

Regarding the intention of pursuing such forms of education, 24.2 per cent of surveyed students confirm that they have their own such desires (the response “maybe” was disregarded), which far outstrips the actual fulfilment of these desires to date. Despite the demonstrated subjective intentions, this is far from a predominant (realistic) form of education. The higher probability of such education (as well as the intention to pursue it) is clearly spurred by the higher material standing of the family, while gender is not a statistically significant factor.

Graph 25: Pursuing courses or education abroad, student samples, Youth 2010 and ŠOS 2005



SOURCES: Youth 2010 and Profile of Slovenian Students 2005

The extent of studying abroad among students has more than doubled over the past five years. There has been an even more significant increase (from 8 to 24 percent) in the proportion of students who intend to pursue part of their studies abroad.

3.8 Key findings

1. In 2008 the proportion of young people aged between 20 and 24 years in Slovenia who were studying was by far the highest among the EU-27 countries.

2. The pronounced increase in the number of students in the period from 2001 to 2007 coincides with a decline in the proportion of GDP allocated to tertiary education, which raises doubts about the necessary substantive quality of such education.
3. In 2007 the proportion of individuals in EU-27 that dropped out of education early was lowest in Slovenia.
4. Relative academic success for young people is positively influenced to a significant extent by being female, by parental education (especially that of the mother) and by appropriate (authoritative or democratic) socialisation styles.
5. Three quarters of young people aged 15-29 years have a command of English, which is significantly higher than in 2000 (60 percent). Fewer and fewer young people in Slovenia have a command of other foreign languages. The Ministry of Education should promote the provision of tuition in other foreign languages at schools on all levels.
6. The majority (more than 60 percent) of Slovenian adolescents describe their feeling in secondary school as mainly favourable.
7. Among the problems that young people identify in Slovenian education, we should point out the (excessively) weak link between the education system and the labour market.
8. More than 92 percent of young people believe that in the future they will participate in non-formal forms of education.
9. Slovenian youths are aware of the importance of non-formal education, but apart from foreign languages and computing they make scant mention of components relating to entrepreneurship, self-employment and inventing.
10. The extent of studying abroad among students has more than doubled over the past five years. There has been an even more significant increase (from 8 to 24 percent) in the proportion of students who intend to pursue part of their studies abroad.

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4 Employment and entrepreneurship

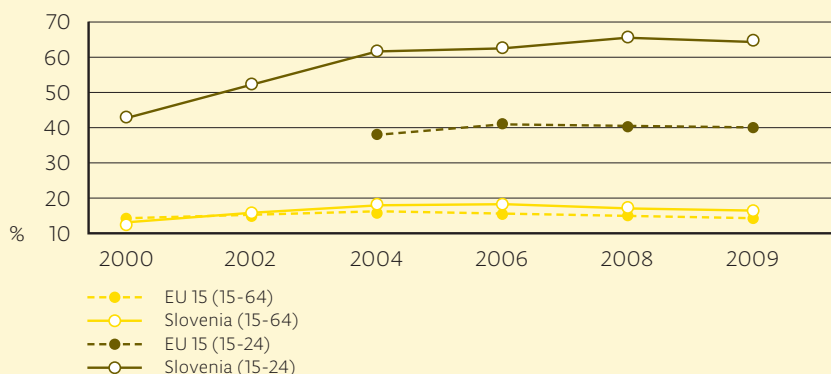
4.1 New conditions in the labour market and young people

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Amidst global competition and unfavourable demographic trends, Europe is encountering forces that are radically changing the labour market and education. Traditional forms of permanent (open-term) employment are increasingly being replaced by less secure and more flexible forms of employment, while the age at which people first enter the jobs market is rising, and the actual transition takes longer and is less certain (Vertot, 2009). Some authors even doubt the justification for the term “transition”, since for an increasing portion of the population, stable employment is unattainable in the long term (Dwyer and Wyn, 2001; Furlong and Kelly, 2005).

Of course Slovenia is no exception in these trends. As can be seen from development reports (OMAD, 2006, 2008, 2010), in Slovenia, too, the proportion of temporary employment (i.e. fixed-term employment) in overall employment has been constantly growing. More precisely, in the period 1996-2005 this proportion supposedly doubled (OMAD, 2006), wherein the greatest increase in temporary employment in Slovenia was precisely among young people. This is also confirmed by the data presented in the graph below.

**Graph 26: Proportion of temporarily employed persons,*
EU and Slovenia, by age group and selected years**



NOTE: *Data relate to the second quarter of the year.

SOURCE: Eurostat – Population and social conditions/Employment and unemployment (Labour Force Survey)

Although what is termed the “age-segregation of the labour market” (Ignjatović and Trbanc, 2009), which characterises a larger portion of the temporary employment among young people than among other employed persons, is something familiar to the majority of EU countries, in terms of the spread of temporary employment among young people, with a 65.5-percent share (this level is even higher for young women: 74.2 percent; young men: 58.6 percent), Slovenia is in top place in the EU (both for EU-15 and EU-27).

Slovenia is in top place in the EU in temporary employment among young people.

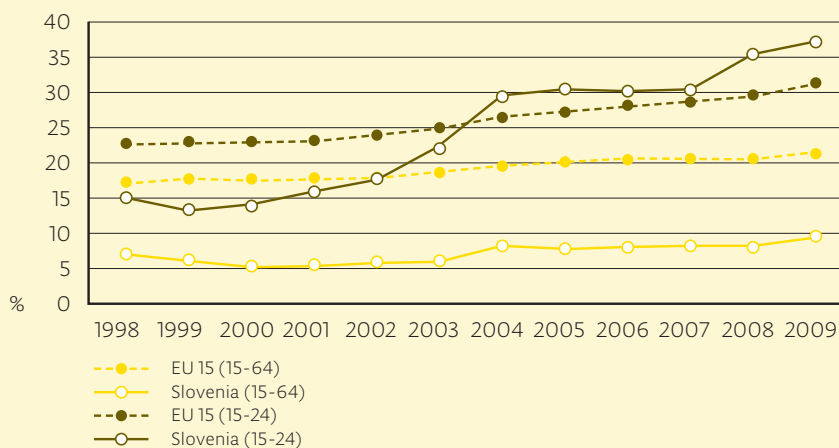
Age-segregation of the labour market (which is “more flexible” for young people) leads to greater uncertainty regarding employment stability, and this affects the possibility for “full economic and social emancipation” (Ignjatović and Trbanc, 2009: 40) as well as major life decisions, including about starting a family (OMAD, 2008: 42). Furthermore, temporary

employment increases the risk of poverty, which is higher among temporary employees than those with permanent jobs (OMAD, 2010: 138).

As Ignjatović and Trbanc (2009) have found, alongside fixed-term employment, among work-active young people (aged 15–24 years) there is an increasing proportion that have part-time work contracts. Thus the share of what are called part-employments among work-active young people in the period from 1998 to 2009 increased by 145 percent, which can also explain the main share of the increase that could be discerned in the same period for the population aged 15 to 64 years (+ 37 percent).

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Graph 27: Proportion of part-time employees among the working population, EU and Slovenia, by age group and selected years



NOTE: Data relate to the second quarter of the year.

SOURCE: Eurostat– Population and social conditions/Employment and unemployment (Labour Force Survey)

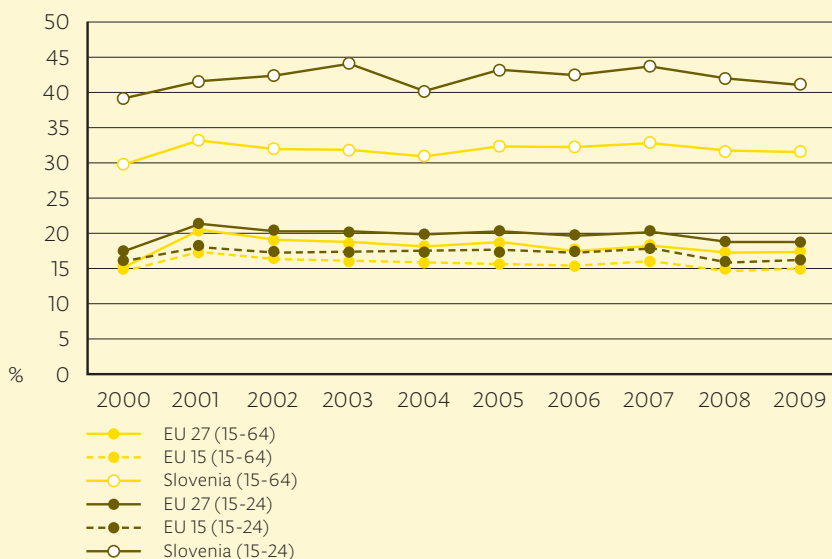
This pronounced increase in part-employments among young people from 1998 to 2009 also contributed to the fact that the proportion of part-time employed young persons in Slovenia (36.6 percent, of which 6.9 percent not voluntarily) in 2009 exceeded the average shown in the same social segment by the economically most advanced European countries (EU-15: 30.9 percent) and the European Union as a whole

(EU-27: 27.8 percent). This offers the conclusion that the labour market in Slovenia, especially where young people are concerned, is more adaptable than the average. Both temporary jobs and part-employments are used as an indicator of the adaptability or flexibility of the labour market (OMAD, 2010: 40).

The labour market in Slovenia, especially where young people are concerned, is more adaptable than the average. The proportion of temporarily and partly employed persons among work-active young people (15–24 years) in Slovenia exceeds the proportion shown in the same segment by the economically most advanced countries of Europe (EU-15) and by the European Union as a whole (EU-27).

On the subject of increasing flexibility of the labour market, we also need to look at employment during the period labelled in the European Labour Force Survey (LFS) as the “asocial” period. This is the period (or forms of work) that traditionally we do not count as part of the time when an individual is work-active (or forms of work that are usually rarer in Western European societies). It includes shift work, Saturday and Sunday work, evening work and night work. The graph below shows the status in this regard of young employees and employed persons generally in Slovenia.

Graph 28: Proportion of shift employees among all employees, EU and Slovenia, by age group and selected years

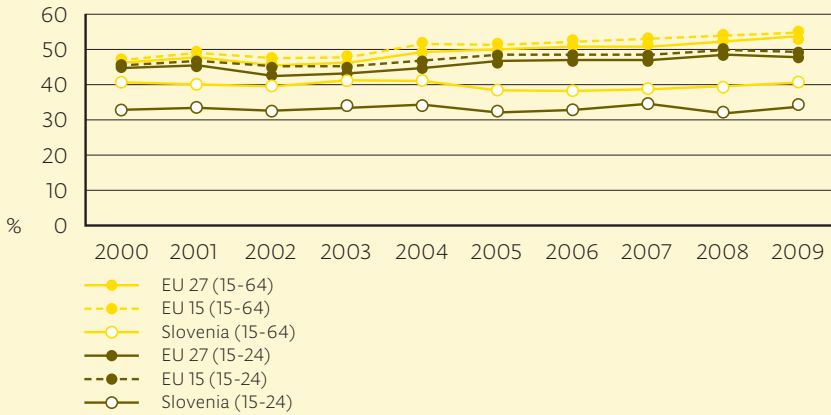


SOURCE: Eurostat– Population and social conditions/Employment and unemployment (Labour Force Survey)

The graph shows that within the “wider and narrower” European Union (EU-27/EU-15) Slovenia stands way ahead in its share of shift employees, especially where young people (15–24 years) are concerned. The proportion of shift-employed young people among all employees is thus on average around twice as high as the European average, which is between 15 (EU-15) and 20 percent (EU-27). We should also point out that Slovenia stands out again when the proportion of shift-employed young people is compared to the proportion of all shift employees. While this difference in EU-27 amounts at most to 2.2 percentage points, in Slovenia it is between 8.2 and 12.3 percentage points.

The picture does not change when we look at the proportion of those that never have to work on Saturdays. Here, too, Slovenia is ahead in terms of all employees, as well as in terms of young employees.

Graph 29: Proportion of employees (out of all employees) that “never” work on Saturdays, EU and Slovenia, by age group and selected years

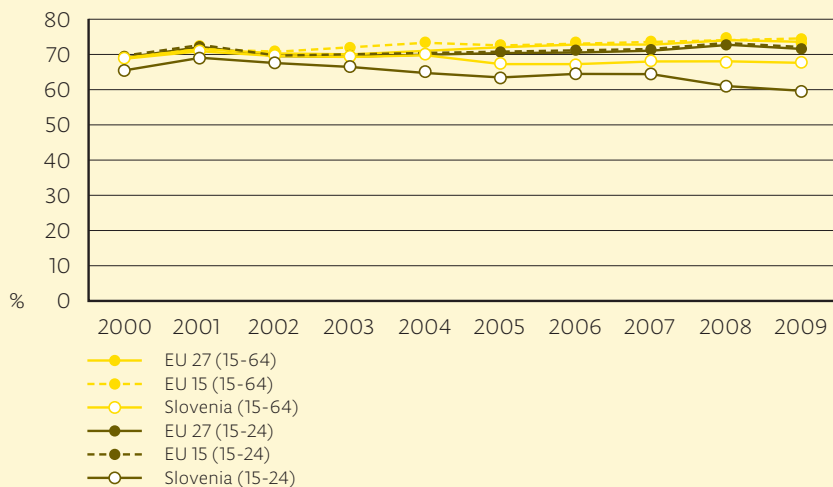


SOURCE: Eurostat – Population and social conditions/Employment and unemployment (Labour Force Survey)

Indeed the data show that the proportion of young employees that do not have to work on Saturdays is markedly higher in the EU than in Slovenia (2009: EU-27 = 48.8 percent; Slovenia = 34.6 percent). Or put another way, based on the data we may conclude that in Slovenia, only a third of young employed people “enjoy” a five-day working week, and that their situation over the past ten years has in practical terms not changed in any discernible way (compared to Slovenia, a shift can be discerned in the EU-15/EU-27 Member States towards increasing the proportion of those who are occupationally active only for five days a week).

Meanwhile we cannot talk of stability where Sunday work is concerned. According to Eurostat data, this is growing in Slovenia, with the increase especially notable among young employees.

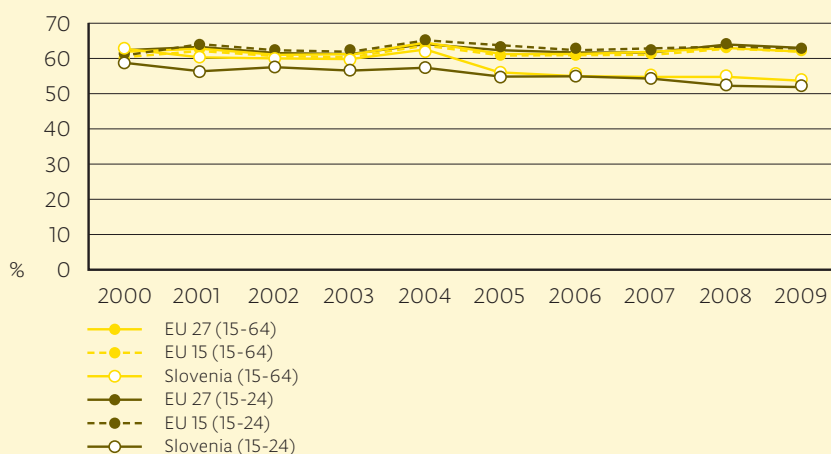
Graph 30: Proportion of employees (out of all employees) that “never” work on Sundays, EU and Slovenia, by age group and selected years



SOURCE: Eurostat— Population and social conditions/Employment and unemployment (Labour Force Survey)

A similar trend to that of Sunday work can be found in evening work, where over the last ten years the proportion of those employees that never work in the evening has fallen from 63 to 54 percent (age group 15–64) and from 59 to 52 percent (age group 15–24).

Graph 31: Proportion of employees (out of all employees) that “never” work in the evening, EU and Slovenia, by age group and selected years



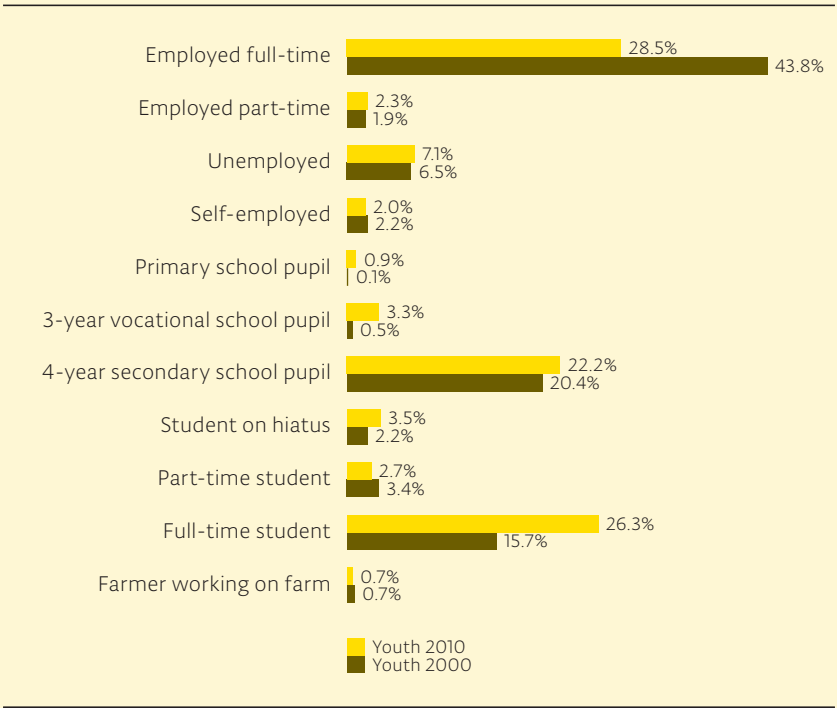
SOURCE: Eurostat– Population and social conditions/Employment and unemployment (Labour Force Survey)

Young employees in Slovenia stand out compared to young employees in the EU in terms of shift, Saturday, Sunday and evening work, while from the longitudinal aspect, in the last two jobs in the “asocial time” Slovenia is showing trends that are counter to those detectable in the economically most advanced EU countries.

The new situation in the labour market is also indicated by data obtained through this study. A comparison of the situation in 2000 and 2010 regarding the predominant working activities of young people in Slov-

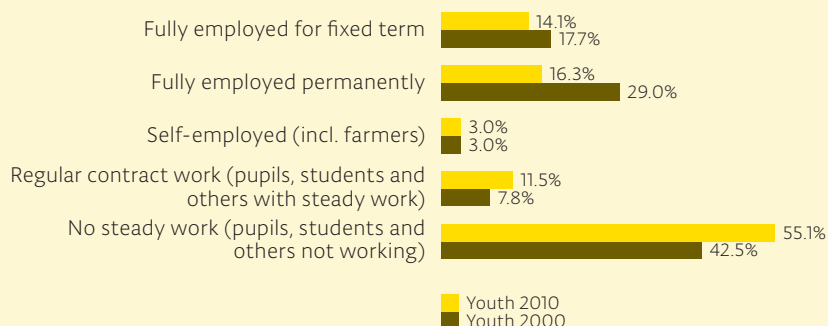
enia (graph below) shows that over the last ten years there has been a major reduction in the proportion of employed persons among young people in Slovenia, while there has been an increase in the proportion of those involved in (chiefly tertiary) education.

Graph 32: Predominant work activities of young people (15–29 years), Youth 2000, Youth 2010



The differences are even greater if we limit the group to those aged 25-29 years, which is especially interesting in terms of the transition to the world of work. The proportion of fully employed persons in this group fell from 74.5 percent to 57 percent, the proportion of full-time students increased from 3.7 percent to 14 percent, and the proportion of unemployed persons rose from 7 to 11.2 percent. So there is a very clear trend of lengthening and tightening the conditions for the transition from education to steady employment.

Graph 33: Basic employment status of young people (15–29 years), Youth 2000, Youth 2010



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The same thing is confirmed by the shifts in circumstances surrounding basic employment status.

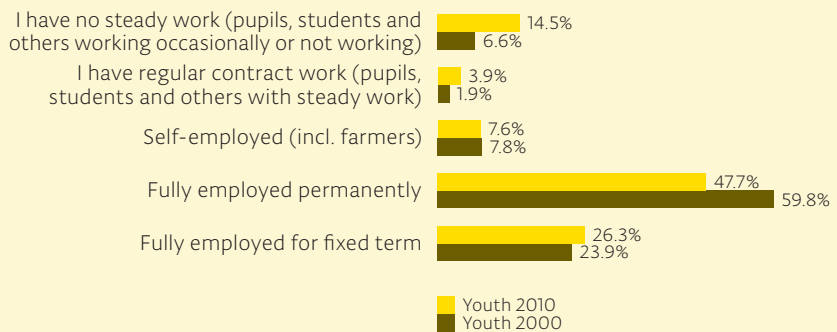
The proportion of permanent employees was almost halved between 2000 and 2010, while there has been a marked increase in the share of young people without any permanent forms of work or with less permanent forms of work.

We can observe the same trends if we limit ourselves to the age group of 25–29 years. The proportion of full-time employees on open-term contracts fell from 52.4 to 32.8 percent, while the proportion of those involved in contract and piece work rose slightly (from 6.8 to 8.6 percent). It is especially interesting to note here that the proportion of young people without steady employment in this group rose from 12.1 to 25.7 percent. The difference arises mainly because of the higher proportion

of respondents who at this age are still involved in tertiary education, and less because of the higher unemployment rate.

In terms of employment marking a successful transition, the most interesting analysis relates to the oldest group of interviewees.

Graph 34: Basic employment status of people aged 29 years, Youth 2000, Youth 2010



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In 2000 the share of those aged 29 in full-time permanent employment was around 60 percent, but in 2010 it was only 48 percent.

On the other hand there was a slight increase in the proportion of those working on single contracts or for fixed terms, and above all there was a major increase in the proportion of those not working (from 6.6 to 14.5 percent). Of those, in 2010 unemployed persons clearly predominated (at 65 percent). The remainder are (still) enrolled in education.

A look at the predominant activities among 29-year-olds yields another important aspect: the proportion of unemployed persons in this group rose from 3.5 to 9.8 percent. This increase can in fact be at least partly

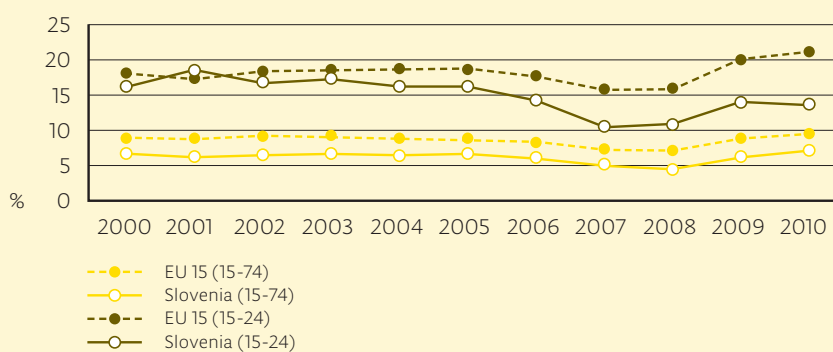
ascribed to the economic crisis of recent years. But more valid conclusions require a closer analysis of youth unemployment.

4.2 Youth unemployment

The relatively unfavourable position of young people in terms of unemployment started to appear as a systematic pattern in Western societies following the recession of the early 80s in the USA and Western Europe, specifically as a reflection of the general lack of jobs, which was quite logically apparent mainly among young people, who were new job seekers. Young people thus took on their shoulders a relatively high share of the burden of general unemployment (Furlong and Cartmel, 2007: 36–37).

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Graph 35: Unemployment rate of the age groups 15–24 years and 15+, EU-27 and Slovenia, 2000–2010



SOURCE: Eurostat– Population and social conditions/Employment and unemployment (Labour Force Survey)

The above graph offers at least four key findings for the current situation in Slovenia:

- Youth unemployment (in Slovenia and the EU) is markedly higher compared to the entire active population. Slovenia, too, is characterised therefore by the aforementioned wider pattern of the relatively unfavourable status of young people in the labour market. Furlong

and Cartmel believe that the unemployment rate of young people in developed countries is on average two to three times higher compared to the adult unemployment rate (Furlong and Cartmel, 2007: 37).

- The difference in the unemployment rate between young people and the entire active population shows a diminishing trend. While the difference in 2000 between the two groups was 9.6 percentage points, in the second quarter of 2010 it amounted to just 6.4 percentage points.
- Compared to the average for EU-27, Slovenian youth is in a more favourable position. Where youth unemployment in Slovenia was even slightly above the EU-27 average in 2001, since then it has tended to fall and in the second quarter of 2010 (after a marked increase during the recession of 2009) it stood at 13.4 percent. Meanwhile the EU-27 average rose to a high 20.5 percent.
- The recent economic crisis (in Slovenia and the EU) has had a relatively greater impact on young people. This is in line with the findings of researchers that youth unemployment is generally much more sensitive to economic fluctuations. In a recession, compared to the general rate of unemployment it rises with markedly greater speed, while during recovery it falls much more quickly (Makeham, 1980; O'Higgins, 2001).

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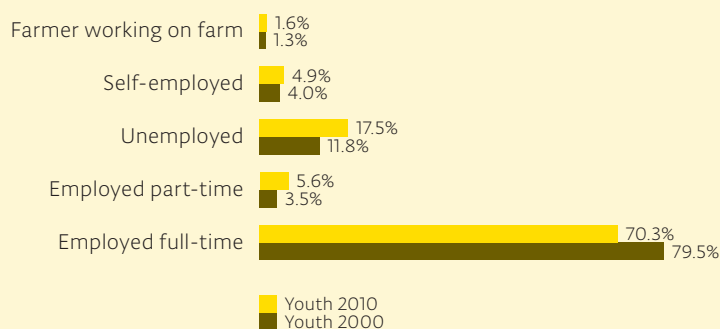
It is important to point out here the effect of how unemployment is defined. The Labour Force Survey, on which the given data are based, defines an unemployed person as someone who *“in the last week (from Monday to Sunday) prior to the survey did not work even one hour for payment (in money or in kind), profit or family prosperity, but who in the past four weeks was actively seeking work and is willing to take work within two weeks. Unemployed persons also include those that have already found work and will begin that work after the survey.”*¹⁹

Even at first glance such a definition runs seriously counter to a sound-minded understanding of unemployment. Our survey data enable us to present the youth unemployment rate as it derives from the self-perception of the individual. In line with the established approach, we limited ourselves to just the active population, in other words the employed, self-

19 <http://e-uprava.gov.si/ispo/delovnoprebivalstvo/osnovna.ispo?pageTo=/delovnoprebivalstvo/metodologija.jsp>

employed and unemployed, where unemployed persons in this analysis are those individuals that perceive themselves to be unemployed.

Graph 36: Employment and unemployment of economically active young people (15–29 years), Youth 2000 and Youth 2010



The unemployment rate defined in this way paints a significantly different picture, since in comparison with the Eurostat data it indicates precisely the opposite trend: the unemployment rate of (economically active) young people has noticeably increased in the past decade. If we limit ourselves to the 15–24 age group, the differences are even greater, since according to our methodology, in 2000 as much as 17.8 percent of young people were in this group, and in 2010 a full 25 percent. So why is there this difference?

These are young people who are not involved in full-time or part-time education (they are not even students on hiatus), while at the same time they are not in any steady employment. Here it should be pointed out that in 2010, none of those respondents in the 15–24 age group who were doing regular contract work defined themselves as unemployed.²⁰ In short these are young people who are in no way involved either in the education system or in any form of steady job. It is clear that an increasing proportion of such young people does not match the definition of unemployed person according to the Labour Force Survey standards, but the reason can be sought primarily in the fact that an increasing number of young people are performing occasional work (at least one hour a week).

²⁰ In the entire sample there were only two such respondents.

Another question is what is the relationship between the number of registered unemployed young persons and the number of young persons who feel unemployed. According to Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS) data (2010), in September 2010 there were 24,452 registered persons in Slovenia under 30 years old. According to our data, in the 15–29 age group, 7.1 percent of respondents define themselves as unemployed. Taking account of Eurostat data, that in 2010 Slovenia had 387,493 inhabitants aged between 15 and 29 years old, we can estimate that around 27,512 of them feel unemployed. Given the incomplete matching of age groups and the projectional nature of data, this estimate should be regarded as an approximation. On the other hand we can assert with some certainty that the number of young people who feel unemployed is 10 to 15 percent higher than the number of registered unemployed young persons. This excess can be ascribed to individuals seeking work through other agencies, not meeting the requirements for registration as unemployed persons or simply not wanting to register at the ESS.

In this context there is a telling opinion from one of our interviewees:

“A lot of people don’t register at the ESS because they say they get hassled by them and have to write out applications. Personally that’s not a problem for me.”

(Maja, 30, unemployed graduate)

But even Maja sees problems with being registered as unemployed:

“I’m tied to the ESS, and I can’t take any unregulated work.”

The next interviewee provides a telling testament to the effectiveness of measures to boost youth employability:

“I signed up for social and got it. I went on some courses, wrote applications... but the whole thing was more for the social, and not really about getting a job.”

(Dani, 24, successfully in unregulated employment)

Indeed Dani notes that there are in fact no jobs, but for that reason there is more than enough work:

“I do everything, lay tiles, bricks, render, I do flooring, frames, paving stones, stone... just about everything in a building, including the decorating. There’s loads of work.”

These analyses lead us to the following finding:

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Official statistical data for the past decade point to a trend of falling youth unemployment, but in this period the proportion of young people who see themselves as unemployed has grown significantly. Taking account of such a definition of unemployment, the unemployment rate in the 15–24 age group in 2000 was around 18 percent, and in 2010 it was a full 25 percent.

To this finding we should add that even higher rates of youth unemployment are prevented by the significantly high rates of involvement of young people in the education system. According to Eurostat data, in 2008 a full 71 percent of young people in Slovenia (15–24 years old) were involved in formal forms of full-time education at the secondary and tertiary level,²¹ while the average for EU-27 was under 60 percent.²²

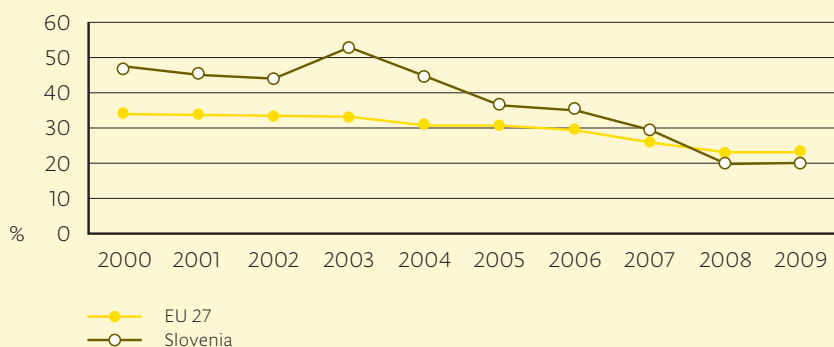
21 The data in our survey indicate a continuation of this trend, since in 2010 74.8 percent of young people aged 20–24 were involved in full-time education at the secondary or tertiary level.

22 According to Eurostat data, the level of activity (proportion of work-active and unemployed) of young people in the period 2003–2009 actually grew from 35.5 to 40.9 percent. It should be borne in mind, however, that the Labour Force Survey defines as work-active those people *in the last week (from Monday to Sunday) who performed any kind of work for payment, profit or family prosperity, or who had the status of an employed or self-employed person, although they did not work* (Kraigher, 2009). Thus the level of activity of young people also rises with an increased proportion of students performing student work.

4.2.1 Duration of youth unemployment

While youth unemployment is relatively high, it is important to stress that it is relatively short-lived. The Employment Service of Slovenia reported, for instance, that in April 2010 the average waiting period for those registered at the ESS among young people under 26 years amounted to 8.1 months, while for all others it was 19.5 months (ESS, 2010).

Graph 37: Share of unemployed youth (15–24 years) unemployed for 12 months or more



SOURCE: Eurostat– Population and social conditions/Employment and unemployment (Labour Force Survey)

The above graph confirms the trend of increasing flexibility in the youth labour market. According to our data, therefore, young people are increasingly finding themselves unemployed, while on the other hand the share of long-term unemployed has considerably declined over the past decade. According to the latest Eurostat data for the second quarter of 2010, that share has actually grown slightly, and amounts to 25.2 percent (EU average is 24.2 percent).

4.2.2 Anticipated trends relating to youth unemployment

Looking at the predicted future trends for youth unemployment, a major part is played by the fact that in the future young people will represent a

progressively smaller proportion of the active population. According to Eurostat data, in the period 2000–2009 the proportion of young people (15–29 years) in the entire active population in Slovenia fell from 24.6 to 21.8 percent. Young people are therefore an increasingly rare human resource, and given the predicted demographic trend (a reduction in the number of young people of around 20 percent over the next decade) we can expect this effect to intensify in the near future.

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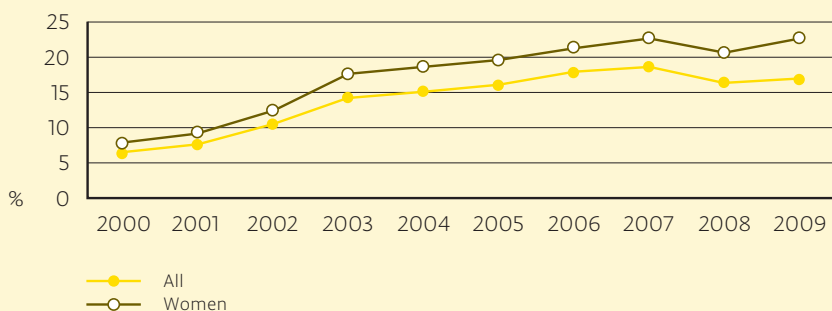
According to some forecasts, we can expect a pronounced shortfall of labour in Slovenia as soon as around 2015 (Kraigher, 1995: 53–57). Based on this, Martina Trbanc envisages a gradual reduction of the youth unemployment rate and an improved attitude among employers to hiring young people, where she points to the impending structural mismatch in the labour market. Indeed despite the general shortage of labour, we can expect unemployment to remain relatively high for certain groups of young people (Trbanc, 2005).

In view of demographic trends, in the future we may expect a declining trend for youth unemployment, wherein certain groups of young job seekers will still be in a distinctly unfavourable position.

4.2.3 Unemployment among graduates (especially women)

The unemployment rate of tertiary level graduates is becoming an increasingly salient issue. Although it is still true for the majority of European countries that the risk of unemployment falls the higher the education attained, the value of a degree as a guarantee of safe entry into the labour market is rapidly diminishing (EU Youth Report, 2009: 30). This is also confirmed by data for Slovenia.

Graph 38: Unemployed graduates as a proportion of all unemployed persons in the 25–30 age group, Slovenia, 2000–2009



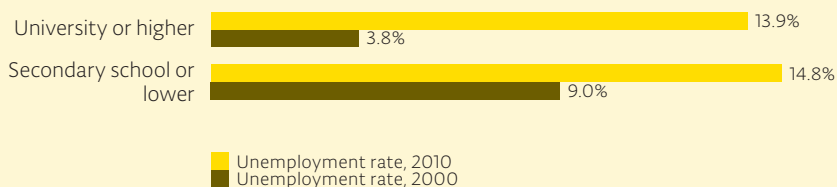
NOTE: * This group includes those that have successfully completed higher professional education, university undergraduate education or university postgraduate education (master's).

SOURCE: ESS, annual report, 2000–2009

Among unemployed young people in the age group between 25 and 30 years old, a marked increase in the proportion of unemployed persons that have completed the 7th level of education was observed from 2000 to 2009. A look at the absolute figures shows that the number of unemployed graduates in the period 2000–2009 increased by a dizzying 240 percent, with the increase especially pronounced among women (278 percent).

A similar picture is offered by data from the last two youth surveys. To begin with, we limited ourselves to the 25–29 age group, and calculated the unemployment rate relative to the attained level of education. Here, for the purpose of transparency, we combined the education levels into two classes (secondary or lower and higher education and above), and we defined unemployed persons as those who see themselves as unemployed. The graph below shows the proportions of such persons among all categories of young people that we can place in the category of the active population.

Graph 39: Unemployment rate of economically active young people (25–29 years) relative to the highest level of education attained, Youth 2000 and Youth 2010



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The graph clearly shows that in a period of ten years the unemployment rate increased significantly in both categories of respondent, but the increase in the group with tertiary-level education was significantly higher.

Where in 2000 the attainment of tertiary education reduced by a factor of more than two the likelihood of a young person finding them-selves unemployed, that advantage has almost entirely evaporated in the period up to 2010.

The reason for this is the exceptional increase in the unemployment rate among respondents with tertiary education, which grew from 3.8 to 13.9 percent. Our data (as well as the aforementioned ESS data) confirm that the situation in this regard is especially critical for women. According to our calculations, over the last decade the unemployment rate for female graduates has risen from 4.3 to 17.8 percent (for males it rose (just) from 2.8 to 7.5 percent).

One of our respondents, who graduated in two university courses, had the following to say after a long period of fruitless employment applications:

“Mum always told me, study, so you won’t end up a cleaner. Now I see it might be better if I was a cleaner.”

(Maja, 30, unemployed graduate)

The significantly harder situation for young female graduates in the labour market is no surprise. There are at least three weighty reasons for it:

- Women are characterised by a significantly higher predominance of tertiary-level education. According to Eurostat data, in 2009 the proportion of at least graduate-level women in the 25–34 age group stood as high as 39.5 percent, which is almost twice that of males in that group (21.9 percent) and also much higher compared to the EU (36 percent of women with tertiary-level education). Given the data on the involvement of women in tertiary education²³ we may anticipate with some certainty that this state of affairs will continue in the coming years.
- Female graduates are heavily concentrated in the wider fields of education, health and welfare, social sciences and humanities,²⁴ where employment prospects have been the least favourable for some time now.
- Research indicates that owing primarily to the greater absence from work for childbirth and caring for children, employers are more inclined to hire males (cp. Mrčela and Černigoj Sadar, 2006).

The growing unemployment of young graduates, both male and female, is a direct consequence of trends where, on the one hand there has been an exceptionally rapid growth in the number of graduates, while on the other hand demand for highly qualified labour has stagnated. According to data cited in its research by researchers from the Federation of Free Unions of Slovenia (ZSSS), between 2007 and 2009 more than 52,000 people graduated with degrees, while each year, according to the researchers, there are around 8,000 jobs available to graduates (ZSSS, 2010: 16). So each year the Slovenian education system produces more than 9,000 surplus workers

23 According to Eurostat data, in 2008 the proportion of women among students in Slovenia stood at 58.1 percent (the average for EU-27 was 55.3 percent).

24 According to Eurostat data, in 2008 the proportion of women among graduates in the fields of social sciences, business and law stood at 71.1 percent, in the humanities and arts it was 69.3 percent, and in education for teaching work it was 85.7 percent.

with tertiary-level education. Or put another way: on an annual basis the Slovenian labour market is capable (per job and relevant level of education) to take in less than half the yearly generation of graduates.

Here we need to realise that the annual surplus of (over)educated labour is mounting up, for which reason we may also expect in the future a pronounced intensification of the problem of unemployment among graduates in Slovenia. Something else that speaks in support of this is that a significant proportion of young people have dealt with the problem of unemployment by continuing to study,²⁵ meaning that in the future these young people will also be returning to the labour market.

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Without any major risk we may therefore conclude:

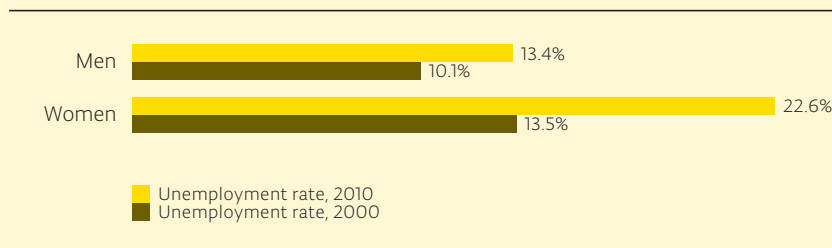
In the future, youth policy will certainly encounter a relatively high and growing number of graduates (especially female) who will not be able to find employment suited to their education.

4.2.4 Unemployment a much greater threat to young women

Here the unfavourable position of women regarding employment is not limited just to the most educated.

²⁵ According to SORS data and our own calculations, the number of postgraduate students in Slovenia increased from 2000 to 2009 by a staggering 305 percent, and in 2009 reached almost 16,000 students.

Graph 40: Unemployment rate of economically active young people (15–29 years) by gender, Youth 2000 and Youth 2010



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The graph clearly shows that (1) in comparison with young men, unemployment is significantly more common among young women, and that in the past decade it has increased much more precisely among the female population of young people, for which reason the differences between the sexes in their status in the labour market have grown considerably.

In the age group from 25 to 29 years, according to Youth 2010 survey data the female unemployment rate was more than double the rate among men of the same age.

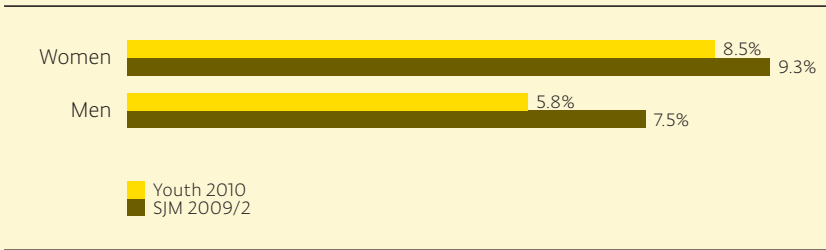
It should be stressed that official data do not show such stark differences between the sexes. According to ESS data, in the 25–30 age group the proportion of women among all unemployed was around the same in 2010 as it was in 2000 (around 55 percent). According to Eurostat data the unemployment rate for females in the 15–24 age group in Slovenia was even slightly lower (13.4 percent) than for males (13.8 percent).

The ascertained differences therefore arise precisely among individuals who perceive themselves to be unemployed, although they are denied that status by official statistics. Among these people there are significantly more women, and their share has grown markedly in this past decade. In view of the previously mentioned definition of unemployed person according

to the Labour Force Survey, we may conclude that this involves primarily young women who are not in any steady form of employment or education, but at the same time they are performing some form of work for payment (monetary or in kind). The labour market offers young women various occasional and periodical and even relatively steady forms of work, especially in catering (mainly waitressing) and in promotional and similar activities. Although we have no tangible data, a fairly likely explanation for these discrepancies would appear to be the theory that many young women probably perform this and similar work mainly within what is termed the “grey” or unregulated economy. The performance of such work by young women is beyond the criteria set for unemployed persons by official statistics (ESS survey or record of unemployed persons).

Given the considerable discrepancy between our findings and the official statistics, a further test of their reliability is needed, and this can be provided by data from the latest accessible Slovenian Public Opinion survey of 2009 (SJM 2009).

Graph 41: Proportions of unemployed among all young people (15–29 years) by gender, SJM 2009/2 and Youth 2010



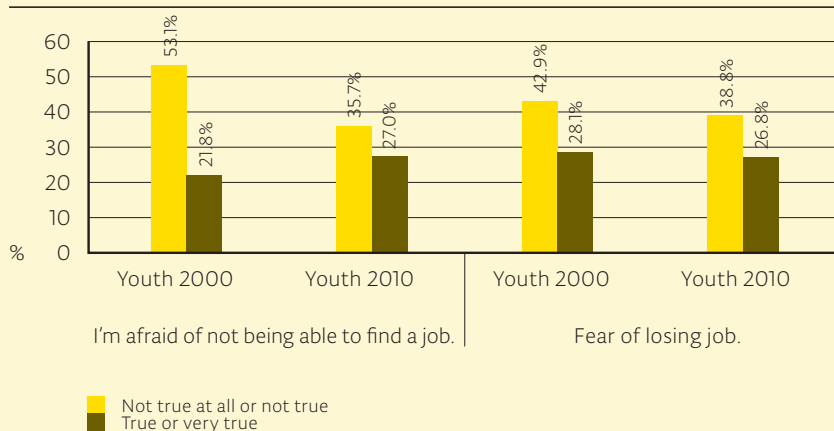
In both surveys the ratios of unemployed males to females are almost the same. According to data from our survey, the proportions of unemployed persons among all respondents²⁶ were slightly lower, which we can ascribe to the modest decline in youth unemployment from 2009 to 2010. We may therefore conclude that the levels of unemployment determined in this chapter, and based on the individual’s self-perception, are quite reliable.

²⁶ It should be pointed out that in this case we are not talking about the unemployment rate that is calculated as the proportion of unemployed persons only in the context of economically active persons.

4.2.5 Views of young people regarding unemployment

In view of the data in both the latest national surveys of Slovenian youth in the past decade, the proportion of young people (15–29 years) who fear²⁷ that they will not be able to find employment has increased from 21.8 percent to 27 percent.

Graph 42: Young people and the attitude to the future (employment, loss of job, fear of failure), Youth 2000 and Youth 2010 (15–29 years)



Given the marked increase in the risk of unemployment, this trend is of course no surprise, but what is perhaps slightly surprising is that the identification of fear of losing one's job (if one is employed or when/if one will be employed) was made in both 2000 and 2010 by around the same number of respondents (around 27 percent²⁸). In view of the described situation in the labour market, it is no surprise that the fear with regard to securing employment is a significantly greater characteristic of women (33.5 percent) than of men (20.8 percent), while a similar story applies to the fear of losing one's job, which is present among 30.2 percent of women and 23.5 percent of men.

²⁷ Those who, on a scale of one to five, indicated that for them this fear was true or very true.

²⁸ We obtain almost the same proportions if we limit ourselves to employed youth.

Here we should stress that the fear relating to one's position in the labour market is characteristic of only around a quarter of young people, and is therefore far from being a majority phenomenon. Nevertheless, conversations with young people indicate that they assess the situation in the labour market as problematic, and that they are also aware of the difficulties pointed out previously (such as the issue of unemployed graduates).

"A very bad situation, disproportionate demand for personnel available. Young people don't have a chance."

(Maja, 30, unemployed graduate)

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"It's getting worse... There's no positive thinking here, the state is doing nothing."

(Špela, 25, young waitress)

"It's not rosy, there are too many workers of certain profiles, everybody is pushing universities and degrees, but there's no emphasis on practical professions. Every Pahor [Tom, Dick or Harry] needs a panel beater when they have a crash. Some people like these jobs, though they're seen as inferior in society... Maybe some excellent student would like to work with wood, but they don't let him and push him into grammar school... I'd almost have preferred to go to a vocational school, become a cook... but my parents made me go to grammar school – our kid won't do menial work..."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

"Employment is pretty bad for young people, there aren't enough jobs, and we young people will have to struggle harder for jobs than our parents. There's also a lot of uncertainty about education, since you don't know where you'll work. The work is also unreliable and we'll need greater flexibility, plus more education and aggressiveness. There will be more project work."

(Mojca, 23, successful psychology student)

Young people believe that responsibility for such a situation is shared, and that individual self-initiative from young people and a more active role of the state are important for dealing with the current situation:

"On the one hand we're all responsible, on the other hand the state, then again the EU... It's hard to define, but still it's the same all over the world, although no one knows why this has happened."

(Špela, 25, young waitress)

"In a way, everyone's responsible. We young people must make an effort to find a job, even if it's not exactly a perfect match for your basic profession. You can't just sit at home and wait for somebody to offer you a job. Then there are the counsellors at the social services, they should really help you find something suitable. And the state should abolish the employment agencies, for instance ADECCO, since they help find you a job, but then they take commission off your wages."

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(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

"Both, individuals are responsible for their resumes and qualifications and initiative, and society should take care of the legislation and issues. It seems normal to me that there are fewer jobs, since our parents were spending excessively. Resources ran out and a period of deprivation followed, but this too will end one day and young people will see better days."

(Mojca, 23, successful psychology student)

"Society should manage these resources fairly... if they can collect taxes, they should ensure that people are properly employed and occupied."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

"Society as a whole is responsible. The state should provide jobs for those who completed their education."

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to the Pekarna youth centre)

In their opinion, the chances of finding employment could thus be improved through the greater self-initiative of individuals and state intervention in the labour market. Those young adults who are already employed see the situation slightly differently.

“Taxes are the problem... reduce taxes, this will stimulate everything else.”

(Stane, 26, young entrepreneur)

“Higher wages... there’s enough work, but too little money.”

(Oto, 28, employed in a garage, young father)

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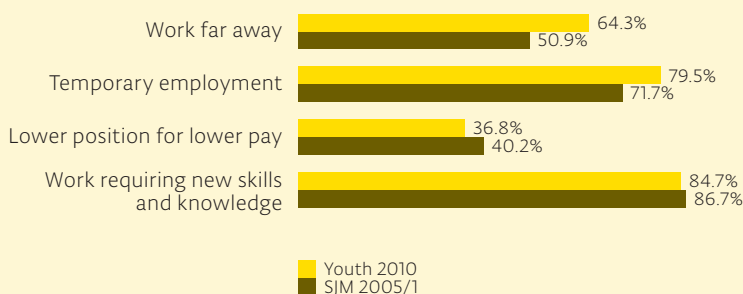
The qualitative data also show that in principle young people do not associate a higher education level with better chances of employment. In their view, the social network has a greater role in applying for a job than the level of education attained. At this time, therefore, they are being quite realistic, since various studies point to the major importance of social networks in the labour market (Rees, 1966; Granovetter, 1973, 1995).

Regarding their own employment, they do not have very solidly formulated projections. Young people do not concern themselves too much with the substance of any possible employment, since they know that they will just have to take work when it is offered. At the same time they do not show any great anxiety, since they believe that some source of income will turn up for them.

Here we were interested in what young people would be willing to do, to avoid the risk of unemployment. To this end we used an instrument of agreement with four statements that were used in the international survey *Stališča o delu – SJM (Views of Work – Slovenian Public Opinion 2005/1)* (Malnar et al., 2005). The next graph shows the proportions of those that agreed (mainly or entirely) that they were willing to make the decision listed.

Graph 43: Willingness of young people (15-29 years) to take action to reduce the risk of unemployment, SJM 2005/1 and Youth 2010

To avoid unemployment, I would be prepared to accept:



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While the proportion of those willing to accept a lower position and work that requires new skills has fallen slightly, the other two indicators show a considerable increase.

Compared to 2005, in order to increase their employment options young people in 2010 were significantly more prepared for geographical mobility and notably more willing to accept temporary employment.

This trend clearly shows that young people are rapidly adapting to the flexible labour market. Here we should point out that among the concepts that correlate with any statistical significance to “sacrifices for employment”,²⁹ the most interesting is educational qualifications ($r = 0.21$; $p < 0.01$). More educated young people are therefore more willing to make various adjustments in order to improve their employment prospects.

²⁹ The variable “sacrifices for employment” was formulated by drawing from the graph of four presented indicators (Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for internal consistency is $\alpha = 0.68$).

This willingness is also affected by certain personality traits such as social intolerance ($r = -0.21$; $p < 0.01$), an orientation to the future ($r = 0.13$; $p < 0.01$), deviance ($r = -0.20$; $p < 0.01$) and permissive socialisation ($r = -0.17$; $p < 0.01$), plus several others. In short, more sacrifices for employment will be made by young people who are socially more tolerant, more conformist, orientated to the future and who were not brought up in a permissive (or authoritarian) way. Along with education, these are clearly characteristics that in themselves increase the probability of success in the labour market.

The structural imbalances in the labour market are being dealt with increasingly – especially with regard to young people – by increasing the flexibility of the labour force. This trend is a constituent part of the economic doctrine formulated during the previously mentioned economic crisis at the beginning of the 1980s, which in the view of researchers such as Furlong and Cartmel (2007: 36) left a decisive mark on the present-day employment situation for young people in Europe. The new economic doctrine was geared primarily towards reducing the costs of labour, while increasing its skills and especially its flexibility.

In Slovenia this trend has perhaps become most prominently apparent in student work. From the employer's viewpoint, student work is a reasonably favourable solution. It provides cheap and flexible labour, which is also above average in terms of energy, and also relatively well educated. On the other hand it offers students the prospect of additional earnings, and in some cases it also provides work experience and the creation of social networks that are important for the continued career path.

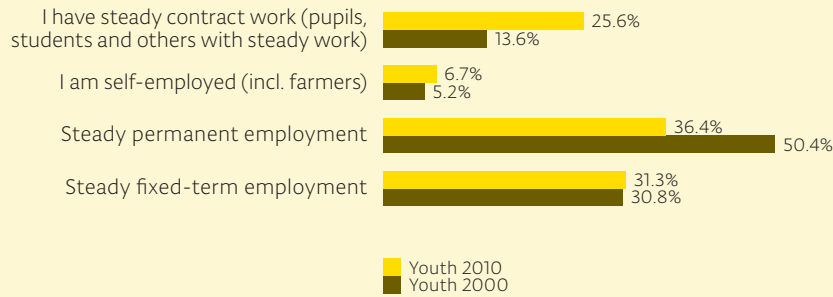
According to the Eurostudent SI 2007 survey, in 2007 student work was performed by 65 percent of students in Slovenia, with 57 percent of them performing on average more than five hours of such work each week. The share of income from work as a proportion of the overall earnings of students that work amounted to 43 percent in 2007, according to the researchers. According to analyses by Šušteršič et al. (2010), the total income from student work reached its peak in 2004. In 2008 it was 12 percent lower than in 2004, while in 2009 it fell a further 8 percent and amounted in total to around 314 million euros.

In our research we repeated the question from the Youth 2000 survey, which asked respondents whether they were supplementing their income *through earnings from occasional work, working via the student employment service, earnings from private lessons and so on*. Among full-time students, 78.3 percent answered in the affirmative in 2000, while 84.1 percent did so in 2010. In addition to student work, these proportions also include other forms of occasional work, so they are a little higher compared to data in the Eurostudent survey (2007). Nevertheless the data indicate fairly reliably that the proportion of students doing student work has increased markedly over the past decade.

4.4 Job satisfaction among young people with steady work

Below we discuss briefly those young people that perform any kind of steady work (including contract work). To begin with, let us look at how their structure has changed in terms of basic employment status.

Graph 44: Basic employment status of young people (15-29 years) performing steady work, Youth 2000 and Youth 2010



Over the past decade there have been considerable shifts in the structure shown, and these reiterate the pronounced trend of increasing flexibility in the labour market for young people.

The proportion of young people performing contract work has almost doubled in the past decade, and in 2010 accounted for more than a quarter of those doing steady work. Meanwhile there has been a marked reduction in the proportion of those with full-time permanent employment.

We then asked all those with steady work, how satisfied were they with their jobs.

Graph 45: Average value of agreement with statements regarding satisfaction with steady work, Youth 2000 and Youth 2010



NOTE: 1 = not true at all, 5 = very true.

The above graph shows that over the past decade, no significant changes were noted in job satisfaction. It is interesting that the slight changes that did occur involve shifts to a higher level of job satisfaction.

However, before we form any final opinion, given the increase in the proportion of young people doing steady contract work, it makes sense to check on their job satisfaction.

Graph 46: Comparison of satisfaction with steady work among those with full permanent employment and those with steady contract work, Youth 2010



NOTE: 1 = not true at all, 5 = very true.

The differences between the groups are more than obvious and consistent.

Young people doing steady contract work are significantly less satisfied with all aspects of their work than those with full, permanent employment.

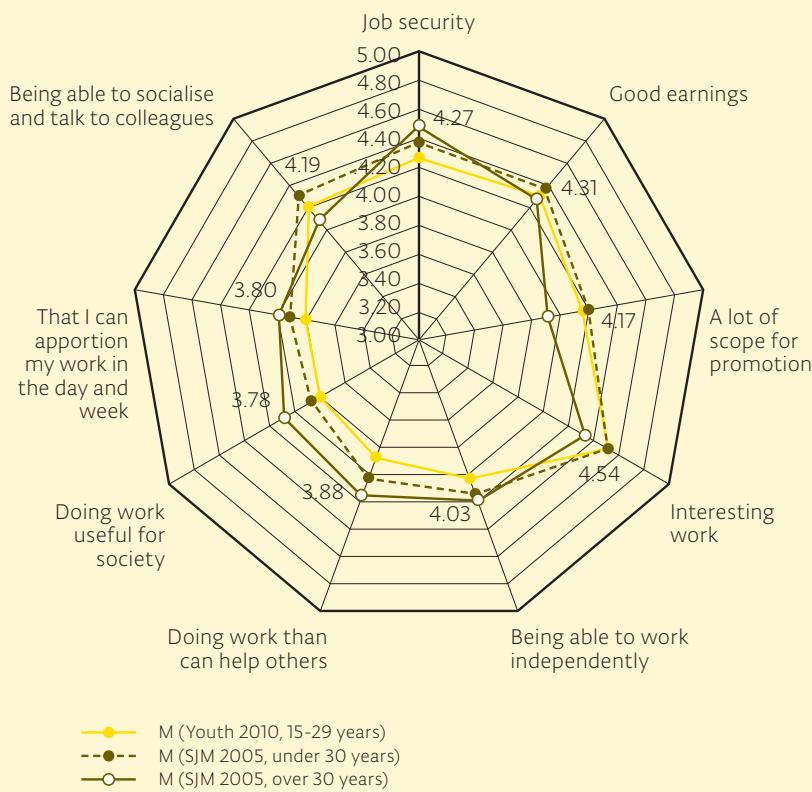
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The differences are most apparent in terms of tedious and unchallenging work, in the prospects for promotion and *regarding how the work is appreciated. This therefore clearly involves work that young people do not include in their career vision, and is chiefly a means of day-to-day support.*

4.5 **The most important thing for young people is that their work is interesting**

One of the key questions as far as work is concerned, is what is the most important thing for young people in work and employment – is it earning money, independence or something else. The graph below presents nine elements of work and employment, and the average values of the responses from young people.

Graph 47: Importance of specific elements of a job, average values, Youth 2010 (15–29 years), SJM 2005/1



NOTE: 1 = not important at all, 5 = very important

The data show that on average, the most important thing for young people is that the work is interesting. This applies regardless of employment status or gender. In second place comes good pay, followed by job security, the possibility of socialising with colleagues and promotion. Young people identified as the least important elements the categories “that you can help others in your work”, “that you can apportion the work for yourself during the day and week” and “that the work is useful to society”. Here we should point out the discrepancy between young people and those older than 30 in the SJM 2005 survey. These older people found the “socially useful” role of work as more important, and also ascribed relatively greater value to

independence at work and job security. The latter was in fact statistically significantly ($p < 0.001$) more important for females (irrespective of the selected subgroup). A statistically significant difference between the genders did in fact appear in the “socially useful” element and the element of helping others, indicating that on average women place greater emphasis on the importance of the social role of work than men do.

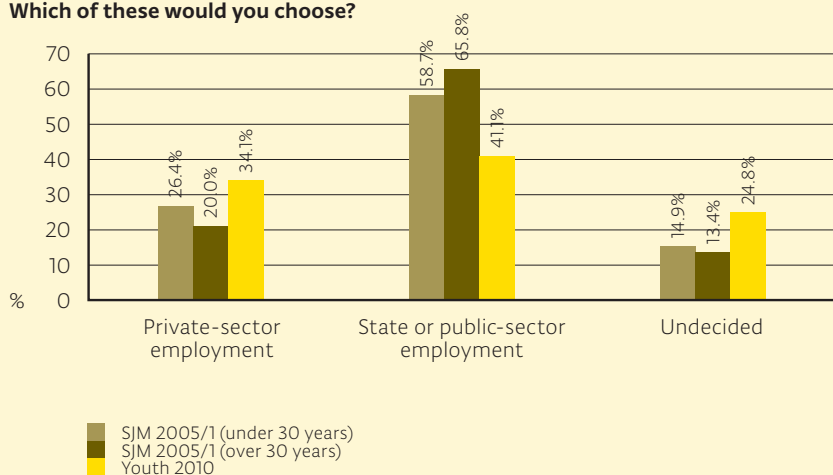
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In work the most important thing for young people is that the work is interesting. This is followed by wages and job security, which is particularly emphasised by young women.

The fact that job security is an important element of work and employment, and that this applies especially to young women, can be seen in the analysis of their choices with regard to type of employment (graph below).

Graph 48: Preferences regarding type of employment (public-private), Youth 2010 (15–29 years), SJM 2005/1

Imagine you're looking for work and you could choose from various types of job. Which of these would you choose?



Young women would most like to be employed in the state or public sector, which is traditionally associated with security. A total of 46.2 percent of these women respondents opted for that choice (while 'only' 36.2 percent of young men opted for this), which is also the reason why employment in the public or state sector represents the predominant choice of young people (although young men prioritise private-sector employment: 39.2 percent as opposed to 36.2 percent; women selected employment in the private sector in only 28.7 percent of cases). These data differ noticeably from the data obtained in the Slovenian Public Opinion survey (Malnar et al., 2005). In this study the inclination towards employment in the public or state sector was considerably more pronounced. This is true of those under 30 years old, as well as of those over 30. As much as 65.8 percent of them would like to be employed in the public or state sector. No doubt one factor in the presented shifts is that for young people it is more important for their work to be interesting than for them to have job security.

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Young people still prioritise employment in the public or state sector over private-sector employment (a consequence of the choices of young women), but the difference is diminishing. On the one hand this can be tied to the fact that the proportion of those undecided has grown, and on the other hand the importance of job security has slightly diminished for young people.

Meanwhile the qualitative part of the survey shows that young people regard employment as extremely important, with most of them seeing it as a step towards independence and in this way towards achieving individual adulthood. After having one's own family, this is the second most important factor in defining one's own adulthood in young people's perceptions. Young people link employment mainly to concepts

associated with financial independence and taking responsibility, which signifies for them an important step towards adulthood:

"I think that when you're financially independent and you're deciding for yourself and setting your own limits and controlling our own life."

(Mojca, 23, successful psychology student)

"When you act like and adult, it means that you're functionally adult. For instance, you've got a job and you're responsible, you accept the consequences of your decisions... you're an adult when you feel psychologically adult."

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(Jona, 25, regular visitor to the Pekarna youth centre)

For young people, employment also means a foundation for ensuring one's own security, and also a foundation for starting one's own family, which is another important stage in attaining one's own adulthood:

"Money is certainly not the most important thing for me. Rather it's security, having a job that allows me to feel secure... and of course that I can have a family."

(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

"Personally I'd prefer not to work, but I can't live on social all my life... I have to get a job so I've got security... they can cut off your social, and then what have you got? Nothing!"

(Enver, 20, young Roma)

4.6 Young people and entrepreneurship

The issue of entrepreneurship, especially in terms of low entrepreneurial activity and innovation, for which reason Slovenia is lagging behind relative to the average European level of entrepreneurial orientation (Rebernik at al., 2009, 2010), is frequently emphasised and discussed. This is not just because a higher level of entrepreneurial activity is associated with higher economic growth rates, higher competitiveness and innovation (Blanchflower and Oswald, 2009), but also because entrepreneurship as such can mean for the individual a solution to the lack of available or appropriate job vacancies (Ignjatović and Trbanc, 2009). Moreover self-employed

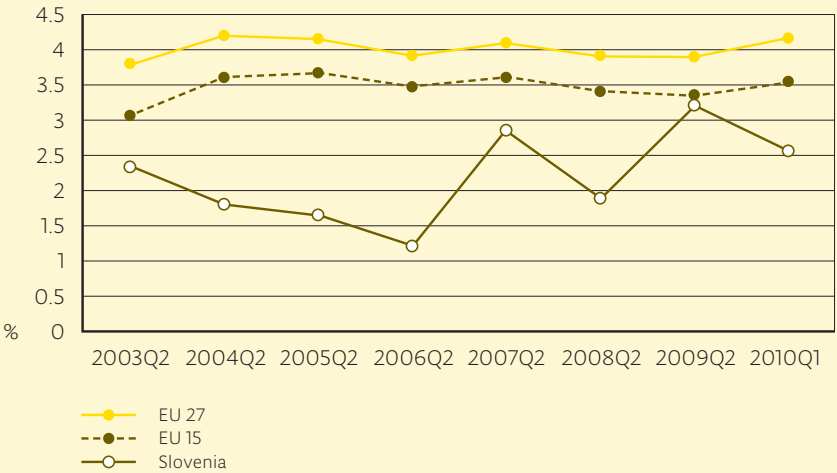
people supposedly have a more distinct feeling of self-fulfilment, and they are supposedly more satisfied with their lives. The results of a study by Blanchflower and Oswald (2009) show that “young self-employed men and women are unusually satisfied with their lives and work” (ibid.: 195).

4.6.1 **Low level of youth self-employment, with slight positive trend**

Despite the measures adopted to promote entrepreneurship among young people, entrepreneurship is not especially widespread among them. In the first quarter of 2010 the number of self-employed young persons as a proportion of all employed young persons stood at just 2.6 percent, which is still below the average for EU-15/27 (EU-15: 3.6 percent; EU-27: 4.2 percent), although a slightly more positive trend can be discerned after 2005.

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Graph 49: Proportion of self-employed young persons (15-24 years) among young employed persons, EU (15/27) and Slovenia, by selected year



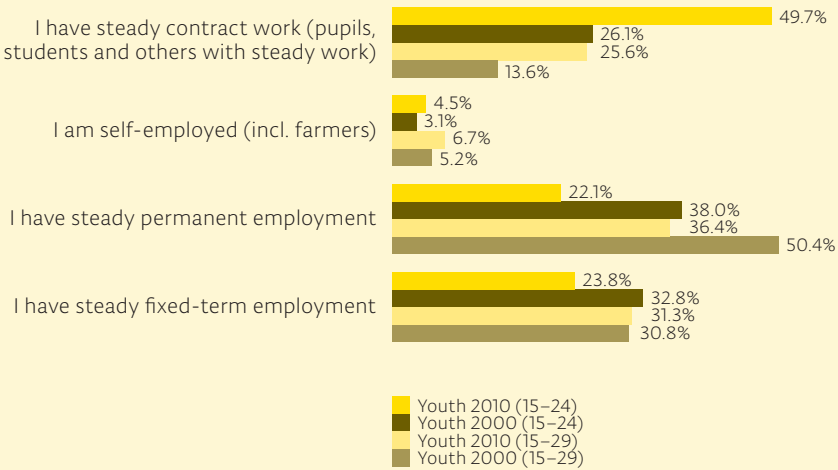
NOTE: Data relate to the second quarter of the year, apart from in Slovenia in 2005, for which owing to a lack of data, we used data from the third quarter, and in 2010, for which the data relate to the first quarter.

SOURCE: Eurostat – Population and social conditions/Employment and unemployment (Labour Force Survey)

It should also be pointed out that the share of self-employed persons is higher in older age groups. In the first quarter of 2010 the number of self-employed young persons as a proportion of all employed persons aged between 25 and 49 years stood at 10.6 percent (2003: 8.5 percent). But in this age group, too, Slovenia is below the European average, which in the same period was around 14 percent (EU-15: 13.7 percent; EU-27: 14.1 percent). These data also accord with the findings of the survey of entrepreneurship in Slovenia (Rebernik et al., 2010): the most entrepreneurially active section of the population is those aged 25 to 34 years, and men are predominant in this group (in the total of emerging and new entrepreneurs, women account for a 24.2-percent share; the average for European GEM countries is 33.3 percent; Rebernik et al., 2010, 51–52).

Data from this research paint a similar picture, although a certain variance can be discerned (graph below).

Graph 50: Basic employment status of young people performing steady work, by age group, Youth 2000 and Youth 2010



The proportion of self-employed persons among all young people performing steady work (including farmers) is indeed slightly higher than indicated by the Eurostat data, amounting to 4.5 percent (15–24 age

group). This indicates that the proportion of self-employed young people aged 15–24 years in Slovenia is even a little higher than the European average, while a comparison with 2000 reveals a slightly stronger increase (2000: 3.1 percent; 2010: 4.5 percent). Including the 24–29 age group, in line with the findings of other research, increases the proportion of self-employed persons from 4.5 to 6.7 percent.

The proportion of self-employed persons in Slovenia is slightly below the European average, but with relatively large recent fluctuations a modest trend of growth can be identified.

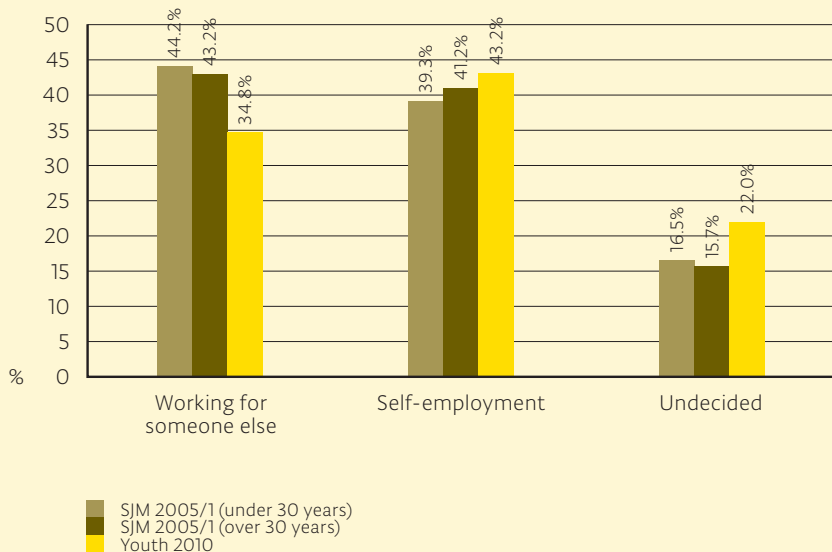
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4.6.2 **High level of willingness to be self-employed, especially among young men**

The low level of self-employment is surprising when it is set against the demonstrated intention, or when we analyse the preferences of young people regarding their type of employment (graph below).

Graph 51: Preferences regarding type of employment (employed by someone else – self-employed), Youth 2010 (15–29 years), SJM 2005/1

Imagine you're looking for work and you could choose from various types of job. Which of these would you choose?



More than 40 percent of young people would, if they could choose, opt for self-employment. This is even higher than the proportion of those that would prefer being employed by someone else (34.8 percent). If we exclude from the analysis those that are undecided,³⁰ the share of those who would like to be self-employed rises to 55.4 percent, which compared to the Eurobarometer data (Flash Eurobarometer 283, 2009) is above the EU-27 average (in EU-27 the average share of those that would like to be self-employed stands at 48 percent). Meanwhile self-employment was more frequently chosen by those with more educated parents ($r_{\text{father, self-emp}} = 0.07$; $p < 0.05$; $r_{\text{mother, self-emp}} = 0.11$; $p < 0.001$), those that experienced permissive socialisation ($r = 0.12$; $p < 0.001$), those for whom it is important that they can organise their own work timetable during the

³⁰ Separating out the undecided was essential for a comparison with Eurobarometer data. In these data the third choice included the category “none of these”, while this study offered “undecided”. So in order to be able to compare the results of the two surveys, we excluded from both those that opted for the third choice.

day and week ($r = 0.13$; $p < 0.001$), that they can work independently (0.08 ; $p < 0.05$) and those for whom job security is relatively less important ($r = -0.10$; $p < 0.001$). Precisely for this reason it is no surprise that among those young people who would choose self-employment, there are more men than women (58 percent), who compared to young men would prioritise working for someone else (37.3 percent of all females would opt for self-employment, 39.6 percent would work for someone else, and 23.2 percent are undecided; males: 48.7 percent, 30.3 percent, 21 percent). This can also be seen in the actual levels of self-employment. As has already been mentioned, the involvement of women in entrepreneurship in Slovenia is significantly lower than that of men (Rebernik et al., 2010).

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Young people in Slovenia today (especially young men) prioritise self-employment over employment with someone else, and the proportion of those that would choose self-employment today is higher than the EU-27 average.

4.6.3 **Young people's opinion of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship is not negative**

Based on what has been presented, the question arises as to why the level of entrepreneurship among young Slovenians³¹ is so low. Aside from various institutional reasons (administrative barriers, lack of adequate sources of finance, problems transferring knowledge and research to companies, low level of inclusion of entrepreneurial knowledge in education, inadequate infrastructure, tax legislation and so on), the reasons mentioned include the issue of the general social attitude to entrepreneurship.

“The attitude to entrepreneurship shows the general inclination of the population to an entrepreneurial career. If entrepreneurship is

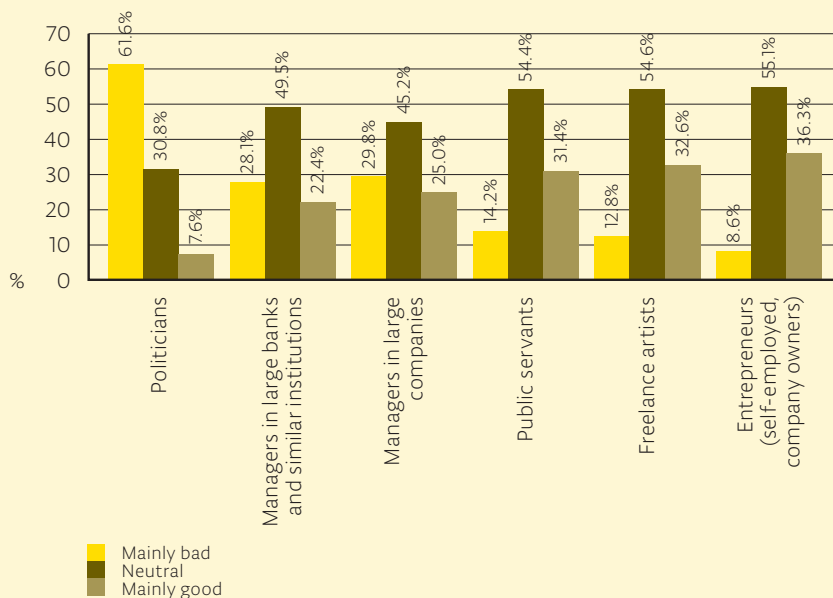
31 It should be pointed out here that the shown discrepancy can be traced in almost all European countries, and in the UK and USA (see for instance Banchflower and Oswald, 2009: 190).

desired in a society, the individual knows plenty of other entrepreneurs or believes that successful entrepreneurs are respected and reputable, the probability of him embarking on an entrepreneurial career is greater than otherwise” (Rebernik et al., 2010).

Rebernik et al. (2010) have thus determined that experts have most frequently stressed, among the basic weaknesses of Slovenia regarding development of entrepreneurship, cultural and social norms that are not inclined to entrepreneurship (e.g. the tendency towards egalitarianism), while Toplak’s research (2004) has shown that just 3.9 percent of entrepreneurs believed that entrepreneurship in Slovenia was appreciated and acknowledged, and that the “great majority of the population regard entrepreneurs as opportunists, cheats, tycoons and layabouts” (ibid.:77). So we asked young people what opinions they had concerning various groups of occupations, including entrepreneurs (graph below).

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Graph 52: Opinions regarding different occupational groups, Youth 2010 (15-29 years)



The findings show that as an occupational group, among young people entrepreneurs enjoy relatively the highest level of inclination, and that only 8.6 percent have a mainly bad opinion of entrepreneurs (while as much as 61.6 percent of young people have a mainly bad opinion of politicians). Although the demonstrated favourable inclination towards entrepreneurs is below the EU-27 average (Eurobarometer survey findings have shown that on average 49 percent of Europeans are well-disposed to entrepreneurs) (Flash Eurobarometer 283, 2009), we can nevertheless conclude that young people do not view entrepreneurs in a negative way. This is also confirmed by the analysis of interviews conducted, which shows that the attitude to entrepreneurship among young people is exceptionally positive, although at a level that is somewhat remote. Young people see entrepreneurs as innovative, adaptable and audacious, and for that reason also successful. Yet since they do not perceive such qualities sufficiently within themselves, they do not associate entrepreneurship with their own future.

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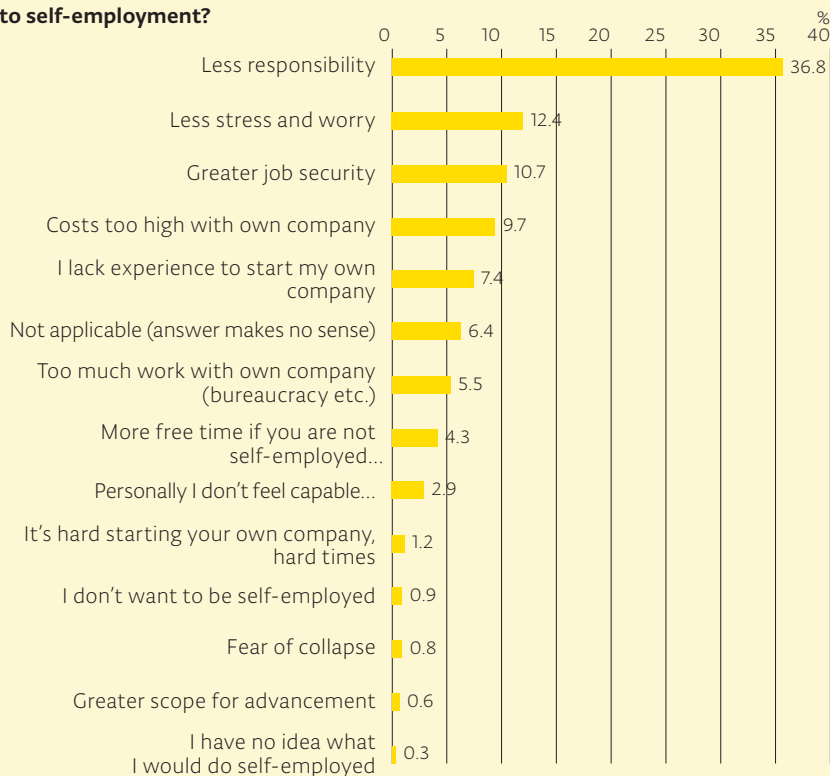
Regarding their opinion of various occupational groups, in relative terms young people are most favourably inclined to entrepreneurs, and least to politicians. They generally assess entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship positively.

4.6.4 **Where are the barriers?**

In order to investigate more closely the reasons why despite their declared inclination towards entrepreneurs and self-employment, young people do not opt for it more frequently, we asked those that chose “employment with someone else” about the reasons for their choice (graph below).

Graph 53: Reasons why young people prefer employment with someone else to self-employment, in share of responses, Youth 2010 (15–29 years)

What is the main reason to prefer employment with someone else to self-employment?



The main reason given by young people for preferring to work for someone else over being self-employed was less responsibility (36.8 percent of respondents gave this answer). This was followed by less stress, greater job security, excessive costs with one's own company and lack of experience. The interviews tied in with the factors given in the literature as predominant – fear of failure (fear of collapse, loss of property and unsteady income) and lack of funds (a full third of Europeans under 65 give as the main reason for not setting up a company a lack of sources of finance or unfavourable economic conditions) (Flash Eurobarometer 283, 2009).

"I would have my own salon... for nails and other cosmetic stuff. If I had enough money, I would open one."

(Afrodita, 21, young disabled woman)

"My own company? No... and in this crisis? I'd go under. But if I had my own company, I'd do tyres or be a mechanic... OK, I don't know how to do it, I'd just start the company... But I can see, when I go to get my tyres changed, 40 euros... I'd need ten customers a day, then I'd have money, I wouldn't need any more."

(Enver, 20, young Roma)

"I'd start up my own company for sports people, but the earnings would be too little to be worth it."

(Gašper, 23, young sportsman)

"I'm scared of debt, of falling into debt and never being able to get out. But if I did, I'd do eco-gardening."

(Maja, 30, unemployed graduate)

"No, because first you have to be financially able... then you have to want it more than I do... then you need bits of land for work... maybe I could do landscaping. I couldn't do all that on my own, you need people under you, it's too much for one person..."

(Špela, 25, young waitress)

From the responses we can conclude that in their perception, setting up your own company stands as a rather improbable plan. Young people see the main barriers as inadequate financial power to start up a company, a lack of ideas around which the company could be organised, and a lack of own experience needed to manage a company. The situation is a little different with those that are already entrepreneurs. While the majority of young people see the main obstacle as being primarily in themselves, a young entrepreneur believes the barrier somewhere else altogether, in the system:

"Taxes are absolutely too high, especially on profits... in the future I see people opening accounts abroad."

(Stane, 26, young entrepreneur)

Some take the view that a solution is possible only through the active participation of young people and the increased role of the state:

“The state could do more, it could focus on measures for young people, a fund for deficit occupations... but the individual also plays a big part. I myself don’t like it when young people sigh and blame the state for their own failure. I understand that they’re disappointed, but you can’t keep laying the blame elsewhere.”

(Mateja, 29, employed in the parliament)

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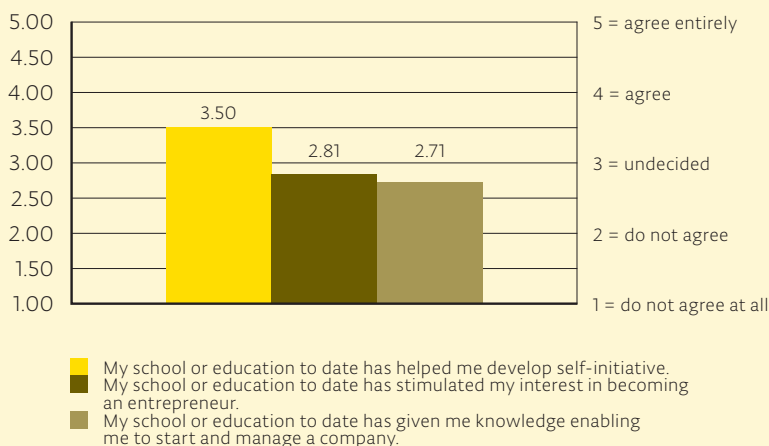
“The profile of young people with vocational training will prosper, since society still has a real need for these vocations.”

(Mateja, 29, employed in the parliament)

In the perception of young people, setting up your own company stands as a rather improbable plan. Young people see the main barriers as inadequate financial power to start up a company, a lack of ideas around which the company could be organised, and a lack of own experience needed to manage a company. The situation is a little different with those that are already entrepreneurs. They see the main barriers as lying on the systemic level.

Young people do feel that the education systems develop self-initiative, but that formal education does not encourage entrepreneurship, and that it offers relatively little knowledge necessary for setting up and managing a company.

Graph 54: Opinion on the importance of education for entrepreneurship, averages, Youth 2010



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The data lead us to conclude that young people in any event perceive a particular kind of deficit in the education system, and that reform aimed at greater promotion of entrepreneurial thinking among individuals could contribute to the founding of new and growth of existing companies. As Rebernik et al. (2010) indicate, entrepreneurship in Slovenia could be encouraged more through an adequate education and training system.

Young people perceive a particular kind of deficit in the education system, which offers the conclusion that reform aimed at greater promotion of entrepreneurial thinking among individuals could contribute to the founding of new and growth of existing companies.

At this point we may therefore conclude that barriers should be sought on the systemic level (poor institutional support in terms of access to funding and in terms of an advice network for potential young entrepreneurs, administrative barriers, inappropriate fiscal policy, a particular kind of deficit in the education system), as well as on the individual level. Indeed the data show that young people in Slovenia still value relatively highly job security and steady income, and that in principle they are not in favour of taking responsibility or risks, which is supposedly, as has been found in other studies, the typical “European pattern” (Shoof, 2006).

4.7 Key findings

The key findings from this chapter, together with recommendations for the implementation of youth policy, may be condensed into the following points:

1. Slovenia is in top place in the EU in the use of temporary employment among young people.
2. The labour market in Slovenia, especially where young people are concerned, is more adaptable than the average. The proportion of temporarily and partly employed persons among work-active young people (15–24 years) in Slovenia exceeds the proportion shown in the same age group by the economically most advanced countries of Europe (EU-15) and by the European Union as a whole (EU-27).
3. Young employees in Slovenia stand out compared to young employees in the EU in terms of shift, Saturday, Sunday and evening work, while from the longitudinal aspect, in the last two jobs in the “asocial time” Slovenia is showing trends that are counter to those detectable in the economically most advanced EU countries.
4. The proportion of permanent employees was almost halved between 2000 and 2010, while there has been a marked increase in the share of young people without any permanent forms of work or with less permanent forms of work.

5. In 2000 the share of those aged 29 in full-time permanent employment was around 60 percent, but in 2010 it was only 48 percent.
6. Official statistical data for the last decade show a trend of reduced youth unemployment. Nevertheless in this period the proportion of young people who regard themselves as unemployed has grown significantly. Taking account of such a definition of unemployment, the unemployment rate in the 15–24 age group in 2000 was around 18 percent, and in 2010 it was a full 25 percent.
7. In view of demographic trends, in the future we may expect a declining trend for youth unemployment, wherein certain groups of young job seekers will still be in a distinctly unfavourable position.
8. Where in 2000 the attainment of tertiary education reduced by a factor of more than two the likelihood of a young person finding themselves unemployed, that advantage has almost entirely evaporated in the period up to 2010.
9. In the future, youth policy will certainly encounter a relatively high and growing number of graduates (especially female) who will not be able to find employment suited to their education.
10. In the age group from 25 to 29 years, according to Youth 2010 survey data the female unemployment rate was more than double the rate among men of the same age.
11. Compared to 2005, in order to increase their employment options young people in 2010 were significantly more prepared for geographical mobility and notably more willing to accept temporary employment.
12. The proportion of young people performing contract work has almost doubled in the past decade, and in 2010 accounted for more than a quarter of those doing steady work. Meanwhile there has been a marked reduction in the proportion of those with full-time permanent employment.

13. Young people doing steady contract work are significantly less satisfied with all aspects of their work than those with full, permanent employment.
14. In work the most important thing for young people is that the work is interesting. This is followed by wages and job security, which is particularly emphasised by young women.
15. Young people still prioritise employment in the public or state sector over private-sector employment, but the difference is diminishing.
16. The proportion of self-employed persons in Slovenia is slightly below the European average, but with relatively large recent fluctuations a modest trend of growth can be identified.
17. Young people in Slovenia today (especially young men) prioritise self-employment over employment with someone else, and the proportion of those that would choose self-employment today is higher than the EU-27 average.
18. Regarding their opinion of various occupational groups, in relative terms young people are most favourably inclined to entrepreneurs, and least to politicians. They generally assess entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship positively.
19. In the perception of young people, setting up your own company is seen as a rather improbable plan. Young people see the main barriers as inadequate financial power to start up a company, a lack of ideas around which the company could be organised, and a lack of own experience needed to manage a company.
20. Young people perceive a particular kind of deficit in the education system, which offers the conclusion that reform aimed at greater promotion of entrepreneurial thinking among individuals could contribute to the founding of new and growth of existing companies.

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5 Participation

Alongside the great names of social sciences, such as Aristotle, J. J. Rousseau, de Tocqueville, J. S. Mill and others, modern authors also stress the enormous importance of participation of citizens in public life (including for instance Almond and Verba, 1963; Dahl, 1971; Dalton, 1996; Inglehart, 1997; Barnes, 2004). Moreover, the proponents of participatory (e.g. Pateman, 1970; Barber, 1984) and minimalist theories of democracy (e.g. Sartori, 1987) agree that civic participation is an essential condition of democracy (Parry and Moyser, 1994: 46; Norris, 2002: 5; see also Almond and Verba, 1963; Inglehart, 1997). Verba illustratively condenses ideas of participation when he says that civic participation is at “the heart of democracy” (Verba et al., 1995: 1; see also Schlozman, 2002: 433).

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In recent decades, however, research has shown that in Western and post-transition democracies there have been radical changes to the patterns and forms of civic participation. Longitudinal research points to a decline in electoral participation (e.g. Abramson and Aldrich, 1982; Wattenberg, 1998; Gray and Caul, 2000; Macedo et al., 2005; Blais, 2007), declining membership and frequency of activities in political parties (Katz et al., 1992; Dalton, 2005; Scarrow, 2007), and a decline in the level of affiliation to political parties (Schmitt and Holmberg, 1995), confidence in politics (Holmberg, 1999) and state institutions (Crozier et al., 1975; Listhaug and Wiberg, 1995; Dalton, 2004). Given all the indicated longitudinal trends of political activity and orientation, it is not surprising that many authors are asking about the future of democracy (Kaase and Newton, 1995: see 7; Macedo et al., 2005).

5.1 Political participation and young people

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The social changes we have witnessed since the second half of the 20th century are viewed by some as a threat to the functioning of modern society. It is often imagined that people in modern, individualised, liberal democracies are egoistic, hedonistic, narcissistic, nihilistic and atomised, and the predominant mind-set among people is one of egocentricity and consumerism. All of this would supposedly cause a significant reduction in the interests of citizens in public and political matters. The flourishing of the described value orientations is regarded as especially destructive to mutual trust and to the cooperation of people in public, it blurs the social order and increases the alienation of citizens from political authorities (see Halman and Luijkx, 2006: 71). Some see the main force behind these described changes as being in the younger generation. In other words they see them as the main “culprits” for the decline in civic participation. For young people in the West, numerous expressions have appeared for young people, including the “me generation” and the “whatever” generation (see Twenge, 2006) as well as the “me first” generation (Lipkin and Perrymore, 2009), which show what is called a “We don’t care” attitude to the world (White, 1998: 9; taken from Kimberlee, 2002: 87). Today’s youth are often labelled egoistic and presumptuous, and as not showing any concern for society and other people. These purported characteristics supposedly contribute to the low participation of young people in public life, and especially to their low political participation.

The political and broader social activity of young people is especially important, since it indicates the “health” and functioning of democracy, while positively influencing the formation of the young person’s identity (Flanagan and Levine, 2010: 160). The participation of young people is also important because political and civil society activity in adolescence heralds the individual’s activity in adulthood. In other words, the best indicator of future political participation is the individual’s past political participation (Obradović and Masten, 2007; Plutzer, 2002). So it is no surprise that the participation of youth in representative democracy and the civil society is identified as an area for action in the European Council Resolution on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field 2010–2018 (Official Journal of the EU/C311, 2009: 7). Although studies show that young people in fact participate quite rarely (in any event more rarely than adults) in politics (e.g. Fahmy, 2008; Dalton, 2008; Quintelier, 2007; Zukin et al., 2006; Kirbiš, 2010a; Kirbiš et al., 2010), the low level of youth participation relates primarily to *con-*

ventional politics (formal, institutional, party-political participation). Young people do actually realise that politics has a big influence, but they perceive political institutions and elites as unresponsive (Bennett, 1997; see also Marsh et al., 2007; taken from Berry, 2008: 368), for which reason they are alienated from the political system (Henn et al., 2005: 574). It is logical that for this reason young people do not use the conventional avenues of political participation, but get into new, direct, individualised forms of involvement.

In studying the civic participation of Slovenian youth, it is also important to mention three key things. Firstly, research conducted on representative national samples show that the indicators of civic participation (compared to post-communist countries) are on average higher in established and economically more advanced Western democracies (e.g. Norris, 2002; Dalton and van Sickle, 2005; Newton and Montero, 2007). Yet despite the relatively high socio-economic development of Slovenia, comparative research shows that the Slovenians are especially low on the scale of political activity and interest, be it comparative research on representative national samples (e.g. Rus and Toš, 2005; Miheljak, 2006; Newton and Montero, 2007) or comparative research of the youth and student population, which compares the participation levels of Slovenian and other youth (Kirbiš, 2010a; Kirbiš and Flere, 2010; Kirbiš et al., 2010). Put another way, we know from research to date that Slovenians are less frequently politically active than the inhabitants of the majority of EU countries, and less than the inhabitants of the other post-Yugoslav societies (despite a relatively high level of socio-economic development). And thirdly, research from the majority of countries in the world shows that young people are less frequently politically active than adults (e.g. Bennett, 1997; Fahmy, 2008; Dalton, 2008; Quintelier, 2007; Zukin et al., 2006; Kirbiš et al., 2010), but generally only where this involves conventional forms of political participation. To sum up, past research points to a low level of political activity and interest among Slovenian youth (see Miheljak, 2002; Kuhar, 2005; Fištravec, 2009; Kirbiš 2010a; Kirbiš and Flere, 2010).

Given the findings presented, in this analysis of Slovenian youth we are interested in: 1) the longitudinal trends of young people's political participation; 2) the levels of participation of Slovenian youth compared to adults and 3) a comparison of Slovenian youth with EU youth. In analysing these three points, we will use indicators and databases that enable as much as possible a reliable longitudinal analysis. Some research results of Youth 2010 will therefore be compared directly with the findings of past

research of Slovenian youth (Youth 1985, Youth 1993, Youth 1995 and Youth 2000), while we will also use data from other public opinion surveys that are representative of the Slovenian population (European Values Survey (EVS), Slovenian Public Opinion (SJM) and European Social Survey (ESS)).³² In analysing the EVS and ESS databases we divided the population into four groups (Slovenian youth (15–29 years), Slovenian adults (30 years and older), youth in EU-27 countries (15–29 years) and adults in EU-27 countries (30 years and older)).

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Below we first conceptualise the notion of *political participation* and its sub-dimensions, conventional and protest political participation, and then we present the findings of longitudinal comparative analysis of political activity and the views of young people, we review the most pertinent findings from our research of youth political participation, and close the chapter with conclusions regarding the main findings of this sub-chapter.

We conceptualise participation in this research as “actions that can be pursued individually or collectively and intrinsically affect the formation of the society in which we live: (Vromen, 2003: 82–83). Based on theoretical and empirical criteria, researchers categorise forms of participation into several categories (Verba et al., 1995; Makarovič, 2002; Vromen, 2003; Claggett and Pollock, 2006), the most common being a division into conventional political participation, protest participation and civil society participation (e.g. Barnes, 1977; Barnes and Kaase et al., 1979; Mihailović, 1986; Pantić, 1988; Inglehart and Catterberg, 2002; Torney-Purta and Richardson, 2002; Zukin et al., 2006). Below we first present an analysis of conventional and protest political participation, while we deal with civil society participation in the sub-chapter Voluntary activities.

5.1.1 Conventional political participation

Conventional political participation relates primarily to activities that are in direct relation to the formal institutions of government and conven-

32 We should also point out that the measuring instrument in the Youth 2010 survey was already set up so as to allow direct comparison of the main indicators of participation (chiefly with the Youth 2000 survey); some of the main addressed variables in Youth 2010 were therefore identical to the variables from research to date on Slovenian youth and the wider population.

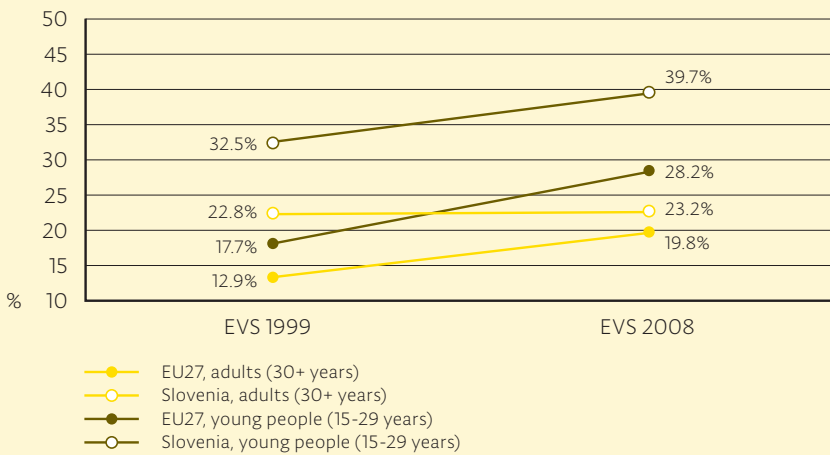
tional political actors – political parties and politicians; see Parry et al., 1992; Torney-Purta and Richardson, 2002; Claggett and Pollock, 2006; Ekman and Amnå, 2009).³³ We therefore class as political participation those activities aimed at influencing political decisions. More precisely, conventional political activity is activity whose purpose or consequence is influencing public decisions or measures directly by influencing the formation or implementation of public policy, or indirectly by influencing the selection of people forming public policy (Verba et al., 1995: 38; see also Kaase and Marsh, 1979: 42; Parry et al., 1992: 16; Brezovšek, 1995: 303). The above definition assumes that political participation is voluntary (that it is therefore not compulsory), that it includes political activity in the narrower sense of the word (it does not usually include activities such as keeping up with politics in the media) and that these activities of citizens are aimed at politicians, public officials and/or institutions. Conventional political participation includes: participation in elections, participation in political gatherings, contacts with politicians, contributing money and/or doing work for a political party or candidate, persuading others about their selection of candidate/party and so forth. (see Henn et al., 2002: 187; Parry et al., 1992).³⁴

As we have already mentioned, participation in elections is one of the main forms of conventional political participation. Since in different waves (years) the EVS surveys did not include identical indicators of electoral participation, we show just the comparative EVS data for 1999 and 2008. We therefore provide the percentages of those that responded that they “would not vote if there were parliamentary elections tomorrow”. The graph below shows that there has been an increase in the proportion of Slovenian and EU-27 youth that “would not participate” in elections, while in both observed years that proportion has only remained unchanged among Slovenia’s adult population. The graph also shows that out of the four population groups surveyed, Slovenian youth is highest on the scale of non-participation (therefore showing the lowest level of anticipated electoral participation).

33 The authors therefore do not include in the concept of political participation the taking of political views or performing political functions. In this study we ourselves are aligned with this conceptualisation.

34 Discussing politics with family or friends and keeping up with media with political content thus as a rule is not included in the concept of political participation, since these acts are not unequivocally aimed at political elites, nor do they exercise any direct influence on elites, and do not demand any response from them (see Verba et al., 1978: 336). Nevertheless, below we also analyse this indicator of young people’s political activity.

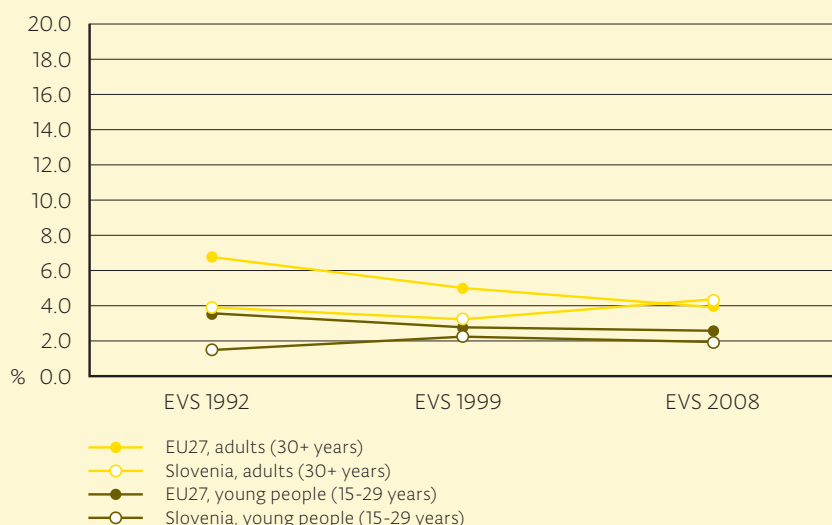
Graph 55: Proportion of young people that would not participate in parliamentary elections, Slovenia and EU-27, 1999 and 2008



SOURCE: EVS

Membership of political parties also equals one of the main indicators of conventional political participation. The graph below shows the proportion of the population that are members of political parties in EU-27 countries within the EVS surveys of 1992, 1999 and 2008, or in the relevant waves.

Graph 56: Membership of political parties, Slovenia and EU-27, 1992, 1999 and 2008



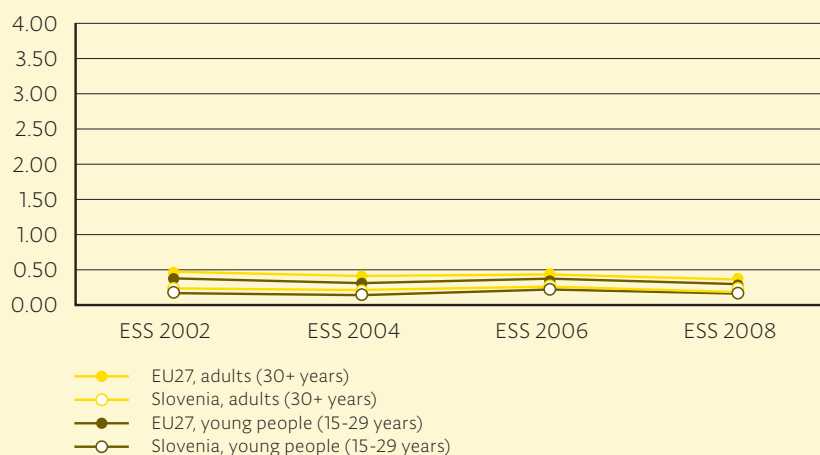
SOURCE: EVS

The results show: 1) that only a minority of EU-27 inhabitants are members of political parties; 2) that among young people, membership of political parties is lower than the EU-27 average; 3) that membership among adults in Slovenia is around 4 percent, while just about 2 percent of Slovenian youth are members of political parties; 4) that in two decades the levels of membership in Slovenia have remained relatively stable (although they were originally low), while on average they have fallen in EU-27 countries; 5) that of all four population groups, Slovenian youth show the lowest level of membership in political parties.

We also performed an analysis of longitudinal trends on a composed variable of conventional political participation based on research data in the *European Social Survey* (ESS). In the graph below we show the average level of participation in 2002, 2004, 2006 and 2008. The cumulative indicator of participation was composed from respondents' self-assessment of the frequency of carrying out four forms of conventional participation (contacts with politicians or public officials, performing work for political parties, performing work in another organisation, wore

or publicly displayed a badge/sticker supporting a candidate or party) in the past 12 months (0 = no action, 4 = 4 actions).

Graph 57: Cumulative conventional participation, Slovenia and EU27, 2002, 2004, 2006 and 2008



SOURCE: ESS

The graph indicates: 1) low levels of conventional participation, since on average respondents in the past 12 months performed much less than one listed conventional political action ($0.20 < M < 0.43$); 2) a higher level of conventional participation is attained by adults; 3) a trend of stagnation in levels of conventional participation with certain minor variances in individual years; 4) of all four population groups, Slovenian youth also show the lowest level of participation in the composite measure of conventional political participation.

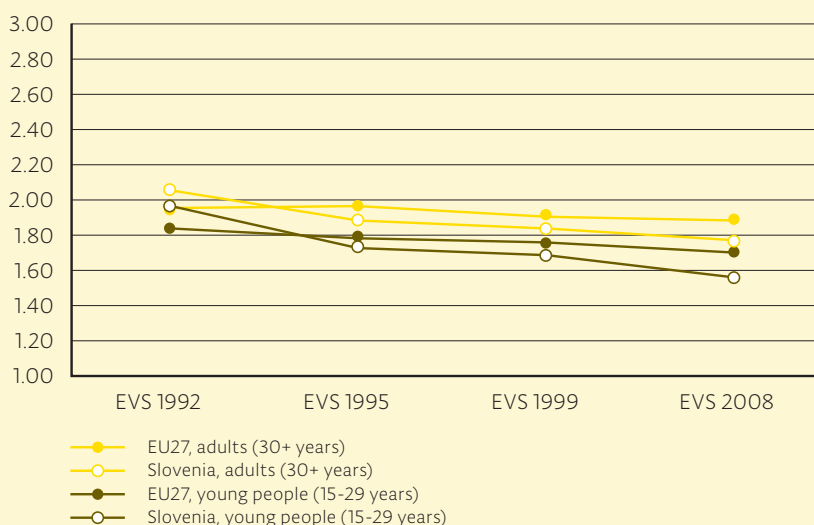
Compared to young people in EU-27, young people in Slovenia are on average less active in conventional political terms.

5.1.2 Political debate and following politics in the media

Alongside analysing political actions, one of the most frequent forms of political activity is debating politics – in other words mutual communication, generally in the family and among friends and peers. Although this, as we have already mentioned, is in some definitions not necessarily “political participation”, since it does not involve directly “influencing the selection of politicians or influencing the adoption of government/public measures” (Schlozman, 2002: 433), it does nevertheless involve one of the indicators of political activity, which of course needs analysing in an investigation of youth. EVS data on the frequency of “talking about politics with friends” are shown in the graph below (1 = never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = frequently) and they match up fairly well with findings to date, since in this indicator of political activity, too, Slovenian youth once again occupy the lowest position. In this light one more notable feature is the findings that compared to other Europeans, young and adult Slovenians discuss politics less, and for that reason European youth in this indicator almost attain the average for Slovenia’s adult population. The difference between the two age groups in the Slovenian population is slightly greater than the difference between these age groups in EU-27.

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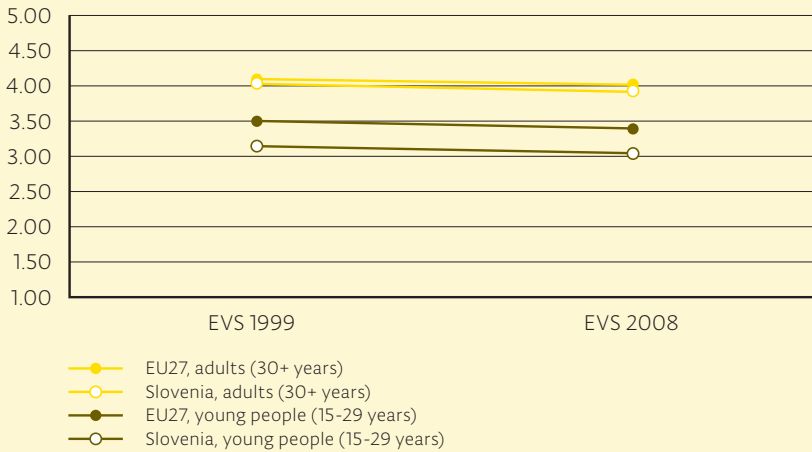
Graph 58: Discussion of politics, Slovenia and EU-27, 1992, 1995, 1999 and 2008



SOURCE: EVS

In addition to debating politics, “keeping up with politics in the media” is also regarded as one of the most common forms of political activity.³⁵ In EVS surveys this indicator was set in the 1999–2004 wave and in 2008 (1 = never, 2 = less frequently, 3 = once or twice a week, 4 = several times a week, 5 = every day). The graph below shows that in both years there was just a small decline in keeping up with the media in EU-27 countries, but once again the lowest level of such activity was recorded by Slovenian youth, who follow politics in the media on average just once or twice a week. Here the differences between the two Slovenian age groups are again greater than between the two age groups in EU-27 (it is noteworthy that the difference between the Slovenian population and the EU-27 population is small).

Graph 59: Following politics in the media, Slovenia and EU-27, 1999 and 2008



SOURCE: EVS

With regard to conventional (party, institutional) political participation, at this point we may conclude: 1) that Slovenian youth are less active in this kind of participation than older Slovenians; 2) that the conventional participation of young people in Slovenia compared to EU-27 countries

³⁵ Like discussing politics, some authors do not class keeping up with media with political content as “political participation”.

is at a lower level (a similar finding was produced by research comparing Slovenian youth with young people in the other post-Yugoslav societies; see for instance Kirbiš and Flere, 2010); 3) that following independence in Slovenia, conventional political participation declined, but in the second decade of independence the levels of conventional participation remain relatively stable, or the decline is smaller;³⁶ 4) a comparison of four population groups shows that in almost all indicators, from the highest to the lowest level of conventional political participation we find the following order: adults in EU-27, the adult population in Slovenia, youth in EU-27 and Slovenian youth. This means of course that Slovenia has a problem of low conventional political participation, especially among young people, but on the other hand the differences between the four groups in some cases are not big, and the longitudinal trends do not show any pronounced changes towards an additional (and continued) decline in conventional political participation. Nevertheless, of course, we may ask whether such levels of participation are “sufficiently high” for the “effective” functioning of democracy (see Welzel et al., 2003).

Conventional political participation among young people in the past decade has shown a declining trend.

5.1.3 Political views

Here we analyse the political culture (in other words political orientations, values and people’s views regarding politics). The reasons for this are: firstly, political culture has been shown to be one of the main factors of political behaviour (see Almond and Verba, 1963). Research shows that a lack of interest in politics, feelings of a lack of trust in politics, political and state institutions and feelings of one’s own lack of competence for political activity (negatively) affect the level of the individual’s political participation (Kim and Han, 2004; Torney-Purta et al., 2004; Grönlund and Setälä, 2007; Hadjara and Beck, 2010), although this influence can also run in the opposite direction, meaning political participation can have a reciprocal influence on political orientation (see Finkel, 1985).

36 This trend is similar in other post-transition countries, and is not surprising.

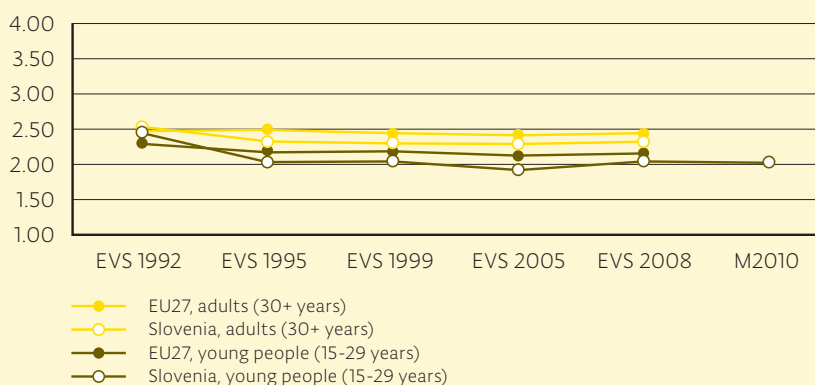
Secondly, in the broader sense, political activity can be indirectly measured through political orientations. Thirdly, past research indicates not just the changes in political participation, but also the changes in political views in Western and post-communist democracies, since there has been a decline, as we have seen, in trust in state and political institutions, political and public officials and in the trust in the functioning or effectiveness of the democratic system (Crozier et al., 1975; Schmitt and Holmberg, 1995; Listhaug and Wiberg, 1995; Holmberg, 1999; Dalton, 2004).

5.1.3.1 Interest in politics

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One particular indicator of political activity is the interest of respondents in politics. The graph below shows the findings of a longitudinal analysis of interest in politics (on a scale of 1 (politics does not interest me at all) to 4 (politics interests me a lot)) in five waves of EVS/SJM and in Youth 2010 data.

Graph 60: Interest of young people in politics, Slovenia and EU-27, 1992, 1995, 1999, 2005, 2008 and 2010



SOURCES: EVS and Youth 2010

The graph indicates: 1) compared to the adult population, Slovenian youth has attained in both decades a lower level of interest in politics; 2) owing to the high mobilisation of the population in the nineties in

(post)transition countries, the post-independence years were “golden” years of political interest among both generations, and at this time the differences between the two generations were lowest (see also Inglehart and Catterberg, 2002); 3) in general terms the longitudinal changes in political interest from 1995 to 2008 are small, but despite this we may observe that in 1995 there was nevertheless a decline in both age groups, especially among young people; in 1999 no major changes have been noticed, in 2005 interest in politics again declined among young people, and in 2008 there was a renewed increase, and in the last two years it has remained unchanged (Youth 2010 data) with an average value ($M = 2.04$) that denotes the response “politics interests me only a little”; 4) in the European comparative context it is clear that since 1995 politics has interested Slovenian youth less than their EU-27 peers. The findings therefore show once again that young people in Slovenia and EU-27 are generally not interested in politics, but the trend of declining interest among Slovenian youth has stabilised in recent years, in effect stagnating, as did interest among the adult population after 1995. Interest in politics among adults is a little higher, but still closest to the response “I’m not interested in politics”.

In addition to interest in politics, using EVS (2008) data we also analysed how important politics was in the lives of young people in EU-27 (1 = not at all important, 2 = not very important, 3 = fairly important, 4 = very important). We dichotomised the variable by adding up the values 1 and 2 (politics is not important) and 3 and 4 (politics is important). The findings showed that out of all EU-27 countries, young people in Slovenia assess politics as having the least importance (just 8.4 percent of young people consider it to be important), while the EU-27 average is 31 percent.

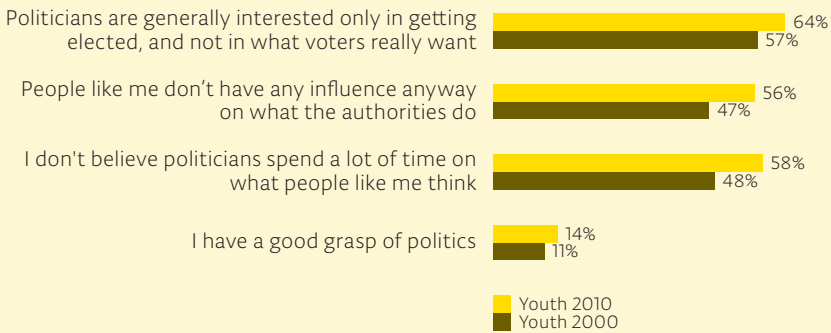
Compared to their European peers, since 1995 Slovenian youth have shown on average noticeably less interest in politics, and out of all the EU-27 countries, young people in Slovenia ascribe the lowest importance in their lives to politics.

5.1.3.2 Perception of political effectiveness

Now let us look at the longitudinal trends of certain political views. Firstly in the Youth 2000 and Youth 2010 surveys we compare the perception of young people regarding political effectiveness. The graph below shows the percentage of young people who, on a scale from 1 (does not apply at all) to 5 (applies completely), selected the values 4 and 5 (applies or applies completely) in four indicators of political effectiveness that were asked in both surveys. The first three statements in the graph below are indicators of what are called *external political effectiveness*, which measures how convinced respondents are regarding the responsiveness of political elites and institutions. The last statement signifies *internal political effectiveness*, which measures the respondent's perception of not being able personally to influence political events and the decisions of political elites (see Miheljak, 2002; Morrell, 2003; Southwell and Pirch, 2003).³⁷

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Graph 61: External and internal political effectiveness of young people, Youth 2010 and Youth 2000



SOURCES: Youth 2000 and Youth 2010

A comparison of findings from 2000 and 2010 shows that on average there has been roughly a 9 percent increase in the proportion of those who feel that the elites do not respond to the wishes and are not working

³⁷ The assertion “People like me don’t have any influence anyway on what the authorities do” is classed by some authors as internal political effectiveness (Miheljak, 2002), and by others as external (Southwell and Pirch, 2003). In this analysis we class it as external effectiveness.

for the benefit of citizens. It is interesting to note that there has been a slight increase in the proportion of those that circled the values 4 and 5 on the scale of internal political effectiveness, but that proportion is still extremely low. More precisely, just 14 percent of young people in their own assessment “understand politics very well”.

To sum up: over the last ten years, there has been an increase among young people in the negative perception of politics and political elites. Young people in Slovenia express a high level of distrust in political officials, with more than half of them believing that politicians do not respond to the wishes of citizens. This is also indicated by the statements below from our interviewees.

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“We young people have chosen politicians to represent us and not their party. Why doesn’t it say anywhere that they represent people. Actually they’re just representing themselves and not us. Politicians do too much for themselves and not enough for people.”

(Vali, 23, young representative of the Hungarian minority)

“Why should (young) people even go to vote... there’s no way they can change anything.”

(Dani, 24, successfully in unregulated employment)

“No, politics gets on my nerves. If elections could change anything, they’d be banned.”

(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

“I used to be (politically active), because I hoped that it would help me get a job. But what happened was, they used me then forgot about me.”

(Maja, 30, unemployed graduate)

Young people's opinions of political elites have notably deteriorated in the past decade, and were distinctly negative in 2010. Young people also express a low sense of their own political influence; just 14 percent say of themselves that they have a good grasp of politics.

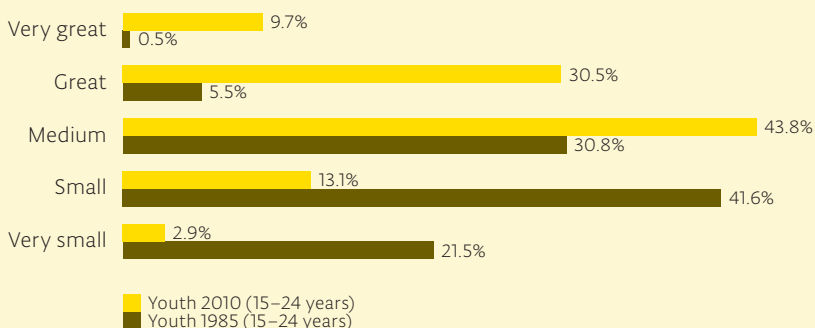
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In addition to internal political effectiveness, which is the perception of one's ability to be active and influential politically, and as such is an important factor of participation (e.g. Hadjara and Beck, 2010), among young people we should take a look in this respect at the feeling of "group" influence on social changes in the future; in other words this is not about the amount of influence of each individual (or not about individual internal political effectiveness, which we analysed in the previous graph), but about perception of the effectiveness of the group with which they identify (in other words a perception of the influence of "young people" on social change). For this analysis we have at our disposal an indicator that allows a longitudinal comparison, since it was asked in the same form in the Yugoslavia-wide survey of youth in 1986 (Ule and Vrcan, 1986) and in Youth 2010.³⁸ A comparison of data from both surveys (graph below) shows that in 2010 young people in Slovenia perceived their age group on average as being distinctly more influential, compared to 1986.

38 For reasons described in the chapter Method, in this case we limited the analysed sample in the two surveys to the age group 15-24 years.

Graph 62: Perception of internal political competence (group level), Youth 2010 and Youth 1985

How do you assess the influence of young people on social change that will take place in your future?



SOURCES: Youth 1985 and Youth 2010

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More precisely, while in 1986 a full 63.1 percent of young people believed that young people have a “very small” or “small” influence “on social changes that will take place in their future”, in 2010 just 16 percent still had that view. At first glance these data do not accord with the level of conventional political participation of young people, which, as we have seen, is low and in the last two decades has shown a falling trend. But these data can also be interpreted differently: on the one hand they can be ascribed to young people’s perception that they do not conceive of their own influence on “social change” as an influence on “political change”, in other words on conventional party politics, which is of little interest to them and regarding which they are highly distrustful, while on the other hand young people probably do not see in conventional political activity a means for achieving “social change”, but in broader, social activity (which of course can have important “political” consequences).

5.1.3.3 Satisfaction with the state of democracy

In addition to the views of young people regarding themselves as political subjects and regarding political objects, numerous studies of political culture and participation devote attention to the “level of democracy”

of inhabitants, especially in post-communist democracies (e.g. Mishler and Rose, 2001; Dowley and Silver, 2002). In this sense there are two aspects of the attitude to democracy: the assessment of the state of existing democracy and support for democracy as an ideal. The first of the two measures people’s satisfaction with the state or functioning of existing democracy. More precisely, this is an analysis of how people perceive the “fulfilment” of democracy in an individual country. The findings of data comparison from the Youth 2000 and Youth 2010 surveys show that satisfaction with democracy among young people in 2010 (compared to 2000) was significantly lower (falling from 21 percent “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with democracy to 13 percent, in others being almost halved).

If we compare the satisfaction of Slovenian youth with the state of democracy in Slovenia with data from the German youth survey Shell 2010 (graph below), we can see that the average satisfaction of Slovenian youth with democracy (1 = not satisfied at all, 5 = entirely satisfied) is slightly lower ($M = 2.55$)³⁹ than the satisfaction of youth in the western part of Germany ($M = 2.41$), although higher than the satisfaction of youth in eastern Germany.⁴⁰

Graph 63: Satisfaction with democracy, Youth 2010 and Shell 2010

In general terms, how satisfied are you with the state of democracy in your country?



SOURCES: Shell 2010 and Youth 2010

Only one in eight young Slovenians is satisfied with the state of democracy in Slovenia.

39 In the entire Youth 2010 sample the satisfaction with democracy is slightly lower ($M = 2.51$).

40 In Youth 2010 satisfaction with democracy was measured on a scale of 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied), while the German survey Shell 2010 used a scale of 1 to 4. Since the question in Germany was put to young people aged 15-25, for direct comparability in the Slovenian sample we analysed the same age group.

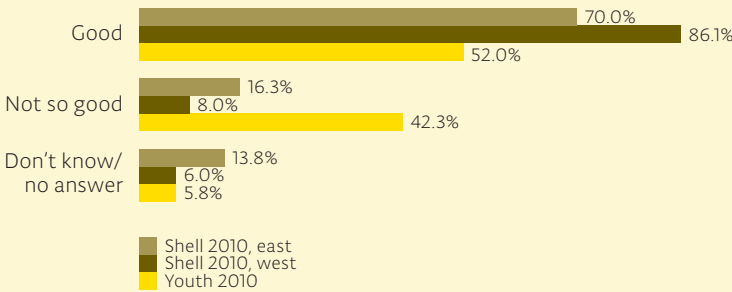
5.1.3.4 **Attitude to democracy as an ideal**

Another indicator measures the attitude of inhabitants to democracy as an ideal, in other words it shows the democratic potential of the population (or vice versa, it examines the undemocratic or authoritarian potential of the population). Indeed it makes sense to ask whether the identified low satisfaction with the state of democracy goes hand in hand with an undemocratic (authoritarian) orientation of young people. In other words, we are interested in whether the above findings point to the lower democratic nature of Slovenian youth. A comparison of data from the Youth 2010 survey and the German youth survey Shell 2010 shows that Slovenian youth have a more disaffected attitude towards democracy as an ideal.⁴¹ More precisely, in response to the question “Regardless of how satisfied you are with the state of democracy in Slovenia, do you believe that democracy in general is a good political system or not so good?”, more than 42 percent of Slovenian respondents answered “not so good”, while in both German samples the share of such responses was markedly lower (8 percent in western and just over 16 percent in eastern Germany).⁴²

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Graph 64: Attitude to democracy as an ideal, Youth 2010 and Shell 2010

Do you believe that democracy in general is a good political system or not so good?



NOTE: Sample of young people aged 15 to 25 years.

SOURCES: Shell 2010 and Youth 2010

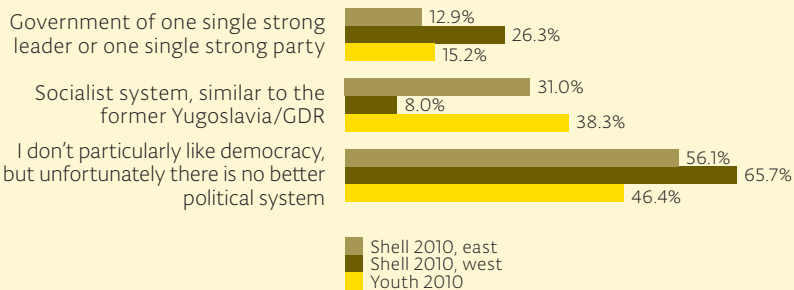
⁴¹ For comparability of the sample, all analyses that compare data from the Youth 2010 and Shell 2010 surveys relate to the sample of young people aged 15 to 25.

⁴² The question in the Shell survey was put as follows: “Regardless of how satisfied you are with the state of democracy in Germany, do you believe that democracy in general is a good political system, or not so good?”

Given the low marks for both indicators of democracy, we also asked young people who feel that “democracy is not such a good political system” what a political system that was better than democracy would look like, in their opinion (in Slovenia this question was answered by 42.3 percent of respondents, in eastern Germany by 16.3 percent and in western Germany by 8 percent). The same question was posed in the German youth survey. A comparison of data in the graph below shows that among young Slovenians who feel that “democracy is not such a good political system”, 46.4 percent of them feel that they “don’t particularly like democracy, but sadly there is no better political system” (a larger proportion of respondents selected the same answer in both parts of Germany).

Graph 65: What in your opinion could a political system better than democracy look like?, Youth 2010 and Shell 2010

What in your opinion could a political system better than democracy look like?



NOTE: Sample of young people aged 15 to 25 years. The analysis covers only 16.3 percent of respondents from Eastern Germany, 8 percent from Western Germany and 42.3 percent of respondents from the Slovenian sample.

SOURCES: Shell 2010 and Youth 2010

In Slovenia the statement that a “socialist system similar to what was in the former Yugoslavia” would be better than democracy was selected by 38.3 percent of respondents (30.7 percent in eastern and 8 percent in western Germany).⁴³ The findings show, therefore, that among young

⁴³ In the German survey the equal response read: “A socialist system similar to the former German Democratic Republic (GDR).”

people in Slovenia, the nostalgia for Yugoslavia is greater than the nostalgia of eastern Germans for the GDR.⁴⁴ Other researchers have already shown the greater nostalgia of Slovenian students in the comparative aspect (e.g. Flere and Kirbiš, 2009). It seems that this nostalgia is mainly the other side of the coin, or goes hand in hand, with young people's criticism of (especially the functioning of) the new political order. This is also illustrated by the statement below from our interviewee.

“Well you know what it was like in Yuga [Yugoslavia]... the main problem was you weren't allowed to speak your mind, but the system provided everything else – job, housing and pension. Then those old folks rebelled... then on top of having everything, they wanted free speech. So we got a capitalist and democratic Slovenia. Now you can say what you want, and no one cares... but jobs, housing and pensions are your own worry now.”

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(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

The attitude of young people to democracy as an ideal was also analysed using indicators of acceptance of (or opposition to) authoritarian systems (e.g. Norris and Inglehart, 2009: 263–264). In past years the EVS surveys included indicators that asked respondents about the best way to run a country. In the EVS surveys, respondents thus graded their agreement with three statements on a scale of 1 (very bad [method of running a country]) to 4 (very good [method of running a country]). We analysed these statements: “Having a strong leader that decides without parliament and elections”; “What is best for the country is decided by experts and not the government” and “The military runs the country”, adding all three statements into a scale, while the findings of longitudinal analysis showed that changes in the observed EVS waves of the last two decades were small, just as the differences between the average values of the EU-27 average and Slovenian youth (which is slightly above the average) were small, while in both groups the average values hover around 2 (in other words respondents regard the authoritarian method of running a country as “bad”).

In view of both indicators of the attitude to democracy, we may therefore conclude that support for democracy as an ideal in two decades among Slovenian youth (and adults) has remained more or less unchanged, but

44 Of course it should be pointed out that nostalgia among the Slovenians is high only in the comparative sense. The absolute proportion of nostalgics among young people is still relatively low (just 14.9 percent).

that in the past decade young people have become quite critical regarding the state of democracy in Slovenia, that they therefore feel noticeably less satisfied with the functioning of democracy and that for this reason they may be regarded as “critical citizens” (Kirbiš et al., 2010). This trend is actually nothing new, and researchers have observed it in other countries (see Norris 1999). Equally, a decline in satisfaction with democracy is logical, if we realise that it has emerged concurrently with a decline in certain other indicators of political views that we have mentioned (such as a reduced trust in politicians and political and state institutions, reduced interest in party politics and so forth), and equally importantly, it accords with lower political participation. We should also bear in mind that satisfaction with the functioning of democracy can also be linked to the global economy and social crisis, which certainly increases the dissatisfaction of young people (and the rest of the population). We can in fact expect an improvement in the current world social and economic conditions to spur some growth in satisfaction with the functioning of democracy, although probably the main factor that can generate the greatest increase in citizen satisfaction is the responsiveness of political elites.

Low satisfaction with the functioning of democracy points primarily to the disappointment of young people at their political system. Let us not forget that expectations during the transition from a socialist to a democratic system were high, and reality today has not satisfied those expectations. Given the low level of expressed authoritarian preferences of young people, we may conclude that they are dissatisfied primarily with “representative” democracy, for that is the only thing they have experienced directly. Of course here there is a clearly visible opportunity to increase “participatory” and “direct” democracy, especially given the findings indicating that the direct involvement of young people is the favourite form of social action (see below). If representative democracy offered in the future even more such methods of participation, while at the same time political institutions and elites responded better to the directly expressed views of young people, this would increase the trust of young people in the functioning of democracy and politics itself.

5.1.4 Protest political participation

Alongside conventional participation, let us now look at other, previously termed “alternative” or “non-conventional” forms of participation. Protest participation (signing petitions, involvement in lawful demonstrations, joining boycotts, participating in unannounced strikes, protest occupation of buildings or factories) is a direct form of non-institutionalised, direct, individualised form of civic action, which for numerous researchers has a vital importance for the functioning and stability of modern democracies, while a willingness to be involved in protest action is deemed to be a characteristic of a democratic public (e.g. Kaase and Marsh, 1979; Inglehart, 1997; Inglehart and Catterberg, 2002). This is also confirmed by studies showing that citizens who are more willing to take protest action also have a greater acceptance of the fundamental democratic principles and values, such as political tolerance, which marks the willingness of people to see groups that they themselves dislike having the same democratic and civic rights as others (see Guérin et al., 2004). In this way, protesters can play a key part in consolidating new democracies. In recent decades, protest forms of participation have increased primarily owing to the process of (post)modernisation. In other words, socio-economic development causes changes in the political culture, values and orientation; citizens trust authority less, values of self-expression are more prominent and citizens are more prepared to grapple with political elites and oppose them (Inglehart, 1997; Dalton and van Sickle, 2005; Inglehart and Welzel, 2007; Welzel, 2007). All of this therefore encourages protest action in the population. Compared to conventional forms of political participation, the protest participatory potential in recent decades has grown on average in established Western democracies, but has declined in post-transition democracies (Inglehart and Catterberg, 2000), which testifies to the validity of the argument about the individualisation of the choice of civic activity and the increasingly common “cause-oriented”⁴⁵ political participation (Norris, 2004; see also Harris et al., 2010). In this survey we analyse the frequency of young people’s participation by means of five protest actions in the database of five EVS/SJM waves, and this time too, we have compared four population groups.⁴⁶ The graph below shows a longitudinal analy-

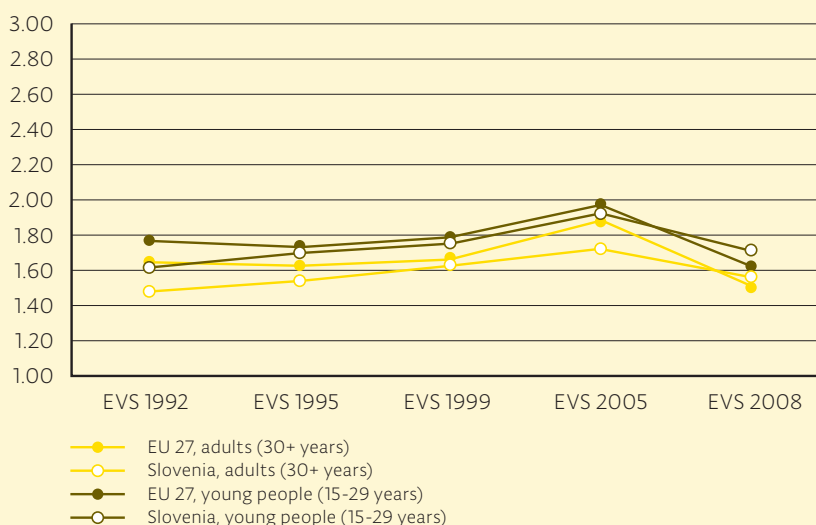
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45 From the English *cause-oriented politics*.

46 Actions ranked on the scale of protest participation were: signing a petition, taking part in lawful demonstrations, joining a boycott, taking part in unannounced strikes and occupying buildings or factories.

sis of the protest potential in Slovenia and EU-27. The EVS measurement instrument measures not just actual protest participation, but also the willingness to participate – values 1 and 2 on a scale of 1 to 3 (1 = never would, 2 = might, 3 = I have done). So we asked respondents about their past and possible future participation, since the classical studies of Almond and Verba (1963) already indicated that for each country an important factor is the participatory potential shown by its citizens (and which can, where necessary, be activated), and not necessarily the frequency of their past political action.

Graph 66: Protest participation, Slovenia and EU-27, 1992, 1995, 1999 and 2008



SOURCE: EVS

Data in the graph show: 1) that in both decades, Slovenian youth showed greater protest potential compared to the adult population, with a similar picture seen in the group of EU-27 countries; 2) that up to 2005 the protest potential grew; 3) that in 2008 protest action in both age groups declined (in Slovenia and also in EU-27), but among Slovenian youth it was still above the baseline average from 1992; 4) that Slovenian youth

in 2008 demonstrated in comparison with their EU-27 peers an above-average level of protest participation.

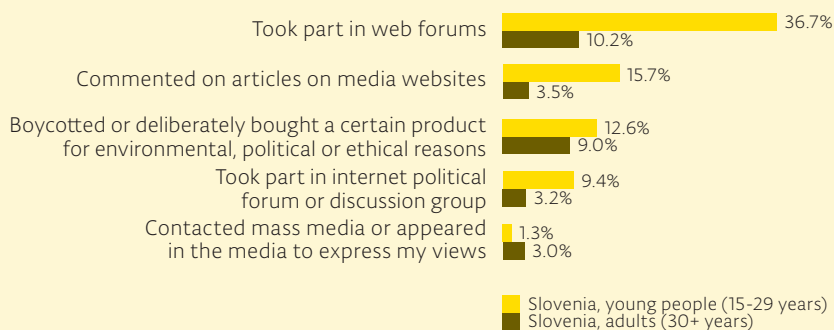
Compared to older people and peers in the EU, Slovenian youth are characterised by a relatively high level of protest political participation. In the last two decades this potential has shown a trend of growth.

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5.1.5 Information technology and individualised forms of political participation

Alongside protest participation, let us look at some other forms of non-conventional participatory action. As already mentioned, in recent decades, especially among the younger generations, new, individualised forms of participation have emerged, where alongside protest activities the emphasis has been mainly on what is called consumer participation (e.g. boycotting or buying certain goods for environmental, political or ethical reasons) and participation by means of information and communication technology (ICT), such as taking part in web forums, commenting on articles by journalists on media websites and so forth. In the SJM survey of 2009 (Malnar et al., 2009), conducted as part of the international ISSP survey, respondents were asked about the frequency of such forms of political activity. Since the data for other countries involved in the ISSP survey are not publicly accessible, in the following analysis we compare just the two Slovenian population groups (young people under 29 years and those over 29 years). The graph below shows a separate analysis of five indicators of individualised and ICT participation (the proportion of those that have already participated in a specific activity).

Graph 67: Individualised forms of political participation, Slovenia, 2009



SOURCE: SJM091

The results show that compared to adults, young people are more active in four IT activities, and it is only in contacts with the mass media that adults are a little more active, although the differences between the two age groups in this indicator are small and in fact the smallest. The differences are greatest in participation on web forums, but this indicator is set out very broadly and can also include less political or civil-society related forums, but it can of course involve a form of political activity. Based on what has been said, we can confirm that in Slovenia, too, young people are generally more active in individualised and ICT forms of political activity, and this is similar to the above-established differences between age groups in protest forms of participation. We also anticipate the finding that contacts with the media are the only indicator that young people do not use more than adults, since in fact this is the least direct political action, involving by definition an “intermediary” (in this case the medium).

Young people are significantly more active in individualised and ICT forms of political participation.

5.1.6 Political participation of youth in 2010

In view of what has been established thus far, in the Youth 2010 survey data we were firstly interested in the frequency of the specific political activities of young Slovenians. Based on the indicator of participation in elections, we can determine that according to Youth 2010 data, a total of 62.2 percent of young people entitled to vote took part in the National Assembly (parliament) elections of 2008, and this matches with the results of the EVS in the same year.⁴⁷

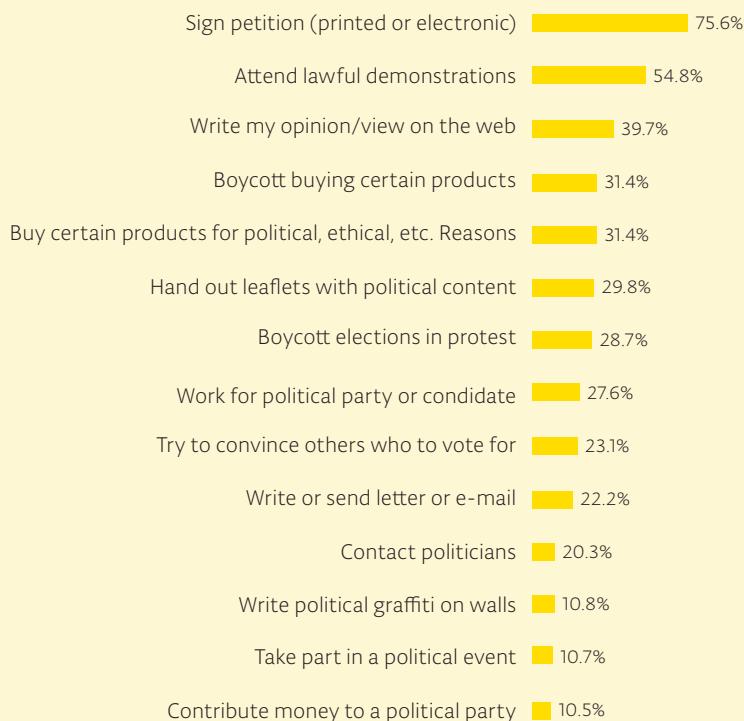
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In addition to electoral participation, on a scale of 1 to 3 (1 = certainly would not, 2 = probably would, 3 = already have) we asked respondents about the frequency of their participation and their willingness to do so. The instrument of measurement was set in such a way as to enable direct comparison with certain other aforementioned surveys (e.g. EVS and SJM). In the graph below we show the proportion of young people that selected the value 2 (“probably would”) or 3 (“already have”) in the specific indicator of participation.⁴⁸

47 We took only respondents aged 20 or over in 2010 (and therefore at least 18 during the 2008 elections) who did not select the response “In September 2008 I did not yet have the right to vote”.

48 Like the EVS surveys, our scale is a combined measurement of past and potential participation.

Graph 68: Proportion of young people who “probably would” do or “already have” done the listed political activity, Youth 2010



SOURCE: Youth 2010

The above graph shows that the frequency of an individual political activity and the willingness of young people to do it differ considerably. The highest level of willingness is for signing petitions (76 percent), followed in terms of frequency/willingness by presence at lawful demonstrations (55 percent). Both of these are activities that fall within protest forms of political participation. In terms of frequency, last place is taken by writing graffiti, damaging other's property at political gatherings, and interestingly, contributing money to political parties and candidates – a conventional political activity that young people are least willing to do. In the long term we may expect individualised and ICT forms of political participation to become even more frequent. For young people, therefore,

these activities are not an alternative, they have become the main form of political participation.

In 2010 political participation among young people in Slovenia was significantly more frequent in protest, individualised and ICT forms, and significantly lower in conventional, institutionalised, party-political activities. Young people are involved in protest activities more than the older population.

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5.1.6.1 Dimensions and factors of participatory activities in Youth 2010

In addition to frequency, we also wanted to know how the indicators of participation rank by groups. We analysed 12 indicators of participation (we excluded from factor analysis two indicators of participation).⁴⁹ Factor analysis showed that indicators can be merged into the composite variable “political participation”.⁵⁰

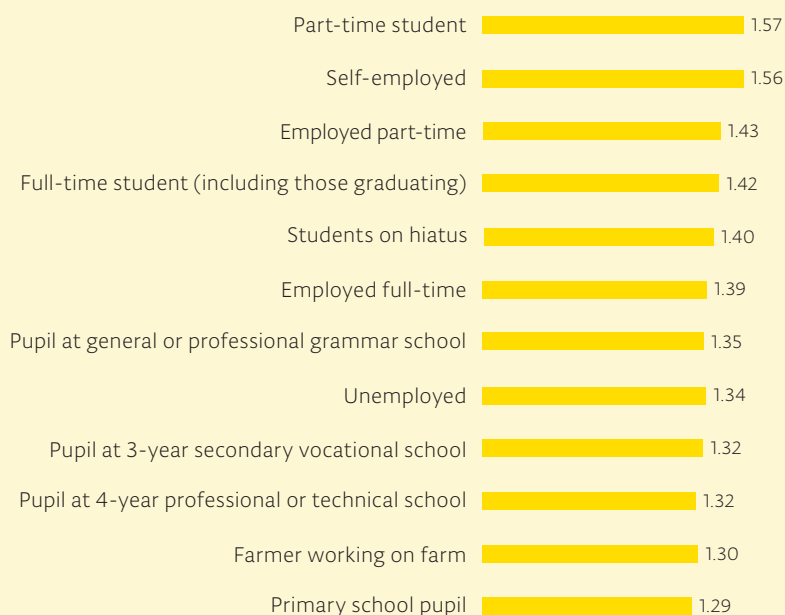
49 These two indicators (“writing graffiti” and “damaging property at political gatherings”) are also a special dimension of political participation in factor analysis, which confirms the rationale of exclusion for methodological reasons. The other reason is of course substantive, since the two forms of participation are illegal.

50 More precisely, factor analysis first showed that with the given 12 variables of participation, two factors or dimensions could be formulated, and in view of the variables these two contain, we may call them “conventional political participation” and “protest/individualised participation”. The two factors explain 43.88 percent of the total variance (the first factor explains 31.65 percent of the variance, and the other 12.22 percent). Based on the results of factor analysis, we formulated two composite variables, by calculating for each interviewee the arithmetic mean of responses for the 12 indicators of participation. Then we again performed a factor analysis of the second order on the two composite variables, where it was shown that the two factors form a single latent dimension, which we have called “political participation”. Based on the results of factor analysis we formulated a single variable on which we performed all subsequent statistical analysis. These two dimensions weighted the total factor of political participation with a weighting of 0.87 ($r = 0.514$; $p < 0.001$), and the latent factor of political participation accounts for 75.7 percent of the total variance.

Below we analyse the effect of these socio-demographic variables on political participation: gender, age, personal income, economic status of the respondent's family, educational qualifications of the respondent and his parents and size of residential settlement. In presenting the results, for accessibility we will limit ourselves to just statistically significant and interesting correlations. Of the listed factors, political participation is positively and relatively strongly affected by: greater age ($r = 0.165$; $p < 0.001$), respondent's monthly income ($r = 0.065$; $p < 0.05$), education of the respondent ($r = 0.150$; $p < 0.001$), father ($r = 0.141$; $p < 0.001$) and mother ($r = 0.121$; $p < 0.001$), current residence ($r = 0.166$; $p < 0.001$) and growing up in an urban environment ($r = 0.118$; $p < 0.001$), while gender⁵¹ and subjectively perceived economic status of the family were not seen to be statistically significant factors of political participation. A comparison of participation relative to main working activity (graph below) showed that the most politically active young people are outstanding students and the self-employed, and the least active are the unemployed, farmers, school pupils, with the least activity, as expected, among primary school pupils, given that as minors they do not have any political status or rights.

51 Although numerous foreign studies (Parry et al., 1992; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba et al., 2003; Vasaallo, 2006) indicate that there are differences between the sexes in the level of political participation and cognitive engagement, even in the Youth 2000 survey (Miheljak, 2002) gender was not seen to be a statistically significant predictor of "interest in politics". A more detailed analysis of Youth 2010 data showed that there are no gender differences, either on the conventional or protest participation scales. Nor in the entire sample are there any differences in interest in politics, although there are differences in the oldest youth group (25–29 years), in which males show a greater level of interest. Future research should study in greater detail the reasons leading in late youth to differences in interest in politics between the sexes (partly this can be ascribed to internal political effectiveness, where differences between the sexes arise only in the aforementioned age group; in other words, males (25–29) therefore believe to a greater extent than women that they have a grasp of politics). Although our study showed that there are no differences in participation, certain other studies of Slovenian youth point to the greater engagement of males (Gril et al., 2009).

Graph 69: Frequency of political participatory activity by working status of respondent, Youth 2010



NOTE: The number of primary school pupils ($n = 11$), farmers ($n = 8$) and respondents that did not circle any of the listed working activities ($n = 6$), is less than 1 percent of the entire sample (in all they make up 2.1 percent of the sample). In view of the small number of respondents, for these three working statuses it is much harder to draw a reliable conclusion regarding their level of political participation.

SOURCE: Youth 2010

Statistically significant factors of higher electoral participation were seen to be age ($r = 0.242$; $p < 0.001$), education of the respondent ($r = 0.219$; $p < 0.01$) and that of the mother ($r = 0.089$; $p < 0.01$).

Given the established factors of political participation, we may conclude:

Young people from families with higher socio-economic status and from urban environments are more frequently politically active.

5.1.6.2 Political and cultural factors of political participation

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In addition to socio-demographic factors, in the Youth 2010 data we also checked whether and how far the political participation of young people was tied to young people's political views. As we have already seen, in the last two decades, interest in politics has waned amongst young people, while there has been an increase in their dissatisfaction at political officials (dissatisfaction is not tied simply to who is currently in power) and the functioning of democracy. A link between political participation and political and cultural variables would indicate that the decline in certain political orientations was one of the key causes of the decline in political participation.

In the graph below we show the link between certain previously examined political views and political participation.

Graph 70: Link between certain political orientations and two forms of participation, Youth 2010



SOURCE: Youth 2010

We have determined that the majority of variables of political orientation have been shown to be statistically significant factors of two forms of political participation (*electoral participation* and the composite variable *political participation*), while the graph above shows six of them; *political participation* is most significantly increased (and reduced) by interest in politics and the perception of one's own grasp of politics (internal political effectiveness), and *electoral participation* by the view that in addition to both the aforesaid, there is a positive link with the respondent's view that participation in elections is the duty of every citizen. There is less activity among those that are dissatisfied with democracy in Slovenia, and those that view political officials and politics in general negatively.

We may conclude that the longitudinal decline in political participation is also exacerbated by political and cultural variables (reduced interest in politics, low perception of one's own political effectiveness, negative view of institutional politics and distrust of those in power). An especially important fact is that there is greater political activity among young people who are satisfied with the functioning of democracy (we know that satisfaction has declined in the past decade, and this may have spurred the decline in political participation). In other words, citizens who are satisfied with the functioning of democracy are more active, and this further increases the participatory exclusion of dissatisfied young people.

Young people who are not satisfied with the functioning of democracy are less politically active.

5.1.7 Key findings

The key findings from this chapter, together with recommendations for the implementation of youth policy, may be condensed into the following points:

1. Conventional political participation among young people in Slovenia is lower than the average for young people in EU-27.

2. Conventional political participation among young people in the past decade has shown a declining trend.
3. Compared to their European peers, since 1995 Slovenian youth have shown on average noticeably less interest in politics, and out of all the EU-27 countries, young people in Slovenia ascribe the lowest importance in their lives to politics.
4. Young people's opinions of political elites have notably deteriorated in the past decade, and were distinctly negative in 2010. Young people also express a low sense of their own political influence; just 14 percent say of themselves that they have a good grasp of politics.
5. Compared to older people and peers in the EU, Slovenian youth are characterised by a relatively high level of protest political participation. In the last two decades this potential has shown a trend of growth.
6. In 2010 political participation among young people in Slovenia was significantly more frequent in protest, individualised and ICT forms, and significantly lower in conventional, institutionalised, party-political activities. Young people are involved in protest activities more than the older population.
7. Young people from families with higher socio-economic status and from urban environments are more frequently politically active.
8. Young people who are not satisfied with the functioning of democracy are less politically active.

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5.2 Voluntary activities

5.2.1 Introduction

Civil society participation is the second of two fundamental types of participation of citizens in public life (alongside political participation, see Mihailović, 1986; Pantić, 1988; Torney-Purta and Richardson, 2002; Zukin et al., 2006). Civil society participation is a broader concept and covers primarily voluntary activities that benefit the community, and necessarily do not relate to political institutions and parties. Here there is an orientation towards broader social issues that can be considered political more or less implicitly (for instance voluntary work to benefit various non-governmental organisations, membership of societies and associations etc.; Fištravec and Šipuš, 2005: 122–3; see also Keeter et al., 2002; Torney-Purta et al., 2004; Zukin et al., 2006). Voluntary activities are therefore all types of voluntary action that are characterised by being open, unpaid, with the individual participating voluntarily, while they involve non-formal educational and added social value (EU Youth Report, 2009). As we have seen in the sub-chapter Political participation, in recent decades we have identified a decline chiefly in conventional political participation, but a declining trend can also be observed in the civil society activities of the population; research for instance points to a falling trend of membership in voluntary organisations and associations (see Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993; Putnam, 1995).

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Despite the decline in voluntary activities and civil society participation, empirical research also shows that compared to adults, young people are more active in this sphere. They take part more frequently in voluntary (and protest) activities (Keeter et al., 2002; Norris, 2004; Zukin et al., 2006; Dalton, 2008). The main reason for young people being involved in these activities is, in Dalton's opinion, the views of young people, who see no effective means for expressing their opinion in conventional political forms. For this reason they are more active in civil society participation, protest participation, political consumerism, participation linked to ICT and so on. Researchers therefore emphasise that attention should be focused not just on "political" but also on "civil society" activities, in other words not just on conventional and formal, but also non-conventional, non-party, social forms of political activity (Norris, 2004; Dalton, 2008; Marien et al., 2010).

Research shows encouragingly that numerous pro-social values are associated with voluntary activities. In Dalton's opinion voluntary activities⁵² also cover standards of autonomy – in particular understanding and respecting the opinions of others and solidarity with others and with those that think differently, as well as empathy and help for one's fellow man and forming one's own opinion based on being informed. Voluntary/ socially active individuals therefore attempt to understand the position of other people, they are prepared to act in accordance with their (pro-social) principles, and at the same time they are prepared to challenge the political elites, if they do not act according to those principles (Dalton, 2008: 28). In civil society activity an important ingredient is participation (but not in the conventional and party-political way). The final key dimension of civil society participation is political tolerance, which is one of the central values of a democratic society. In our research, we may therefore expect voluntary activities among young Slovenians to be linked to positive values and to the psychosocial development of young people. Numerous other studies also confirm the link between voluntary activities and the positive development of young people (for an overview, see Balsano, 2005).

Previous research has also shown that there are certain key factors of civil society activity. Where we might envisage for conventional political participation, on the basis of previous studies (Parry et al., 1992; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba et al., 2003; Vasaallo, 2006), that males are more frequently politically active (although it has been seen in Youth 2010 that there are no differences between genders), more recent research of civil society participation shows that women participate more in voluntary activities (Schlozman et al., 1995; Krishnamurthy et al., 2001; Inglehart and Norris, 2005; Norris et al., 2006: 298). In addition to age and gender, particularly important factors of voluntary activity have been observed to be education, income and place of residence (Barnes, 1977; Halman and Luijkx, 2006; MacFarland and Thomas, 2006; White and Gager, 2007; Van der Meer et al., 2008).

Below we analyse: 1) the extent of voluntarism among Slovenian youth; 2) longitudinal trends (changes) of willingness to be active in civil society; 3) the levels of voluntarism among Slovenian youth compared to German youth; 4) psychosocial correlates and 5) socio-demographic factors of frequency of voluntary activities.

52 The expressions "voluntary activities" and "civil society" participation are used alternately in this study.

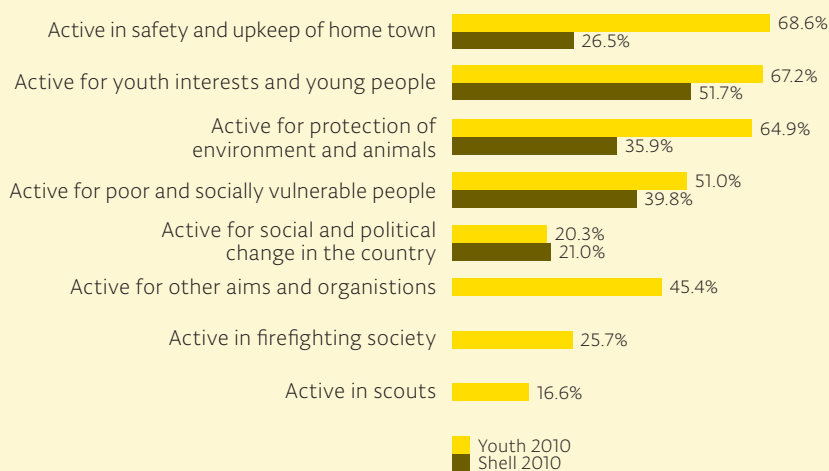
5.2.2 Frequency of voluntary activities

The Youth 2010 survey included several indicators of young people's voluntary activities, and they all fall into the basic conceptual framework of voluntary activities and civil society participation: 1) non-formal work or activities, generally in cooperation with others, in order to deal with specific issues, and 2) membership in voluntary societies and organisations (Keeter et al., 2002). In the graph below we present eight forms of voluntary activities of Slovenian youth, and for five of them we also have comparable data from the German youth survey Shell 2010.

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Graph 71: Voluntary activities of young people, Youth 2010 and Shell 2010

Proportion of young people that are "sometimes" or "often" active in the following voluntary activities, Youth 2010 and Shell 2010



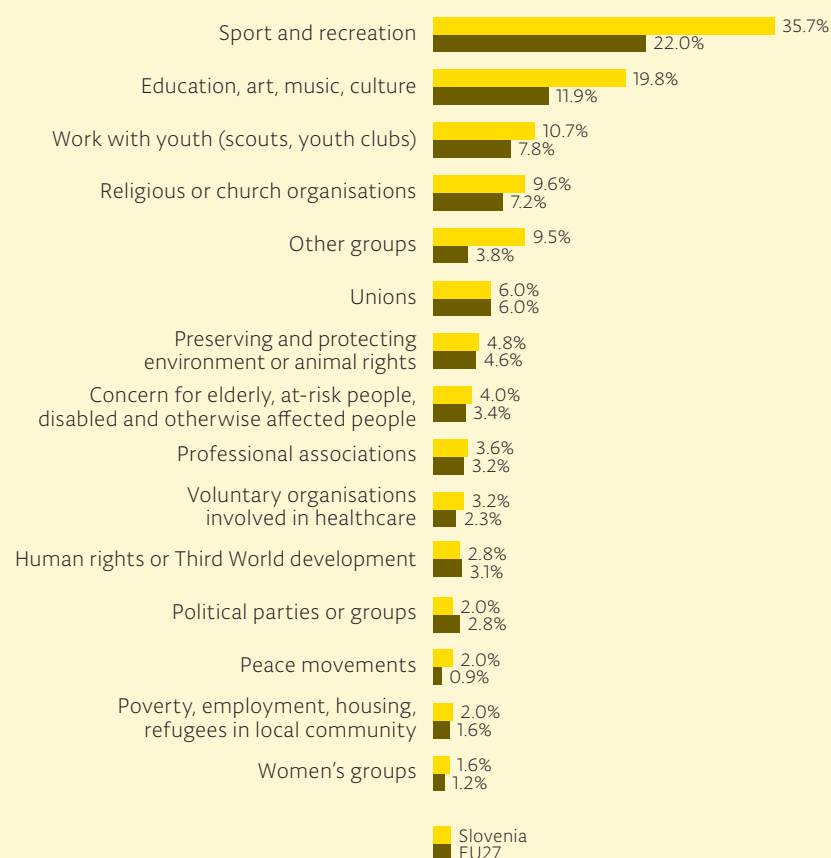
SOURCES: Youth 2010 and Shell 2010

A comparison of five indicators (where we analyse the proportion of young people that are "sometimes" or "often" active in the given voluntary activities) shows that Slovenian youth are more active in four forms of activity, most commonly in activities linked to the safety and upkeep of the location where the respondent resides (68.6 percent of young peo-

ple), and to youth interests and young people (67.2 percent). Activity for “social and political change” is the only form of activity for which it can be said that German youth are somewhat more active (in Slovenia 20.3 percent of young people are active in this field). The low commitment of young people in this case should probably be ascribed to conventional “political” activity, which as we have seen in the previous chapter, Slovenian youth perceive to be mainly negative (a low level of trust in political officials and institutions, low conventional participation and so forth). The data also show that around a quarter of Slovenian youth are active in firefighting societies, and just under 17 percent in the scouts. The graph therefore points to a relatively high level of civil society activity among young people in Slovenia, especially compared to German youth, which is also in line with the results of the European youth survey, whereby young Slovenians attain the highest level of voluntary activity compared to other EU Member States (Flash Eurobarometer 202, 2007).

Equally, we checked the extent to which Slovenian youth (compared to EU-27 youth) are members of voluntary organisations. Data in the graph below indicate that in 12 out of 15 indicators, Slovenian youth attain a higher level of membership. The biggest differences involving membership and favouring Slovenian youth are in two types of organisation that have the most members: sports/recreation organisations and cultural organisations. Among Slovenian youth the only notably lower membership is in political parties, which accords with the results in the sub-chapter Political participation.

Graph 72: Young people's membership of voluntary organisations, Slovenia and EU-27



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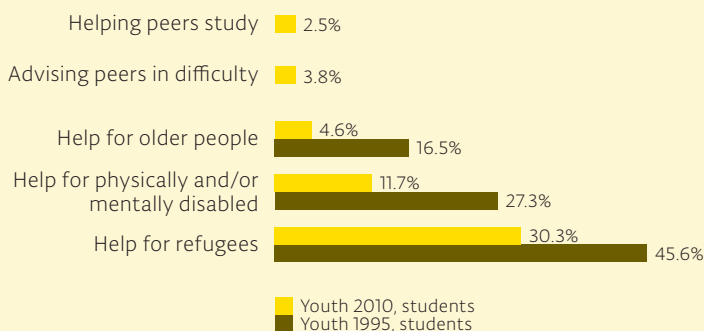
In the graph below we show an analysis of a different indicator of voluntary activity: the willingness or otherwise to take part in voluntary activities is compared to data from the Youth 1995 and Youth 2010 surveys. Before looking at the results, we should point out: 1) in both surveys just three indicators were presented, so a longitudinal comparison is possible only in those three; 2) in the Youth 1995 survey, two responses were offered regarding willingness to perform voluntary activities: »I would participate« (1) and »I would not participate« (2). In the graph the Youth 1995 data therefore show the proportion of young people that »would not participate» in the given activity, while Youth 2010 shows the

proportion of young people that “certainly would not participate” in the given activity; 3) the Youth 1995 survey covered students of Ljubljana and Maribor universities, while Youth 2010 shows the average values for all students in the Youth 2010 sample.

In the graph below, voluntary activities are classified according to level of willingness/frequency from greatest to smallest (we should bear in mind that the values show those that *would not participate* in the specific activities).

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Graph 73: Proportion of young people that “would not participate” in the given voluntary activities, Youth 2010 and Youth 1995, students



SOURCES: Youth 2010 and Youth 1995

The data show that in 2010 young people were most willing to help their peers study (only 2.5 percent would not help), to advise their peers if they were in difficulty (just 3.8 percent of young people would not offer advice), and to help older people (just 4.6 percent would not be willing to help them). The last two places in terms of willingness to do voluntary activities relate to helping persons with physical and mental disabilities (11.7 percent of young people “would not participate” in such voluntary activity) and helping refugees (30.3 percent of young people would not help them as part of voluntary activities). Viewed longitudinally (taking into account the aforementioned limitations), the data indicate that the willingness of young people to engage in voluntary activities increased

in 2010, while the proportions or sequence of three activities analysed in both years remained unchanged. The fact that willingness to help refugees and disabled persons comes last should be no surprise, since young people probably perceive them as being the most “different”. The only point of some relative concern is that just under a third of young people are not willing to help refugees, although we may expect that in time this form of inactivity will further decline, if we bear in mind that in 1995 there was a significantly higher proportion of young people who were not prepared to help refugees. To conclude: in 2010 we therefore perceive a significant increase in the willingness to help older people and physically/mentally disabled persons and refugees.

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Compared to 1995, Slovenian youth are significantly more active in the voluntary sphere, and are also significantly more active than German youth.

An analysis of the averages, which we do not show, has indicated that compared to protest forms of participation, voluntary activities have higher average values. Behind protest activities comes just the frequency or willingness to help refugees, although in its average value this does not differ significantly from protest participation. If we know from the findings of the sub-chapter Political participation that protest activity is more popular among young people than conventional political participation, we may conclude that voluntary activities are those forms of activity in society that are most common among young people. This is also illustrated by the responses of two Youth 2010 interviewees to the question, when are you politically or socially active.

“I don’t know... I like to help if I can. I was selling drinks at some football event for free... I take part in the Let’s Clean Skorba project... I help serve tables at the drama workshop for free, I also do the cleaning up... I help friends at home, grape picking, for example... I’d like to give blood, but I haven’t had the chance...”

(Špela, 25, young waitress)

“If political work was tied to minority issues and I got work that I’m qualified to do, so it would make sense for the minority and for our town. But if it was just politics in general, that would be a waste of time.”

(Vali, 23, young representative of the Hungarian minority)

On the other hand, some young people are also critical of voluntary activity, as indicated by these statements from our interviewee:

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“Volunteering comes from within yourself, you just want to help somebody. If it was formalised, like work references, for instance, abuse would be possible. There’s a strong drive when it’s informal. Both should be (adequately) related.”

(Mateja, 29, employed in the parliament)

“If there’s a mass, they do (have the power to influence things). But for young people everything is too fragmented. Demonstrations, for example – the effect was negative, but it had mass. There are too many youth societies and clubs that are separated, so who should the politicians talk to if they want a proper grasp of young people’s views?”

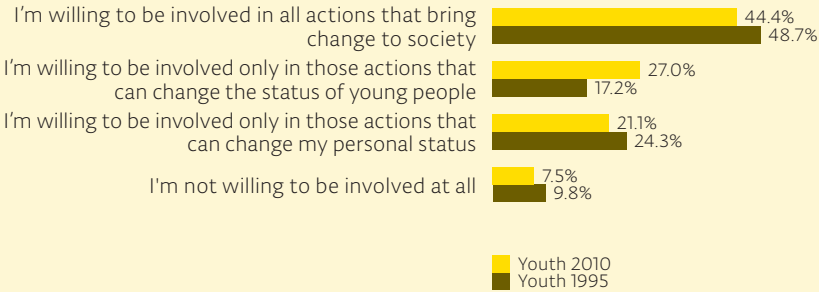
(Mateja, 29, employed in the parliament)

Out of all forms of participation, young people are most frequently involved in voluntary activities. In addition to their involvement in employment and education, voluntary activities are the main mechanism for social inclusion in Slovenia.

5.2.3 Willingness to act for social change

The following indicators of young people’s voluntary activity relate to their willingness to be active in society. More precisely, we asked young people how far they were “willing to engage in implementing social change”. The indicator therefore does not relate exclusively to “social”, but can potentially also cover “political”. In the graphs below we present a comparison of data from the Youth 2010 and Youth 1995 surveys. Since the Youth 1995 survey was conducted among students, we show a comparison of data relating only to student samples.

Graph 74: Willingness of students to be active in society, Youth 2010 and Youth 1995



A comparison of the student populations of 1995 and 2010 in the above graph indicates that the willingness to participate in “all actions that bring social change” was slightly lower in 2010 (falling from 48.7 to 44.4 percent), while students showed an increased willingness to participate in action that would change the “status of young people” (from 17.2 percent to 27 percent), which points directly to the high identification of young people with their age group and their willingness to act in the interests of young people as a group. There has also been a slight increase in the percentage of young people who are not willing to participate in any action, while there has been a drop in the percentage of young people willing to participate only in those actions that would change their personal status. Similar trends can be observed if we compare the school pupil population of the Youth 1993 survey and the same population in Youth 2010 (not shown).

We can summarise the presented results to the effect that the general willingness of students to take action for all social change has declined, but students are at the same time more willing to fight for the improvement of their status (as a group). This was also shown in 2010, albeit with a sour aftertaste, by the student demonstrations in front of the National Assembly. The reduced willingness of students to improve merely the specific status of the individual indirectly shows that solidarity among them has slightly increased. In this sense the value of egalitarianism, which is in fact a characteristic of post-communist societies and relates primarily to the economic sphere, can also be observed in the socio-political sphere of young people.

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In the past 15 years there has been a pronounced increase in the willingness of students to participate in actions that improve the status of young people.

5.2.4 Dimensions of voluntary activities

Before analysing the factors and correlates of voluntary activities, the dimensions of these activities need to be examined. Below we therefore present the factor structure of young people's voluntary activities, specifically relating to 13 indicators of activity. The factor analysis (table below) showed that young people's voluntary activities can be categorised into four dimensions, which we have named: 1) help for peers and older people, 2) environmental activities, 3) volunteering through societies and 4) help for the marginalised. When we performed the factor analysis of the second class of the four created factors, one single latent dimension of voluntarism emerged. Below we correlate the four factors with their factor scores through a series of psychosocial constructs.

Table 12: Factor structure of young people’s voluntary activities, Youth 2010

	Factor			
	Help for peers and older people	Environ- mental activity	Volun- teering through societies	Help for marginalised groups
Advice for peers in difficulty	0.891			
Helping peers to study	0.848			
Help for older people	0.672			
Active in protection of the environment and animals		0.886		
Active in the safety and upkeep of the place where you live		0.858		
Active for poor and socially vulnerable people		0.567		
Active for youth interests and young people		0.431	0.300	
Active for social and political change in Slovenia			0.724	
Active in the scouts			0.676	
Active for other aims and organisations			0.567	
Active in firefighting societies			0.521	-0.318
Help for refugees				0.849
Help for physically and/or mentally disabled				0.584

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5.2.5 Correlates of voluntary activities

The correlation analysis showed that voluntary activities are associated with certain psychosocial constructs (table below) Three forms of voluntarism are mildly positively associated with narcissistic grandiosity, while help for marginalised groups is not a statistically significant correlate.

Table 13: Correlates of everyday and leisure activities, Youth 2010

	Help for peers and older people (F1)	Environmen- tal activity (F2)	Volunteer- ing through societies (F3)	Help for marginalised groups (F4)
Authoritarianism	0.140**	0.108**	-0.042	0.058*
Narcissistic grandiosity	0.060*	0.058*	0.056*	0.017
Narcissistic opportunism	-0.190**	-0.067*	0.112**	-0.130**
Social intolerance	-0.113**	-0.022	0.082**	-0.140**
Alienation	-0.172**	0.039	0.142**	-0.029
Anomy	0.004	0.072*	-0.055	0.040
Orientation to the future	0.154**	0.153**	0.008	0.081**
Orientation to the present (hedonistic)	0.037	0.048	0.119**	-0.053
Orientation to the present (fatalistic)	-0.040	0.072*	0.059*	-0.085**
Deviance	-0.093**	0.006	0.195**	-0.048
Authoritative socialisation	0.123**	0.064*	0.041	0.075**
Authoritarian socialisation	-0.088**	0.005	0.124**	-0.043
Permissive socialisation	-0.075**	-0.009	0.099**	-0.094**
Political participation	0.061*	0.168**	0.339**	0.138**
Civil society participation	0.726**	0.733**	0.580**	0.590**
Satisfaction with life	0.171**	0.030	-0.014	0.018
Satisfaction with health	0.040	-0.032	-0.085**	-0.004
Stress	0.015	0.036	0.075**	0.042
Social exclusion	-0.111**	-0.079**	-0.099**	-0.045

NOTE: *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01.

At the same time, three dimensions of voluntarism are negatively associated with narcissistic opportunism, while volunteering through societies is positively associated with it. Help for peers and older people, and help for marginalised groups are positively associated with social tolerance, while volunteering through societies is associated negatively with it. Help for peers is also negatively associated with alienation, but volunteering through societies is positively associated, and is the only thing to be associated with anomy. Apart from volunteering through societies, the other three dimensions are positively associated with an orientation to the future. Volunteering through societies is also positively associated with a hedonistic and fatalistic orientation to the present. Environmental activity is also associated positively with this, while help for marginalised

groups is associated negatively. Volunteering through societies is relatively strongly associated also with deviance ($r = 0.195$; $p < 0.001$), while help for peers and older people is associated negatively with deviance ($r = -0.093$; $p < 0.001$).

It is also noteworthy that an authoritative socialisation increases the frequency of help for peers and older people, while authoritative and permissive socialisations reduce it. The sample is the other way around in volunteering through societies, which is increased by authoritarian and permissive socialisation. Young people that are more often involved in societies are also less satisfied with their health and more frequently feel stress. Help for peers and older people is the only dimension of voluntarism associated positively with greater satisfaction with life ($r = 0.171$; $p < 0.001$). Apart from helping marginalised groups, socially excluded people participate more rarely in the other three dimensions of voluntarism. Given the large number of connections between volunteering through societies and indicators of less adjusted psychosocial development of adolescents, we also performed correlation analyses while controlling socio-demographic variables. The strength of the association generally did not change significantly, but the coefficients remained statistically significant.

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Voluntary activities are mainly associated with the more adjusted psychosocial development of young people. A willingness to help peers and older people is associated primarily with indicators of more adjusted development, while membership in voluntary societies (firefighters, scouts etc.) is generally associated with negative indicators of development.

Despite the association of volunteering through societies with generally less favourable psychosocial constructs, this does not mean that voluntary societies are a barrier to young people's psychosocial development, nor does this indicate the need to destimulate such activity. The causes

of lower adjustment of members of voluntary societies should probably be ascribed to self-selection mechanisms.

5.2.6 Socio-demographic factors of voluntarism

242 The following have been observed to be statistically significant socio-demographic factors of voluntary activities: female gender on the total, latent dimension of voluntarism and in two sub-dimensions – help for peers and older people ($r = 0.169$; $p < 0.001$) and help for marginalised groups ($r = 0.158$; $p < 0.001$). Greater age is associated with environmental activities ($r = 0.099$; $p < 0.001$) and help for marginalised groups ($r = 0.239$; $p < 0.001$). Respondent's education is associated with three forms of voluntarism ($0.079 < r < 0.111$; $p < 0.01$), the exception being only volunteering through societies, where there are no statistically significant differences. Young people who live (or grew up) in the countryside are more frequently active in three dimensions of voluntarism ($0.059 < r < 0.109$; $p < 0.05$), with just help for marginalised groups being more frequently provided by young people from urban environments ($r = 0.083$; $p < 0.01$). The respondent's perception of the economic status of his family is positively associated with environmental activities and help for marginalised groups ($0.105 < r < 0.189$; $p < 0.001$). Some previous surveys of Slovenian secondary school pupils and students accord fairly well with our findings, but they also point out that there are social barriers to young people's social participation (such as the perception that "young people don't get support for their ideas" or that "young people are not accepted as equal partners in decision-making").

Young people perceive these social barriers as more important than individual and informational barriers (see Gril, 2004; Gril et al., 2010: 96–97).

Being female, older, living in an urban environment, higher educational qualifications of the respondent and higher economic status of the family are factors that positively influence most forms of voluntarism.

5.2.7 Association between political and voluntary activities

Finally we were interested in the link between voluntary activities and political participation. Based on past research, we may expect young people who are active in the civil society to also be more frequently politically active (e.g. MacFarland and Thomas, 2006; Kirbiš, 2010a). The results confirm this, since the link between the total, latent dimension of voluntarism and political participation is relatively strong and positive ($r = 0.262$; $r < 0.001$). Out of four sub-dimensions of voluntarism, the associations are ranked as follows in strength: volunteering through societies ($r = 0.339$; $r < 0.001$), environmental activities ($r = 0.168$; $r < 0.001$), help for marginalised groups ($r = 0.138$; $r < 0.001$) and help for peers and older people ($r = 0.061$; $r < 0.001$).

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Political and voluntary activities are relatively strongly associated positively with each other.

From the point of view of foreign youth surveys, the frequency and pronounced willingness of young people in Slovenia to engage in voluntary or civil society forms of activity are no surprise (see e.g. Dalton, 2008; Keeter, 2002; Zukin et al., 2006). Although one of the main reasons for longitudinal changes to samples and forms of citizen participation in public life is the socio-economic changes that have taken place in Western, established democracies, and in the past two decades especially in post-socialist societies (e.g. Inglehart, 1997; Inglehart and Welzel, 2007), another important reason for the high level of participation (primarily of young people) in voluntary forms of activity is that they (can) signify for them experience and a recommendation in seeking employment, or in other words, voluntarism can also be a springboard for jobs.⁵³

⁵³ Thus for instance young people can show their own competence (knowledge, skills, abilities) acquired through various forms of activity (voluntary work, courses, conferences, projects, workshops, seminars etc.) on the Slovenian website *Nefiks*. This kind of project of referencing, acknowledging and establishing non-formally acquired knowledge can additionally stimulate young people to greater civil society and non-formal activity, which can have positive effects not just on the individual/young person, but for all of society.

5.2.8 Key findings

The key findings from this chapter, together with recommendations for the implementation of youth policy, may be condensed into the following points:

1. Compared to 1995, Slovenian youth are significantly more active in the voluntary sphere, and are also significantly more active than German youth.
2. Out of all forms of participation, young people are most frequently involved in voluntary activities. In addition to involvement in employment and education, voluntary activities are the main mechanism for social inclusion in Slovenia.
3. In the past 15 years there has been a major increase in the willingness of students to participate in actions that improve the status of young people.
4. Voluntary activities are mainly associated with the more adjusted psychosocial development of young people. A willingness to help peers and older people is associated primarily with indicators of more adjusted development, while membership in voluntary societies (firefighters, scouts etc.) is generally associated with negative indicators of development.
5. Being female, older, living in an urban environment, higher educational qualifications of the respondent and higher economic status of the family are factors that positively influence most forms of voluntarism.
6. Political and voluntary activities are relatively strongly associated positively with each other.

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5.3 Social exclusion

5.3.1 Introduction

Social exclusion is a multi-dimensional concept (Aasland and Fløtten, 2001) that is subject to varying definitions (Atkinson et al., 2002), partly because it overlaps with certain other concepts. A single definition and conceptualisation are therefore not just impossible, but also undesirable (Christian and Abrams, 2007: xiii). Although some authors point out the deficiencies in the term social exclusion (e.g. Renner, 2007), the expression has held out for several decades in scientific, professional and political discourse.

In general, social exclusion is conceived as the involuntary exclusion/separation of individuals and groups from political, economic and social processes, thereby preventing their full participation in the society in which they live (Marlier and Atkinson, 2010). This is a concept whose

opposite is “social inclusion”, i.e. the extent to which people have access to institutions and are included in relations in society (van der Maesen and Walker, 2005: 12). As Carter says (2003: 24), social exclusion is a dynamic process, since it is linked to modern processes in society that can cause the exclusion of individual groups and individuals whom organisations and institutions then push to the margins (Susinos, 2007; see also Skalli, 2001: 75; Bonell et al., 2003: 871; Abrams et al., 2005: 21).

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In recent years, combating social exclusion has become one of the main objectives of numerous countries in the European Union (Official Journal of the EU/C311, 2009: 8). One of the key reasons for determining its dimensions and measures to reduce it is its direct consequences. As Abrams et al. have found (2005: 14), the consequences of exclusion for the excluded person are in fact always negative (including for instance low self-esteem, feelings of frustration and anger etc.).⁵⁴ It has also been seen that socially excluded youth more frequently use alcohol and are involved in less safe sexual practices (Bonell et al., 2003). Furthermore, in a series of experimental studies, Twenge and Baumeister (2005) report on the uniform negative effect of social exclusion. There are also some noteworthy results of certain experimental research indicating that upon exclusion from society, certain disruptions to the brain are activated, in a similar way to the experiencing of physical pain, and social exclusion also raises the level of stress then perceived by the excluded person (Eisenberger et al., 2003). Regarding an issue such as social exclusion, it is clear, therefore, that many people are calling for an integrated approach to solving this problem, which must be tackled by all of society (Watt, 2001: 175).

5.3.2 Dimensions of social exclusion

While some authors do not include economic status in the dimension of social exclusion (see Aasland and Fløtten, 2001) and are increasingly distancing themselves from a definition based mainly on poverty (Yoshikawa et al., 2008: 80), one of the basic dimensions of social exclusion is nevertheless the individual’s economic situation, which researchers measure with differing indicators (Berman and Phillips, 2000: 334). The concept of social exclusion is in fact separated from the concept of poverty by the fact that exclusion is a broader concept, since apart from

⁵⁴ The exception here (where exclusion does not have negative consequences) is cases where the individual is excluded from undesired situations or groups (ibid.).

anything else, it does not comprise merely objective indicators of a lack, but also subjective assessments of the individual's inclusion in society (Popp and Schels, 2008: 166).

Another important dimension of social exclusion is exclusion from the labour market and/or from education. In "late modernity" (Giddens, 1991), social exclusion has become a fixed feature, while prior to this social *inclusion* was one of the key conditions for the functioning of the capitalist system, (e.g. the inclusion of young people in the education system and labour market), and it was intended for the functioning of the economic system and the disciplining of workers and control over them. In late modernity and with modern forms of production, the economic system has at its disposal a reserve force of workers, for which reason the inclusion of people in economic terms is no longer of such key importance. At the same time, in post-industrial societies the state has increasingly retreated from responsibility and concern for ensuring the inclusion of members of society, and this is increasingly (implicitly or explicitly) left to the market. Indeed this stems from the assumption that the individual should achieve inclusion through his own decisions in the market. The distribution of the benefits that form the basis of social inclusion is not based on the concept of inclusion, nor does it even accord with that concept. Indeed the distribution of wealth and the market are based on maximising profit (the aim is not, therefore, the inclusion of individuals). The reduced scope of the welfare state has merely diminished further the possibilities for deprived and marginalised groups participating in the market (Lister, 1990; taken from France and Wiles, 1997: 66). For this reason exclusion from the labour market and from education is a key dimension of social exclusion. Moreover, as Aasland and Fløtten point out, in numerous studies such exclusion is in fact the sole proxy of social exclusion (Aasland and Fløtten, 2001: 1030; France and Wiles, 1997).

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Social networks, especially within the framework of family, friends and peers, are another key component of social inclusion (Shildrick and MacDonald, 2008: 48; Aasland and Fløtten, 2001). Strong social ties can extenuate exclusion in other areas, and thereby contribute to the individual's subjective perception of not feeling excluded (ibid.). Given the common difficulties and life situations that excluded people face, it is no surprise that individuals develop various subcultures within which they can get to grips with their status (Terpstra, 2006). Exclusion from political and civil society activity is the last one of the main dimensions of

social exclusion. As we have seen in the sub-chapters Political participation and Voluntary activities, there are certain factors that significantly influence political and civil society participation, and below we focus our interest on whether exclusion is affected by factors similar to those that affect both forms of participation.

5.3.3 Indicators of social exclusion

250 Social exclusion is therefore a process where individuals or groups encounter a combination of mutually associated problems that are also mutually reinforcing (SEU, 2005; taken from Macpherson, 2008: 364). One of the key features of social exclusion therefore is its cumulative quality, for which reason escaping it is especially difficult for the individual (Gaetz, 2004: 428). On the other hand, it is also significant that the fundamental components of social exclusion are not necessarily linked. So for example those that endure poor living conditions or are materially deprived, do not at the same necessarily have a feeling of lack, of exclusion from society, impotence and lack of influence (Popp and Schels, 2008: 167; Aasland and Fløtten, 2001: 1042), although of course it is *more likely* that all of these things coincide in the individual. In view of the above theoretical basis, in this analysis we have put together a combined scale of social exclusion, and below we set out the indicators that in our research signify the individual dimensions of social exclusion.⁵⁵

We analysed the dimension of exclusion from *the labour market and education process* by asking respondents about their predominant work activity. Those that defined themselves as “unemployed” or as “students on hiatus” were classed as excluded (given the value of 2), and all others as not excluded (given the value of 0).

The dimension of being *socially connected* was studied through a greater number of indicators. Connection associated with the family included these statements, where respondents demonstrate their expectations regarding parental help (1 = I do not expect parental help, 3 = parents

55 Some authors incorporate other components into the conceptualisation of social exclusion. Thus for instance MacDonald (2006: 380) includes frequent absence from class (where this involves young people enrolled in education), parental separation and low level of education as the most common forms of exclusion, and delinquency and long-term drug use as the most problematic forms of social exclusion. Some authors also place within it a range of other variables: e.g. a negative attitude to school (Bonell et al., 2003). This illustrates how diverse the conceptualisation of social exclusion can be.

will help a lot): “in job seeking”, “in sorting out my housing needs”, “in childcare”, and “through money, gifts etc.”. Moreover, here we also included indicators of the quality of the relationships between young people and their parents (0 = no contacts, 5 = we get along very well): “I get along with my mother” and “I get along with my father” and the statements (1 = not true for me at all, 5 = very true for me): “I have the feeling that my parents love me a lot” and “At home I don’t/didn’t feel very good”⁵⁶. We looked at the level of exclusion via communication with others and through the respondent’s confronting of problems using indicators that measure the respondent’s response when he/she encounters major difficulties (1 = I never react in that way, 4 = I always react in that way): “I talk to my parents or other adults”, “I confide in a friend and ask them to help” and “I step back, because I don’t think I can change anything”⁵⁷. All of these indicators were added up on a scale which we dichotomised by the criterion of the average: those who scored an above-average value on the scale of social connection were ranked as not excluded (we gave them the value 0), and those that scored a below-average value were ranked as excluded (with a value of 1).

We analysed exclusion from political and social participation using the indicator of political participation, which we addressed in greater detail in the first part of the chapter Participation.⁵⁸ For this reason we formulated a single variable, and once again classed respondents in two groups: below-average and above-average participation, and thereby obtained the dichotomous variable “political exclusion”. We then studied the inclusion of young people in voluntary associations and organisations: those who are members of at least one association⁵⁹ were given the value of 0 (not excluded), while those who are not members of any society were given the value of 1 (excluded). We then added up both dichotomised variables⁶⁰ and divided up respondents into politically and socially not excluded (value of 0) and excluded (value of 1).

56 We recorded this statement in the opposite direction.

57 We recorded this statement in the opposite direction.

58 As has already been indicated, based on the results of factor analysis of 12 indicators of participation we formulated two composite variables, by calculating for each respondent the arithmetic mean of responses for all indicators. *Then we again performed a factor analysis of the second order on the two composite variables, where it was shown that the two factors form a single latent dimension, which we have called “political participation”.*

59 Associations that are not political parties or religious organisations.

60 We therefore added up political exclusion and civil society exclusion.

The final dimension we studied was the indirect indicator of economic status, specifically through the variable of the respondent's assessment of the "housing conditions of the premises where he/she spends most time", which again we dichotomised (0 = at least good conditions, 1 = less than good conditions). We decided to incorporate this variable into the economic dimension of exclusion and not other indicators of economic status for the following reasons: 1) frequency analysis of responses of the respondent's assessment of "economic status of the family" was shown to have low variability; 2) the indicator of the respondent's "total net monthly income in cash" could not be used in analysing exclusion, since it does not afford a direct insight into the scope of exclusion (a relatively low monthly income (e.g. 100 euros) does not necessarily mean that the respondent is economically deprived/that he/she lives in poverty, since for example his parents might be covering all his/her material needs); 3) of both aforementioned indicators were classed as a variable of social exclusion, it would make less sense methodologically to make any further analysis of the correlation with economic status; 4) the analysed population of young people is very diverse (in age and otherwise), so the indicator "economic status of family" does not necessarily show the economic status of the young respondent. Additional reasons for using the indicator "assessment of housing" to show economic status were: 5) the indicator brings together the economic dimension and a spatial assessment of the quality of residence (spatial exclusion) and 6) this was seen to be associated statistically with the respondent's self-assessment of the economic status of the family ($r = 0.160$; $p < 0.001$).

To sum up: social exclusion is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, which in this study we conceptualise as: low economic and housing status, exclusion from the labour market or from education, below-average participation in political activities and voluntary societies, and exclusion from social networks. We then divided respondents in each of these four dimensions (scales) into an upper and lower group (below-average inclusion and above-average inclusion), and then added up the values. Although we discuss four dimensions, 5 is the highest value that a respondent can score (exclusion from the labour market or from the education system was weighted with the value 2, in view of the primary importance of such exclusion).⁶¹ In other words, those respondents who

61 Weighting of dimensions in studying social exclusion is one of the difficulties that researchers face. The question that arises is whether to accord equal weight to the individual dimensions of exclusion. Exclusion from the labour market (unemployment) and from the education process (students on hiatus) are for instance a key dimension of social

are excluded in all four dimensions of social exclusion score the highest points (5). We only counted as socially excluded those that “collected” 3 points out of 5 on the scale of exclusion, which is in line with other researchers that define as excluded those that are excluded in certain but not necessarily all the dimensions of social exclusion (Aasland and Fløtten, 2001).

In the methodological sense, social exclusion does not involve a typical scale that would necessarily be seen to be internally consistent or one-dimensional. Indeed we were interested primarily in just the individual’s cumulative value in four indicators of social exclusion (see Aasland and Fløtten, 2001). In our sample, too, out of five coefficients of association, only two are statistically significant: political exclusion is associated with exclusion from the labour market or from education ($r = 0.071$; $p < 0.05$), while the dimension of social connection is associated with economic/housing exclusion ($r = 0.135$; $p < 0.001$).

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The dimensions of social exclusion have no strong mutual association.

5.3.4 Socio-demographic factors of social exclusion

Below we analyse the influence of socio-demographic variables on social exclusion, and in presenting the findings we again limit ourselves to statistically significant and especially important correlations.

The first important finding in our study is that in Slovenia, according to our criteria, 10.4 percent of young people are socially excluded (more than one tenth of respondents therefore score a value of 3 or more on a scale of 0 to 5). Our analysis has also shown that the probability of young people’s social exclusion is increased by the following socio-

exclusion and in this respect we accorded them greater weight than the others. On the other hand some researchers take the view that such weighting can potentially reduce the transparency and interpretive quality of the scale of exclusion (Robson et al., 1991; taken from Aasland and Fløtten, 2001: 1049). For the purposes of this analysis we nevertheless decided to weight exclusion from the labour market (or from the education process) with a value of 2, meaning that it has double the weight of other dimensions.

demographic factors: greater age ($r = 0.066$; $p < 0.05$), low education of father ($r = -0.110$; $p < 0.001$) and mother ($r = -0.097$; $p < 0.001$), and also low monthly income ($r = -0.063$; $p < 0.05$), lower subjectively assessed material standing of the respondent's family ($r = -0.073$; $p < 0.05$) and growing up (but not also current residence) in an urban environment ($r = 0.073$; $p < 0.01$). Other socio-demographic factors are not associated with social exclusion among young Slovenians. That social exclusion among Slovenian youth stems primarily and specifically from the socio-economic status of the respondent's family is an especially salient issue. Precisely this aspect of exclusion is cited as one of the goals of the European Council's Resolution on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field: the goal is to prevent the social exclusion of young people or prevent the "transfer of exclusion from generation to generation" (Official Journal of the EU/C311, 2009: 8).

The socio-demographic factors that raise the probability of social exclusion of young people are: higher age, lower education of father and mother, low monthly income, worse material standing of the respondent's family and growing up in an urban environment. Socially excluded youth therefore come mainly from families with lower socio-economic status, in which authoritarian socialisation patterns in particular are dominant.

5.3.5 Psychosocial correlates of social exclusion

Social exclusion has also been seen to be linked to psychosocial variables. It is positively associated with alienation ($r = 0.320$; $p < 0.001$), narcissistic opportunism ($r = 0.205$; $p < 0.001$), deviance ($r = 0.153$; $p < 0.001$), social intolerance ($r = 0.123$; $p < 0.001$) and anomie ($r = 0.102$; $p < 0.001$).

Socially excluded persons are also less oriented to the future ($r = -0.141$; $p < 0.001$) and more to the present (they are therefore fatalists; $r = 0.061$; $p < 0.05$). Equally, they are significantly less satisfied with their lives ($r = -0.188$; $p < 0.001$), and with their health ($r = -0.092$; $p < 0.001$) (this is especially important, since a self-assessment of one's own state of health in numerous longitudinal studies has turned out to be a significant predictor of the actual mortality rate; see for instance Idler and Benyamini, 1997). The findings also show that socialisation (upbringing) styles are also strongly associated with social exclusion. Authoritative (democratic) socialisation lowers the probability of social exclusion ($r = -0.126$; $p < 0.001$), while authoritarian socialisation increases it ($r = 0.098$; $p < 0.001$). The feelings on being excluded from education and the labour market are described thus by two of our interviewees:

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"Then I stayed at home for a year. I had a year to myself, I studied German, although I failed again. I went and registered at the Employment Agency, I took a computer course and once more started doing various things, I learned runes, divination from cards... that year was hard, I was at home all the time and missed school... I didn't know what was going on, I was totally excluded from any action. Terrible."

(Natalija, 25, young religious believer)

"The main motive young people have for finding a job is security... when you're unemployed, you're depressed, and also isolated, since you spend most of the time alone at home. If you have a job, society considers you 'normal'."

(Matjaž, 29, young unemployed)

Social exclusion is negatively associated with numerous indicators of young people's psychosocial development and physical health.

5.3.6 Key findings

The key findings from this chapter, together with recommendations for the implementation of youth policy, may be condensed into the following points:

1. The dimensions of social exclusion have no very strong mutual association.
2. The socio-demographic factors that raise the probability of social exclusion of young people are: higher age, lower education of father and mother, low monthly income, worse material standing of the respondent's family and growing up in an urban environment. Socially excluded youth therefore come mainly from families with lower socio-economic status, in which authoritarian socialisation patterns in particular are dominant.
3. Social exclusion is negatively associated with numerous indicators of young people's psychosocial development and physical health.

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6 Creativity, culture and leisure

6.1 Introduction

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Young people devote a significant portion of their time to leisure activities, in other words to activities that are not part of their educational, job or family obligations (Dumazedier, 1967). According to some data, young people who are involved in the education system spend more than 40 percent of their time in leisure activities, i.e. outside the activities that form part of their studies or outside the obligatory curriculum (Timmer et al., 1985), while some more recent research indicates that leisure time occupies 22 percent of the entire time in the life of an individual, and paid work and education take up a total of just 13 percent of the individual's life (in first place comes sleep with 35 percent; see Roberts, 2006: 11).⁶² The *HETUS* (2007) study of the use of time shows that Slovenians have at their disposal just under five hours a day for leisure pursuits.⁶³ Meanwhile a study of how young people in Slovenia spend their free time, conducted on a sample of 8th grade primary school and 3rd year secondary school pupils (Kralj et al., 2007), showed that 40 percent of adolescents have more than three hours of free time every day.⁶⁴ Given the significant proportion of leisure time, it is therefore no surprise to see the interest of researchers in studying leisure pursuits, although this is only one of the reasons. Another reason is that youth, and especially adolescence, is a period of the individual forming his identity, his own individuality, and at the same time it is a time of adaptation of young

62 A study conducted on a representative sample of Britons aged over 15.

63 In addition to free time (on average 4 hours and 59 minutes (4:59) of time spent daily), the following were also categorised: Personal hygiene (along with sleeping, 10:31); work (3:17), studying (0:17), household tasks and caring for family (3:49) and travelling (daily mobility, 1:06).

64 Own calculation.

people to wider social changes. In this period of life, leisure plays an especially important role (Róiste and Dinneen, 2005; Roberts, 2006; Furlong and Cartmel, 2007; Wilson et al., 2010). More precisely, through leisure activities adolescents (can) develop satisfying social and interpersonal relationships that contribute significantly to their psychological and personal wellbeing (Salend, 1999; Abbott-Chapman and Robertson, 2009). Young people spend their free time in various contexts (socialising with peers, sports, time with the family, following the media and using ICT, organised activities, cultural and arts activities, sports and so forth), that can thus influence their development significantly (Larson, 2000). The statements from our interviewees illustrate how young people regard leisure time:

“...Free time for me is when I don’t have to answer to anyone and I can stare into space. When I engage in my thoughts and music, that’s real spare time...”

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

“The time when you should take care of your mental and physical health with activities you think are right for them. For me, it’s music, sport and hanging out with friends, reading, TV...”

(Matjaž, 29, young unemployed)

In general numerous authors have found that it is primarily structured leisure activities that are a positive factor for young people’s psychosocial development (Holland and Andre, 1987; Young et al., 1997). We count as structured activities those where young people cooperate in some system involving limitations, rules and objectives, frequently under the supervision or organisation of adults (Larson, 2000). The majority of studies show that it is primarily within the school system (at-school, after-school or special interest) that leisure activities are associated as a rule with numerous dimensions of positive adolescent development (McNeal, 1995; O’Brien and Rollefson, 1995; Feldman and Matjasko, 2005). In other words, pupils who take part in school special interest activities have a higher average score, their risk of not completing school education is lower, they are absent from lessons less frequently, their level of school deviance is lower and this kind of primary school activity is also a positive indicator of continued education at university level (Marsh, 1992; Finn, 1993; McNeal, 1995; Mahoney and Cairns, 1997; Yin

et al., 1999; Prelow and Loukas, 2003; Zaff et al., 2003; Chambers and Schreiber, 2004; Dunn et al., 2004; Darling, 2005).

Extramural structured (organised) free time activities (in other words activities that are pursued under the supervision of adults, frequently in order to attain some *instrumental goals*) are also associated with the more adjusted development of adolescents (see Beauvais, 2001; Busseri and Rose-Krasnor, 2009; Watts and Caldwell, 2008), while longitudinal research shows that the scope (diversity) and intensity (frequency) of participation in structured pursuits during adolescence influence the later development of adolescents (Denault and Poulin, 2009). On the other hand passive, unstructured activities (where adolescents are not striving to attain any instrumental goals, such as socialising with peers, watching television, listening to music etc.) are generally linked to the less favourable psychosocial development and behaviour of young people (e.g.

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Osgood et al., 1996; Vazsonyi et al., 2002; Caldwell and Smith, 2006; McHale, 2008; Bohnert et al., 2009). Of course passive leisure activities are not in themselves problematic, but the problem is when such activities become excessive or dominant, or even the only way of spending free time (Ule, 2000: 68).

Authors offer two fundamental reasons why unstructured activities are generally associated with less favourable adolescent development. On the one hand there is the zero sum explanation, where any kind of free time spent in unorganised, unstructured activities takes away from the time that could be devoted to structured activities (Coleman, 1961; Camp, 1990; Marsh, 1992). Yet on the other hand the theory of *individual development* indicates that unstructured, passive leisure activities can also positively influence psychosocial adolescent development, since through them they express and build their talents, interests and identity.

In this respect Larson and Verma see various contexts involving the leisure pursuits of young people as *experiential niches* that tend to offer the adolescent a learning environment with special rules, scenarios and motivational experiences (Larson and Verma, 1999). Time spent in individually selected activities, therefore, can contribute significantly to the development of adolescents, since through them the adolescent can build his own competence and discover new social roles (Eccles, 1999). Also Ule (2000: 62-63) sees in reduced supervision of adolescents (which is of course seen primarily in unstructured and passive activities) an impor-

tant dimension of free time; apart from the fact that the individual can regenerate in free time (regeneration is needed owing to the losses arising in other life environments), and in free time he can resolve conflicts in the social sphere, while at the same time it facilitates socialising and strengthening and maintenance of social networks that are a key support in life for adolescents. Research also shows that for young people, free time means chiefly time for relaxation, socialising with friends and for enjoyment (Schiano et al., 2007). There are some interesting (and not surprising) empirical studies confirming that unstructured leisure activities of young people for instance serve to reduce their experiencing of stress (Kozar et al., 2006).

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Some activities and contexts, however, cannot be brought into the dichotomy of structured/unstructured free time. These include for instance creativity and cultural activity, which can be pursued in free time in a range of variously (un)structured forms (for which reason some authors label them *unstructured active* activities, see Bohnert et al., 2009). Although the conceptualisation of *creativity*, like most terms in social science, can involve several meanings, it is usually imaginative and expressive works, products and activities that are deemed to be creative. *Expressive* refers to those activities through which the individual shares with others part of his ego and part of his personality (Sefton-Green: 2000, 8; taken from Lange and Ito, 2010: 245).

Although the traditional channels of creativity and cultural activity for young people are still present today (such as making music, singing and dancing, fine art, going to the cinema, museums, the theatre, exhibitions and so forth), they are no longer necessarily predominant. Creativity and cultural activity can therefore no longer be studied only through conventional forms of participation, and we need to grasp the diversity and even eclecticism of cultural production and creativity (Pronovost, 2002), which especially among young people is increasingly linked to information and communication technology (ICT), in particular the web. Websites such as *Youtube*, *Facebook* and *MySpace*, activities such as blogging and writing comments on websites, and “living” in virtual worlds (such as *Second Life*), in which young people communicate, cooperate and “live”, have become important ways in which they express their creativity and present it to others and the world (Lange and Ito, 2010; see also Buckingham, 2008).⁶⁵

⁶⁵ For more on the use of ICT among young people see the chapter Virtualisation of everyday life.

6.2 Changes in the frequency of young people's everyday and leisure activities

Previous youth research in Slovenia has shown for the most part that in their free time, young people most frequently socialise with friends and partners, listen to music, watch television, pursue sports and spend time on the computer (Ule and Miheljak, 1995: 81, 206; Nastran Ule, 1996: 230; Ule, 1996: 80; Ule and Kuhar, 2002: 69; Bajzek, 2003: 161; Gril, 2004: 15,16, 19; see also Škvor and Zupan, 2008; Fištravec, 2009; Kuhar, 2007; 2009, Kirbiš, 2010b). The conclusion of researchers regarding young people's free time is unanimous: young people in Slovenia are involved predominantly with passive activities, although young people relatively frequently pursue sports.

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Despite the important findings to date regarding patterns of how Slovenian youth spend their free time, youth studies to date nevertheless have in particular two drawbacks: to begin with, they were conducted on different age (and geographic) samples of young people. Now we have the first opportunity to compare two representative samples of Slovenian youth in the 15-29 age group.⁶⁶ Secondly, past research on representative samples of young people generally did not include an analysis of the association between leisure pursuits and the psychosocial development of adolescents. The exceptions here are for instance Ule, who points out that there are value correlations of leisure activities (those with an authoritarian and traditional orientation, for instance, participate more in family activities), and the research of Flere et al. (2010), in which for a sample of Slovenian secondary school pupils the highest positive association was seen to be between structured leisure activities and academic success. More precisely – 1) within-school, organised and artistic activities; 2) passive activities; 3) family and religious activities; 4) use of electronic mass media and 5) sports activities – all of them turned out to be positively associated with academic success, even with the control of socio-demographic variables, while there was a negative association with academic success only in the sixth dimension of leisure pursuits, that is, socialising with peers (see Kirbiš, 2010).

Before analysing the correlates of young people's leisure activities, let us first look at the frequency of leisure activities among Slovenian youth

66 A representative sample of Slovenian youth was available in the study by Ule and Vrcan (1986), but we are interested primarily in comparing youth from the post-independence period.

in the past decade. In this study we analyse an area of activities that is broader than free time (activities that in other words are not necessarily leisure, but at the same time they do not fall within education and work, so we call them everyday or “routine” activities, and young people (more or less) frequently spend their days in them.⁶⁷ Routine activities are therefore more or less repetitive activities in the lives of adolescents (see Cohen et al., 1979; Vazsonyi et al., 2002).

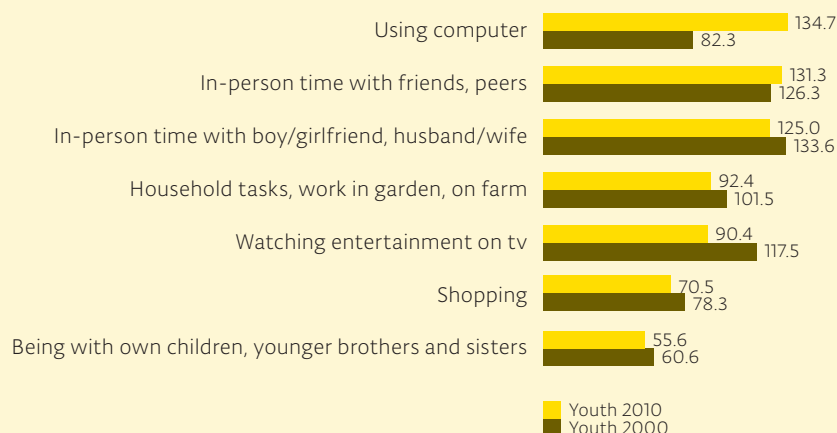
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In the Youth 2000 survey, the frequency of everyday/routine activities was measured slightly differently (1 = never, 5 = very often) compared to Youth 2010 (1 = never, 7 = every day), for which reason a comparison in the absolute sense is not possible.⁶⁸ Equally, in our Youth 2010 study, we analysed a broader selection of everyday activities. Before comparing the frequency of everyday activities in both years, we first compared longitudinally those indicators of activity that were included in the two surveys. We performed this by calculating for both periods the average of all seven activities together, then took this average as the basis for calculating the indices with a constant base (average of all = 100) for each of the seven activities. In this way for both years we obtained values above 100 for activities that were above the average in individual years, while values below 100 signify activities that were below the overall average. We compare the index for both 2000 and 2010 for each of the seven everyday activities in the graph below.

67 Examples of such routine activities are household work and spending time with brothers/sisters.

68 We opted for a change to the instrument of frequency of leisure activities in Youth 2010, because we wished to obtain more precise data on their frequency. We were interested in whether young people pursue the individual activities “never”, “less than once a month”, “1 to 3 times a month”, “1 to 3 times a week”, “4 to 6 times a week” or “every day”.

Graph 75: Everyday activities of young people (comparison of individual activity with the average of all seven activities), Youth 2010 and Youth 2000



SOURCES: Youth 2000 and Youth 2010

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The above graph shows that of the seven activities, in frequency the use of a computer was far above the average in 2010, while in 2000 it was still well below the overall average for the analysed activities.⁶⁹ Involvement with computers has therefore advanced most in terms of frequency (by a value of +52.4). Personal socialising with friends and peers has not grown much (+5.0), while socialising with a partner has fallen slightly (−8.7). Slightly below-average values out of all seven activities were seen in household chores (work in the garden, on the farm) and watching entertainment programmes on TV. Watching television is the only activity where a somewhat greater decline can be observed (−27.1)⁷⁰ The frequency of shopping and involvement with children has also declined slightly.

69 Since this index depends on the average of all activities, this still does not mean, as we shall see below, that young people most frequently spend time on the computer.

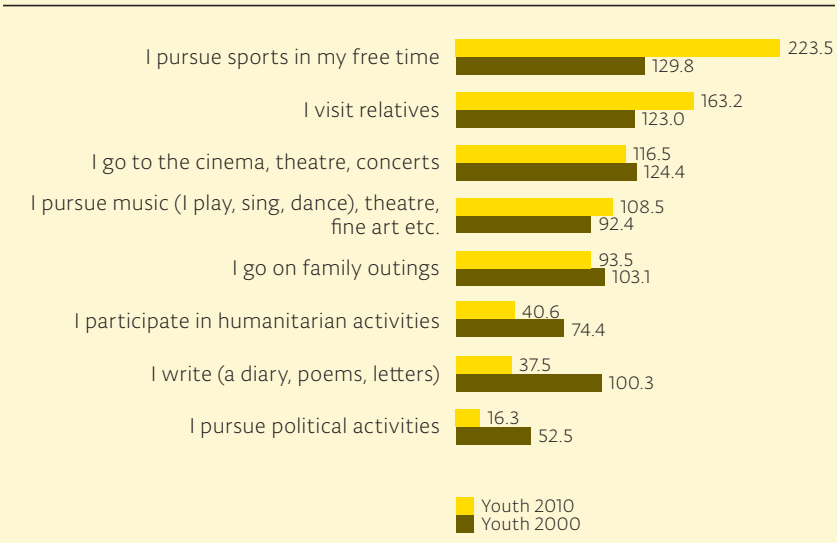
70 This decline is actually a little smaller than the graph shows, since the indicator in Youth 2010 measured “watching entertainment content on TV”, and the indicator in Youth 2000 measured “watching TV” (in other words it measured entertainment and informational content). Yet since young people watch informational content much less frequently than entertainment, it makes sense to expect that the actual value of total TV watching has fallen by less than the stated value of the index (− 27.1).

Over the past decade, in everyday activities there has been a marked increase in the time young people devote to computer use, while the time devoted to watching television and doing household chores has declined.

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The graph below shows free time activities (since this involves a measuring instrument set up differently, the two graphs and indices are not directly mutually comparable).

Graph 76: Free-time activities of young people (comparison of individual activity with the average of all seven activities), Youth 2010 and Youth 2000



SOURCES: Youth 2000 and Youth 2010

Of eight free-time⁷¹ activities, in terms of frequency the biggest growth was in sports activity (+93.7) and in visiting relatives (+40.2), which occupy the top two places. The frequency of family outings is below the average, while the biggest decline has been in keeping a diary (poems and letters, -62.9), involvement in political activities (-36.2) and participating in humanitarian activities (-33.8). Both indicators of young people's cultural participation are above the average. The first of the two indicators – attending film shows (theatre and concerts), which represents *receptive* cultural participation (van Wel and Linssen, 1996) – fell slightly in 2010 (-7.9), while involvement in music and other creative activities (acting, singing, dance, theatre, fine art etc., in other words *active* cultural participation) grew somewhat (+16.1) and are now above the average of the other activities. On the other hand, writing (diary, poems, letters), which we can place conditionally in *active* cultural participation (van Wel and Linssen, 1996), has declined sharply (from an index of 100.3 to 37.5). Such a decline in writing (diary, poems, letters) makes sense when we realise that a major motivation for cultural participation is socialising with friends and family (in addition to emotional response/satisfying the acquisition of new knowledge; see Ostrower, 2005), something that writing, which is for the most part an individual activity, does not enable, and such individual writing is no doubt less frequent owing to the more common use of ICT.

It should also be pointed out that long-term trends of increasing frequency of sports involvement and growth in cultural activities (among Slovenian youth primarily *active* cultural participation) can be seen in certain other post-transition countries (Bouillet et al., 2008), and in others still, these trends are reversed and indicate a general decline in cultural participation (e.g. Roberts et al., 2009). The observed frequent sports activities of young people is encouraging and is no surprise, since according to European youth survey data, of those young Slovenians that are members of voluntary societies and organisations, a full 40 percent are members of sports societies (Flash Eurobarometer 202, 2007: 24). Our findings also point to similarities in changes to the patterns of spending leisure time with young people from other post-transition countries (Bouillet et al., 2008).

71 We conceptualise them as “free-time” activities since we asked respondents about their frequency in the time left to them after they have fulfilled their work, school and household obligations.

Compared to 2000, in 2010 young people were devoting less time to keeping up with cultural and artistic content, but significantly more time to cultural and artistic creativity.

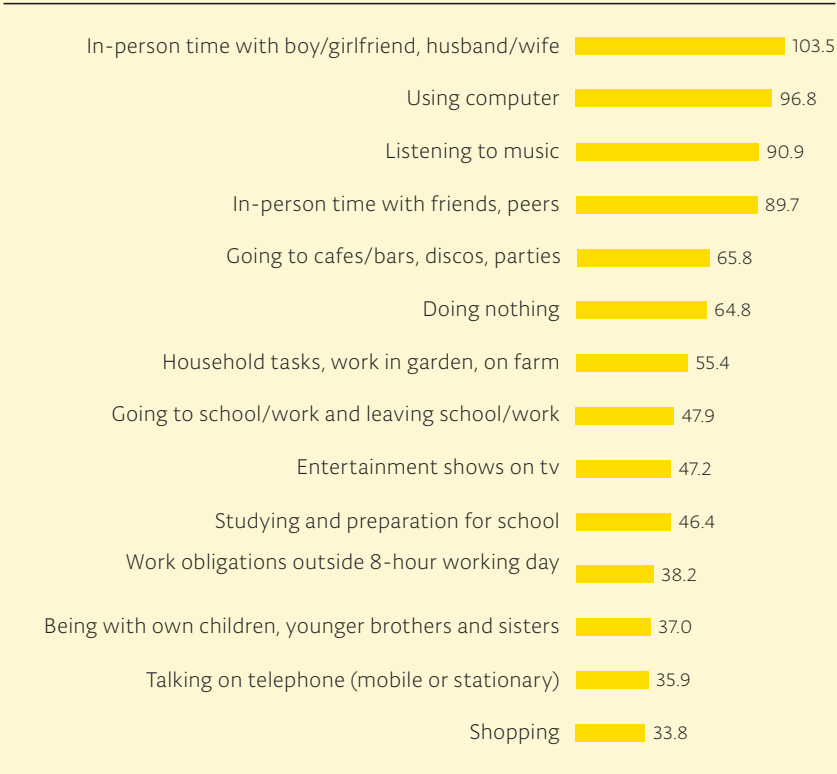
6.3 Frequency of young people's everyday activities

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In analyses to date we studied the trends in frequency of routine and free-time activities, and now we sought to find out how many minutes a day young people spend on a given activity. This latest analysis includes activities that we have not yet analysed above (because they were not covered in the Youth 2000 survey). The graph below shows the average value of time young people spend on routine activities (in minutes).⁷²

⁷² We made the methodological conversion to minutes by recoding all the intervals in their mean value: the intervals of frequency of activities selected by respondents were: 0 = nothing/I never do it, 1 = less than 15 minutes (recoded as 7.5 minutes), 2 = 15–30 minutes (recoded as 22.5 minutes), 3 = 30 minutes to 1 hour (recoded as 45 minutes), 4 = 1–2 hours (recoded as 90 minutes), 5 = 2–3 hours (recoded as 150 minutes), 6 = more than 3 hours (recoded as 210 minutes). The average values in minutes were calculated from the above recoded values.

Graph 77: Everyday activities of young people (in minutes), Youth 2010



SOURCE: Youth 2010

On average young people spend 104 minutes a day with their partner, 97 minutes at the computer, 91 minutes listening to music and 90 minutes socialising with friends and peers. They spend just over an hour each day in cafes, bars or discos and parties, and around the same amount of time just doing nothing. They watch entertainment programmes on television for 47 minutes a day, and around the same amount of time getting ready for school. At the bottom of the scale in time spent are talking on the phone (36 minutes) and shopping (34 minutes a day).

Of course it should be realised here that the structure of these activities can differ greatly from person to person. This is also borne out by the responses of our interviewees:

"It means being carefree, doing what you like doing... some people sit at the computer and that's their free time. I don't have a computer, I prefer to chat with my friends or go to the drama workshop... At home I help, I work in the garden with Mum, I hang out with friends, with my boyfriend when we can find the time, with my family, on Sundays lunch with Grandma..."

(Špela, 25, young waitress)

"I read the news, go on the internet, watch something on TV. I try to think as little as possible about other things, bills and money."

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(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

"I spend most of my time with Jernej ... walks, riding bikes... reading, TV, films, music, I take care of all the animals, do jigsaw puzzles and so on."

(Helena, 18, excellent grammar school student)

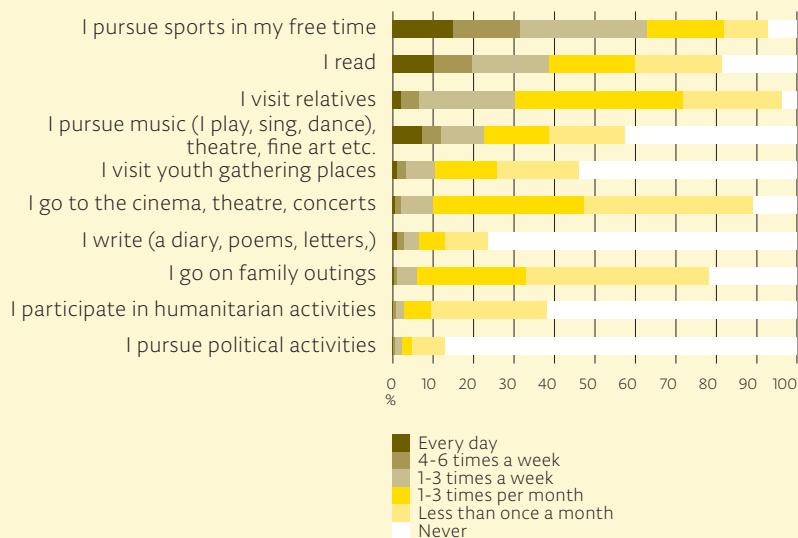
"It used to be the time when I did sports, but now it's the time when I can relax, when I don't think of business, and when I have children, I'll spend it with them."

(Stane, 26, young entrepreneur)

6.4 Frequency of young people's leisure activities

A similar analysis, now of free-time activities, is presented below. Since the coding of variables in the Youth 2010 survey differed from the everyday activities, the graph below shows in sequence the proportions of young people that pursue an individual leisure activity from every day (1) to never (6). The analysis is oriented to the proportion of young people that pursue the individual activity at least once a week.

Graph 78: Free-time activities of young people, Youth 2010



SOURCE: Youth 2010

The results show that within the surveyed ten activities, the greatest proportion of young people – just under two thirds – is involved at least once a week with sports, while just under 31 percent pursue sports at least four times a week in their spare time. In terms of frequency this is followed by reading (just over 19 percent of young people read at least four times a week in their free time), visiting relatives and pursuing music. The four activities in which young people are least active in their free time and for which more than half of young people say that they “never” pursue, are: visiting youth gathering places (54.1 percent never visit youth gathering places), participating in humanitarian activities, writing a diary (poems, letters) and getting involved in political activities (87.1 percent of young people are never politically active in their free time).

The findings indicate, therefore, that young people are most frequently active in sports (just 7.1 percent are never involved in sports), and they also read quite frequently. As has been noted in the chapter Participation, young people are not interested in being politically active (87.1 percent “never” get involved in politics). Given the identified low level of involve-

ment in politics, we may conclude that respondents have understood it in its traditional, institutional, party form, which, as we have seen, is very unpopular among young people.

We can summarise that young people chiefly spend their free time socialising with partners and friends (in person and virtually), while also taking care of their physical wellbeing and also being active creatively and artistically.

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In leisure activities over the past decade there has been a marked growth in young people's involvement in sports, and in 2010 (alongside being at the computer and socialising with peers and partners) this was the most frequent leisure activity, while there has been a pronounced decline in free-time involvement in politics, which is the least frequent leisure activity.

6.5 Dimensions of young people's activities

Before analysing factors and correlates of everyday and free-time activities, it makes sense to look at which everyday and free-time activities comprise common dimensions. Previous studies of secondary school youth have already pointed to the existence of dimensions of free-time activities among Slovenian youth (e.g. Ule and Miheljak, 1995; Kirbiš, 2010), while the dimensions of free time are also indicated in other research (Roberts et al., 2009; Sweeting and West, 2003). Below we present the factor structure of young people's activities in the Youth 2010 survey (despite a different coding of frequency, we analysed everyday and free-time activities together).⁷³

⁷³ We excluded from further analysis three variables: one activity that was not directly associated with the choice of young people, but depends mainly on available transport

The factor analysis (table below) showed that young people's activities can be categorised into six dimensions, which we have named: *socio-cultural activism*, *being socially active* (socialising with friends and peers, going to parties, discos etc.), *family activities*, *computer activity*, *sports activities* and *television*. If we discuss the apparent dimensions in the context of the aforementioned dichotomy of structured/unstructured (organised/non-organised) activities, we can class family and sports activities as structured (and conditionally also socio-cultural activism). On the other hand *social activities* and *computer activities* in particular can be classed as unstructured forms of spending time.⁷⁴ The factor of *television* is in the intervening field because it also includes visiting relatives (see table below), which generally takes place under the supervision (or in the company) of parents or other adults (those, therefore that often visit relatives also often watch entertainment programmes on television). In any event, given the aforementioned studies to date, we may anticipate family and sport activities being mainly positively associated with indicators of the young person's psychosocial development, and in particular social activities with less favourable development of the individual.

infrastructure, i.e. the time spent on transport to school or work, and two activities that exclude a large number of young people in the sample: 1) "studying and preparation for school" – this is never pursued by 394 young people (31.6 percent of respondents) and 2) "work obligations outside the 8-hour working day or additional contract work" – this is never done by 652 young people (52.4 percent of respondents).

⁷⁴ Such a classification is ideally typical in Weber's meaning of the word, since it is clear that there may also be exceptions that depend on each specific form of the activity.

Table 14: Factor structure of everyday and free-time youth activities, Youth 2010

	Factor					
	Socio-cultural activism	Social activities	Family activities	Computer activities	Sports activities	Television
I get involved in political activities	0.771					
I participate in humanitarian activities	0.756					
I write (diary, poems, letters)	0.684					
I go to youth gathering places	0.523	-0.307				
I pursue music (play, sing, dance), theatre, fine art etc.	0.429		0.301			
I go to film shows, the theatre and concerts	0.403				0.394	
I go to cafes and bars, discos and parties		0.753				
Personal socialising with friends and peers		0.660				
Shopping		0.576	0.392			
Talking on the telephone (mobile or stationary)		0.529				
Doing nothing		0.503				
Household chores, work in the garden, on the farm			0.683			
Being with one's own children, younger brothers and sisters			0.636			
Spending time in person with boyfriend/girlfriend, husband/wife		0.313	0.610			-0.363
Going on family outings			0.473			
Listening to music				0.712		
Computer activity				0.659		
I read				0.427		
In my free time i get involved in sports					0.823	
I visit relatives					0.345	0.699
Watching tv entertainment						0.645

SOURCE: Youth 2010

Based on the results of factor analysis, six factors were formulated through the process of factor scores. Below we first analyse the psychosocial and socio-demographic correlates of these six variables of the newly created factors (in other words the associations between six factor values and psychosocial constructs), and then socio-demographic factors that

affect the frequency of young people's activities. In presenting the results, for accessibility we will limit ourselves to just statistically significant and interesting correlations.

6.6 Correlates of young people's activities

The correlation analysis showed that free-time activities are associated in various directions and intensities with indicators of the young person's psychosocial development (table below). More precisely, socio-cultural activism and social activities are positively correlated with alienation, while family and sports activities are negatively associated with alienation.

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Table 15: Correlates of everyday and leisure activities of young people, Youth 2010

	Socio-cultural activism (F1)	Social activities (F2)	Family activities (F3)	Computer activities (F4)	Sports activities (F5)	Television (F6)
Authoritarianism	-0.154**	0.067*	0.164**	0.019	-0.032	0.084**
Narcissistic grandiosity	0.094**	0.117**	-0.070*	0.123**	0.079**	-0.007
Narcissistic opportunism	0.122**	0.085**	-0.134**	-0.065*	-0.091**	0.055
Social intolerance	-0.039	-0.017	-0.041	-0.229**	-0.110**	0.061*
Alienation	0.169**	0.058*	-0.084**	0.039	-0.150**	0.033
Anomy	-0.095**	0.127**	0.096**	0.047	-0.068*	0.043
Orientation to the future	-0.105**	-0.068*	0.181**	-0.019	0.129**	0.023
Orientation to the present (hedonistic)	0.078**	0.242**	-0.151**	0.117**	0.068*	0.020
Orientation to the present (fatalistic)	0.053	0.193**	-0.146**	0.103**	-0.008	0.076**
Deviance	0.244**	0.155**	-0.150**	0.057*	-0.022	-0.007
Authoritative socialisation	0.007	-0.013	0.108**	0.046	0.092**	0.066*
Authoritarian socialisation	0.121**	0.062*	-0.028	0.001	-0.088**	-0.066*
Permissive socialisation	0.103**	0.171**	-0.094**	0.037	-0.096**	0.071*
Political participation	0.426**	-0.046	0.004	0.112**	0.088**	-0.028
Civil society participation	0.330**	0.027	0.277**	0.084**	0.188**	0.047

NOTE: *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01.

Furthermore, social activities and family activities are positively associated with anomie, while socio-cultural activism and sports activities are negatively associated with it. Family and sports activities are positively associated with an orientation to the future, while socio-cultural activism and social activities are negatively associated with it. On the other hand as many as five activities are positively associated with a hedonistic and/or fatalistic orientation to the present, while just family activities are negatively associated with both time orientations. Socio-cultural activism, social and computer activities are also positively associated with deviance, while family activities are negatively associated, as one would expect. Although the first two factors – socio-cultural activism and social activities – are associated especially with indicators of the less stable psychosocial development of young people, on the other hand socio-cultural activism is strongly associated with political and civil society activity. Family, sports and computer activities are also positively associated with this. Sports and computer activities are also associated with political activity.

Higher levels of receptive, and especially active, cultural participation are closely linked to higher levels of political and civil society activity.

The results of correlation analysis therefore show that primarily structured activities (family and sports activities) are associated with a better state of psychosocial development of young people, while unstructured (especially social activities with peers, and partly also socio-cultural activism) activities are associated with a less favourable psychosocial state. We were interested in which of the individual activities are most associated with deviance. Its strongest correlates include these activities: going to cafes/bars, discos, parties ($r = 0.177$; $r < 0.001$), doing nothing ($r = 0.164$; $r < 0.001$) and going to youth gathering places ($r = 0.274$; $r < 0.001$). Household work ($r = 0.081$; $r < 0.01$) and spending time with one's partner ($r = 0.079$; $r < 0.001$) are the only activities negatively associated with deviance. To sum up: social activities (spending time with friends and peers, going to cafes/bars and parties etc.) and socio-cultural

activities are mainly associated with indicators of a poor psychosocial state of young people, although at the same time socio-cultural activities are positively associated with the political and civil society activities of young people. Family and sports activities are mostly and more strongly associated with indicators of more adjusted adolescent development.

6.7 Socio-demographic factors of everyday and leisure activities

Correlation analyses have shown that women are more frequently active in four dimensions of everyday and free-time activities: in socio-cultural activism, in social activities, family activities and computer activities⁷⁵ ($0.069 < r < 0.266$; $p < 0.05$). The fact that girls are more frequently at the computer is also indicated by the latest research from some other countries (see e.g. Tufekci et al., 2008), although on an aggregate sample of European youth research (Flash Eurobarometer 202, 2007: 89) it was shown that on average males are more frequently involved in such activities⁷⁶. A more detailed analysis of three activities ranked among computer activities (fourth factor – use of computer, reading and listening to music) showed that there are no gender differences in the indicators of frequency of “computer use” and “listening to music”, while in their spare time women read much more frequently. Our findings show that men more frequently pursue sports ($r = 0.106$; $p < 0.001$), which is in line with the EU trend (Flash Eurobarometer 202, 2007: 89). Lower age is associated with more frequent activities in the context of five dimensions ($0.066 < r < 0.268$; $p < 0.05$), apart from family activities, where as expected, older youth are more frequently active ($r = 0.306$; $p < 0.001$). The education of the father and mother has a positive influence on three dimensions of free-time activities: young people with more educated parents are more frequently socio-culturally active (that socio-economic status contributes to the cultural participation of young people is also shown by other research; e.g. Hanford et al., 1985; van Eijck and Knulst, 2005), while at the same time they are more frequently active with com-

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75 A study of schoolchildren (11, 13 and 15-year-olds) from 2002 showed that boys more frequently used computers and watched television (Currie et al., 2004: 100–103).

76 The difference in findings may result partially from the measuring instrument in the European youth survey, in which young people were asked about the frequency of their “use of the internet and playing computer games” (Youth Barometer, 2007: 89), since specifically computer games are played more frequently by boys (in our sample too; $r = 0.261$; $p < 0.001$).

puters and sports ($0.102 < r < 0.200$; $p < 0.001$), but less frequently with family activities ($0.162 < r < 0.187$; $p < 0.001$). Equally, more time is spent being socio-culturally ($r = 0.084$; $p < 0.01$) active and at the computer ($r = 0.135$; $p < 0.001$) by young people from urban environments (something also indicated by the aggregate data from European youth research, see Flash Eurobarometer 202, 2007: 88), but they participate less frequently in family activities ($r = 0.199$; $p < 0.001$).

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Boys are more active only in sports, with girls more active in other areas. Young people with less educated parents are more rarely socio-culturally active, and are more rarely involved with computers and sports, but more frequently with family activities.

We may therefore conclude that in the past decade there have been some very clear changes to the patterns of how Slovenian young people spend their free time. There is more frequent use of computers (and information and communication technology in general)⁷⁷, but certain other activities (*active* cultural participation and social activities) have also increased somewhat. Of the non-computer activities, there has been a significant increase in sporting pursuits. In terms of spending free time, young people are quite a diverse group, since their activities are determined chiefly by socio-demographic variables, something indicated also by studies in other Western (Erwin, 2008) and post-transition democracies (Bouillet et al., 2008). If the findings of our study indicate that in Slovenia an especially important factor of young people's cultural participation (and other leisure activities) is the socio-economic status of the family (e.g. parents' education), from other research (e.g. Hanford et al., 1985) we know that cultural participation would be greater if it cost less.

Nor is it surprising to observe that among Slovenian youth, too, family and sports activities have generally been seen to be positively associated

⁷⁷ The use of ICT by young people is discussed in greater detail in the chapter Virtualisation of everyday life.

with a range of indicators of more adjusted adolescent development. Similar findings have been produced by studies in other countries, although this does not mean that the associations of these two leisure dimensions (family and sports activities) with adolescent development are always positive. Sports activities, for instance, can be associated with positive but also negative aspects of a young person's development (Wilson et al., 2010; Le Menester and Perkins, 2007). Of course it is also significant that young people are active in the widest possible range of pursuits, since other research also shows that variety and frequency of leisure activities have an influence on numerous positive aspects of the young person's psychosocial development in later life (Denault and Poulin, 2009). As expected, research has also shown that the way young people spend their free time depends mainly on the opportunities (infrastructure) that are available to them in their surroundings (neighbourhood) or community (Morrissey and Werner-Wilson, 2005). It is therefore important to provide young people with adequate support and opportunities for *active* and *structured* leisure pursuits.⁷⁸ Indeed we know that youth programmes can have a stimulative effect on young people perceiving their own responsibility (Wood et al., 2009), while equally, through familiarisation with their children's free-time pursuits and interest in them, parents can contribute to the positive experiencing of free time by young people (although it is important for parents not to "control" the free time of their children or coerce them, since this has contrary and undesired effects; Sharp et al., 2006).

Finally we should mention two other things. Firstly, the fear occasionally arises in the public that structured leisure pursuits can also have negative consequences. More precisely, with an excessive scope and variety of such activities, young people (who meanwhile have plenty of other school, homework or work obligations) can feel increased stress, a lack of "time to unplug" and therefore "burnt out". Although research indicates that the level of anxiety for instance is greater in young people who participate in an exceptionally high number of structured activities (see Melman et al., 2007), these young people do not report any more frequent signs of depression or other (physical) health issues, and the study by Melman and associates of structured activities also covered paid work (and other structured obligations). An analysis of individual (separate) dimensions of activities and three indicators of less adjusted development

⁷⁸ Although as we have said, passive spending of free time has (in addition to certain less desired) numerous positive effects, and such spending of free time does not after all require any complex infrastructural and organisational capacities.

showed that the associations are not statistically significant. Being excessively burdened can therefore be the consequence of an excessive total number and excessive frequency of all structured activities (including paid work), and in this sense, therefore, we cannot speak of the consequences of an excessive leisure burden. The majority of authors also agree that the proportion of “leisure-overloaded” young people is extremely small⁷⁹ and that attention should be focused primarily on those that are not involved in leisure pursuits at all (Mahoney et al., 2006), since as we have seen, structured activities are generally associated with numerous indicators of more adjusted development in young people.

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Secondly, it is important to stress that causes cannot be identified on the basis of our research (whether for instance more deviant youths opt more frequently to spend time with peers – because, for example, such socialising is more conducive to deviant behaviour – or do young people become deviant only after frequently getting together with (deviant) peers). Thus adolescent deviance can be a precursor to or consequence of spending time with peers (see Bohnert et al., 2009). It is also clear that spending time with peers does not in itself signify any threat to the psychosocial development of the young person, since it has numerous positive effects.

6.8 Key findings

The key findings from this chapter, together with recommendations for the implementation of youth policy, may be condensed into the following points:

1. Over the past decade, in everyday activities there has been a marked increase in the time young people devote to computer use, while the time devoted to watching television and doing household chores has declined.
2. Compared to 2000, in 2010 young people were devoting less time to keeping up with cultural and artistic content, but significantly more time to cultural and artistic creativity.
3. In leisure activities over the past decade there has been a marked growth in young people’s involvement in sports, and in 2010

79 According to some data, less than a tenth (see Mahoney et al., 2006).

(alongside being at the computer and socialising with peers and partners) this was the most frequent leisure activity, while there has been a pronounced decline in free-time involvement in politics, which is the least frequent leisure activity.

4. Higher levels of receptive, and especially active, cultural participation are closely linked to higher levels of political and civil society activity.
5. Boys are more active only in sports, with girls more active in all other areas. Young people with less educated parents are more rarely socio-culturally active, and are more rarely involved with computers and sports, but more frequently with family activities.

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7 The virtualisation of everyday life

7.1 Introduction

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The mass media⁸⁰ (and more broadly, information and communication technology, or ICT), one of the main components of the modern “information society” (Webster, 2006), have a major influence on politics, the economy, culture and everyday life (McQuail, 2005). Researchers devote special attention to the role of mass media in the lives of children and youths, partly because: 1) young people are the most frequent users of media (in Slovenia in 2010 a full 99 percent of young people (10-15 years) had used a computer in the past three months; see SORS), 2) young people are quicker in starting to use newly created (electronic) media and 3) because media formats have changed significantly in recent years and decades (Roberts et al., 2005). For this reason some people call the youth of today Generation M (i.e. the *media generation*)⁸¹, since according to research by the *Kaiser Family Foundation*, in 2005 more than a quarter of the day-to-day life of the American adolescent is supposedly spent using media, with daily media use apparently amounting to almost six and a half hours (Roberts et al., 2005: 37), and in 2010 as much as seven and a half hours (Rideout et al., 2010: 2).⁸² A particularly important place in the mass media is occupied by the internet, which has become a “constituent part of the lives of adolescents” (McMillan and Morrison, 2006). This shows how

80 We conceptualise mass media as organised systems of mass communication (McQuail, 2005: 4).

81 Given that in the last five years there has been an increase among young people in the frequency of media use, the expression »media generation squared« has also appeared (”M2”, see Rideout et al., 2010).

82 If we also take into account that young people often follow several media at the same time, the total daily use of media content amounts to as much as 10 hours and 45 minutes (Rideout et al., 2010: 2).

clearly appropriate another label for today's generation of young people is – the so-called *Net Generation*, (see Van den Beemt et al., 2010).⁸³

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It is not surprising that given the central role of ICT in modern society, the attitudes of researchers, political interests and the public to the use of ICT and mass media, as well as their effects and consequences, are highly contradictory. On the one hand, numerous national institutions and EU institutions stress the importance of ICT for the future of the individual state and its competitiveness in the global world, while on the other hand numerous researchers have been trying to determine the extent of the digital divide, i.e. the differences in access to ICT among members of a given society, as well as the differences between individual countries (e.g. Vromen, 2007; Wong et al., 2009; Wold, 2010). According to data from the publication *Youth in Europe* (Domžalska, 2009: 138) regarding the access of households to the internet and computers for 2008, Slovenia was in the upper half of countries in terms of web access (with 59 percent of households having access) and access to computers (65 percent of households), with the web being most accessible in the economically most advanced (mainly Scandinavian) EU countries. In Slovenia the proportion of households with access to the web in 2009 increased to 64 percent, and in the first quarter of 2010 to 68 percent (SORS).

The media and ICT are considered by many to be especially important, since they perform numerous functions for the individual: they offer opportunities for being informed, for entertainment and also for getting to grips with everyday problems or for (temporary) withdrawal from them (Rubin, 1994; Lohaus et al., 2005; Kirsh, 2010), which can of course have positive effects. Equally, numerous studies show that the media (especially with informational content) are associated with a number of positive indicators of development for society and the individual (see Norris and Inglehart, 2009). Several studies show, for instance, that web users score higher average marks in indicators of positive psychosocial development (Chen and Persson, 2002; Jackson, 2009), while research by Johnson (2010) has shown that a child's cognitive development is positively associated with internet use. A study of the media habits of Slovenian youth also established that the web is more frequently used by young people who on average enjoy greater academic success (see Dolničar and Nadoh, 2004). Ohanessian (2009) reports that use of the media can also be a safety mechanism

83 We are also seeing the emergence of numerous other labels for the new generation of young people, which grew up with the internet and other forms of information technology: these include *Generation Y* (Lipkin and Perrymore, 2009), *Generation Next*; see Pew, 2007) and the *millennium generation* (Howe and Strauss, 2000).

in problematic families – in her study, boys from such families who kept up with the media more frequently showed lower levels of anxiety (although at the same time there was a reverse association among girls). Some other studies do not actually indicate a positive association between the media and indicators of psychosocial development, but they do show that between users and non-users of ICT (e.g. the web) there are no significant differences in psychosocial development (e.g. Subrahmanyam and Lin, 2007).

On the other hand, numerous authors frequently stress that the virtualisation of everyday life (in other words the increasingly common use of ICT and its heightened importance in the individual's life) can have negative consequences for the individual and society (Buddemeier, 1999; Stivers, 2004; Fištravec et al., 2008). Indeed research indicates that more frequent use of the web (Park, 2009; Ybarra et al., 2007), television (Primack et al., 2009; Romer et al., 2009) and computers (Lohaus et al. 2005) is associated with several indicators of less favourable adolescent psychosocial development (for an overview see Subrahmanyam et al., 2001; Kirsh, 2010), including more frequent signs of depression and lower academic success (Mythily et al., 2008), more regular use of alcohol, tobacco and other substances and a poorer state of health among young people (Sun et al., 2005).

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In view of the above, by analysing the use of media and ICT in Slovenian youth we should attempt to answer the following questions: 1) does longitudinal analysis show more frequent use of virtual activities in 2010 compared to 2000, 2) has the frequency of direct or face-to-face forms of socialising declined in 2010 (compared to 2000), 3) are the two types of activity negatively associated on the level of the individual (in other words do individuals who more frequently use ICT socialise less frequently in a personal (face-to-face) way with friends/peers and partners) and 4) how are virtual activities associated with the individual's psychosocial development? It is especially important to find a response to the third question, since between direct communication and communication using ICT there are differences in four basic dimensions. Indeed using ICT for communication: a) enables greater anonymity, b) reduces the importance of physical appearance; c) increases control over the time, place and speed of communication and 4) enables an easier determination of people who are "the same as me"/establishing contact with them (Amichai-Hamburger and Barak, 2009). Each of these differences can have both positive and negative consequences, so it is first important to know whether and how patterns of communication are changing in time among young people.

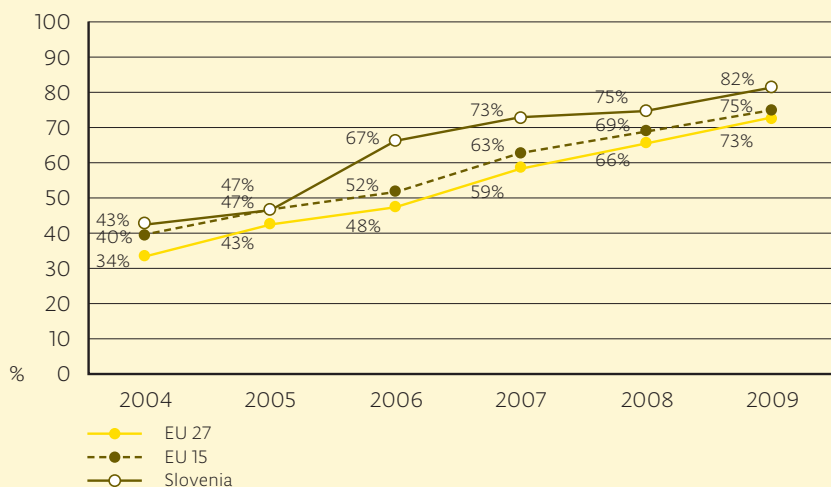
7.2 Direct/personal forms of socialising and use of ICT

We have already responded to the first two questions in the chapter *Creativity, culture and leisure*, where we found that compared to 2000, “computer activity” had climbed into second place in 2010 in terms of frequency (in those activities that have advanced most in terms of frequency, the index of frequency rose by a value of +52.4, from 82.3 to 134.7). Equally, we found that the majority of direct forms of socialising had been reduced slightly, compared to 2000 (spending time with partner, with friends, and to a slightly greater extent the frequency of being involved with one’s own children/brothers/sisters).

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In the graph below we show comparative data on internet use in the EU-27 countries, specifically the proportion of young people (16–24 years) that use the internet frequently (those that have used it on average every day or almost every day over the past three months). The data show not just that young people in Slovenia are frequent internet users, but also that in terms of frequency, Slovenian youth are above the EU-27 average and even above the average for the more socio-economically advanced EU-15 countries.

Graph 79: Proportion of young people (16–24 years) that use the internet every day or almost every day, Slovenia, EU-15 and EU-27



SOURCE: Eurostat

A total of 82 percent of young people use the internet (almost) every day. The proportion of such internet users in Slovenia is above the average for the EU-15 and EU-27 countries.

Analysis of the Youth 2010 data has shown that just 1.9 percent of young people in Slovenia “never” use the internet. If we know that 68 percent of households had access to the web in 2010, we may conclude that young people also had frequent access to the web outside their homes, especially in educational institutions, as well as in libraries and other institutions, and employees had access at work. In a similar way, past surveys of Slovenian youth (e.g. Dolničar and Nadoh, 2004) have shown that young people use the media relatively frequently.

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Below we analyse the nature of the link today between the two types of activity on the level of the individual. So do those that spend more “total time online”, on “social networking sites”, and those that more frequently “use a computer” also spend less time directly socialising with peers, friends, partners etc? We analysed several indicators of the frequency of use of media, IT and virtual communication, specifically: 1) the cumulative measure of media entertainment content⁸⁴, 2) the cumulative measure of media information and political content⁸⁵, 3) being at the computer, 4) using the internet, 5) using social networking websites and 6) talking on the telephone. The results⁸⁶ have shown that “face-to-face socialising with friends and peers” is positively associated ($0.061 < r < 0.331$; $p < 0.05$) with five listed ICT variables, and negatively only with the cumulative measure of media information and political content ($r = -0.069$; $p < 0.05$). The same pattern of five positive coefficients emerged in

84 The scale was formulated from four indicators, in relation to which respondents answered the question “How often do you follow politics or the news in the following mass media...?”, specifically for television, print media, radio and the internet.

We asked respondents about the use of mobile and stationary telephones (together).

85 The scale was formulated from four indicators, in relation to which respondents answered the question: “How much time in an ordinary working day do you spend on average on entertainment content in the following media...?”, specifically for television, print media, radio and the internet.

86 To calculate coefficients we used non-recoded results.

analysing the indicator “going to cafes/bars, discos and parties” ($0.112 < r < 0.318$; $p < 0.01$), with a negative correlation only with information and political media content ($r = -0.076$; $p < 0.01$). On the other hand, “face-to-face socialising with partner” is associated statistically significantly and positively only with the measure of information and political media content ($r = 0.076$; $p < 0.01$) and with talking on the telephone ($r = 0.098$; $p < 0.01$). Visiting relatives and spending time with the family on outings is also positively associated with the two cumulative measures of media use ($0.086 < r < 0.152$; $p < 0.01$), but not with the rest of the indicators of virtual/ICT activities.

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The majority of media and virtual activities are also statistically significantly associated positively with creative and cultural activities and humanitarian and political activities (the association of political activities and virtual activities, especially internet use, is also indicated by other research; e.g. Anduiza et al., 2009).

The results of our study show therefore that among young people in Slovenia, the use of ICT does not detract from direct (interpersonal) communication (there are similar findings from research into American youth aged 8-18, see Roberts et al., 2005), since there is more face-to-face socialising among those young people that use the media more (the only exception is those young people who more frequently keep up with information and political media, although the negative coefficients in this case are very weak). Although we did not ask respondents this, we may conclude indirectly from quantitative data (and directly from qualitative data) that virtual communication and the use of mass media supplement face-to-face communication, or rather that young people communicate virtually with persons with whom they also communicate face-to-face (of course at other, “non-virtual” opportunities). A similar picture of the coinciding of the two types of communication is in fact painted by other studies, which have found that the majority of young people communicate with their friends “live” and also “virtually” (see Markow, 2006). In this respect Lange points out that young people render “concrete” their local social networks through virtual activities (Lange, 2007), or put another way, virtual communication consolidates (and expands) young people’s social ties (see Bonds-Raacke and Raacke, 2010). The research of Iannotti and associates (2009) here has shown that the relationships of young people that more frequently follow the media are of higher quality with their peers (for instance they have more friends, they get together with them in person more frequently etc.).

We can summarise by stating that among Slovenian youth, too, one cannot speak of a negative association between the use of ICT and the frequency of *direct socialising and communication in person*.⁸⁷ On the other hand, results have shown that virtual activities and keeping up with the mass media to a large extent overlap with the cultural, artistic, political and humanitarian activities of Slovenian youth, probably and chiefly because of their informational role. At this point we can therefore conclude:

The use of information and communication technology does not detract from face-to-face interpersonal communication, and is primarily positively associated with it. Among Slovenian youth a similar positive relationship is evident between the more frequent use of ICT on the one hand and cultural, artistic, humanitarian and political activities on the other hand.

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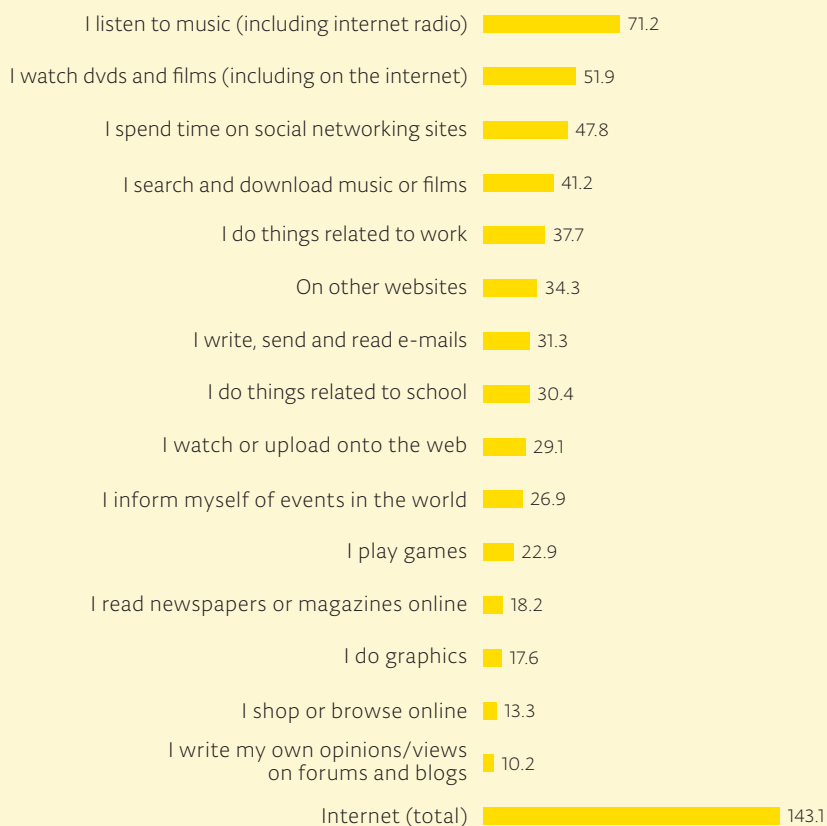
7.3 The frequency of individual computer activities

The graph below shows the use of computers among young Slovenians. This involves a wide range of activities that are partly drawn from research by *Kaiser Family Foundation* (Roberts et al., 2005). The activities are set out in the graph below by frequency of average daily use in minutes.⁸⁸

87 Nevertheless some studies of youth in the advanced democracies show that computer activity, especially at home, detracts from direct socialising with friends and family (see Vilhelmson and Thulin, 2008: 615) or reduces the quality of relationships with friends (Mesch, 2001).

88 We carried out the methodological conversion to minutes as shown in the chapter *Creativity, culture and leisure*. To sum up: we recoded the intervals as their mean value, and the intervals of frequency of activities selected by respondents were: 0 = nothing/I never do it, 1 = less than 15 minutes (recoded as 7.5 minutes), 2 = 15–30 minutes (recoded as 22.5 minutes), 3 = 30 minutes to 1 hour (recoded as 45 minutes), 4 = 1–2 hours (recoded as 90 minutes), 5 = 2–3 hours (recoded as 150 minutes), 6 = more than 3 hours (recoded

Graph 80: Computer activities of young people (in minutes), Youth 2010



SOURCE: Youth 2010

The data in the above graph clearly show that the most frequent computer activity is listening to music (over 71 minutes a day). The fact that specifically this computer activity is the most frequent is not surprising, when we realise that it is possible to have music on “in the background”, in other words at the same time as doing other (computer and non-computer) activities. Meanwhile this kind of multitasking is typical not just of computer activity, but also of ICT use in general (Roberts et al.,

as 210 minutes). The average values in minutes were calculated from the above recoded values.

2005: 35–37; Bardhi et al., 2010). For this reason activities in the above graph cannot be simply added up to give a total daily use of the computer, and it makes most sense to set them out separately and compare their frequency.⁸⁹

In terms of frequency, very high on the list come watching DVDs and films (51.9 minutes) and spending time on social networking sites, which according to our data accounts for around 47.8 minutes a day of young people's time.⁹⁰ Then come in terms of frequency: surfing for music and films online and downloading them, activities linked to work duties, surfing other websites and writing, sending and reading e-mails. Of these activities the least frequent among Slovenian youth are: online shopping (or browsing goods) and writing one's own opinions and views on forums or blogs. Since some of these activities involve spending time online, and others not, we also asked young people how much time each day they spend on the internet (they assessed internet use in hours, see the final column in the above graph). The average value of daily use of the internet over the entire sample was just under two and a half hours, or just over 143 minutes daily.⁹¹ Young people therefore quite frequently pursue virtual activities, something also illustrated by statements from the interviewees in our study:

"[The role of digital media in your free time is]... big, mainly the computer, telephone and TV... I surf the internet, Youtube and so on..."

(Helena, 18, excellent grammar school student)

89 In methodological terms the most relevant (and reliable) analyses of media use are generally based on a combination of various methods, for instance a combination of a questionnaire and the respondent keeping a log or noting down the daily use of mass media and ICT (e.g. Roberts et al., 2005). Nevertheless our (survey) method affords an insight into the use of ICT among Slovenian youth, although there remains the probability that the data on daily activities (in minutes) is somewhat overstated (see Kirsh, 2010).

90 The latest study from the Nielsen research organisation and carried out in the USA showed that in terms of frequency of use, the social networking site Facebook is ahead not just compared to other online social networks, but also compared to other internet sites. On an average day, internet users in the USA spend more time browsing, configuring and reading Facebook pages than they spend in total browsing the following websites: Google, Yahoo, YouTube, Microsoft, Wikipedia and Amazon (Parr, 2010).

91 For comparison we should point out that young Americans (8–18 years old) use the internet for an hour and a half each day (excluding use in school).

Young people use the computer primarily for communication and entertainment.

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The findings indicate, therefore, that the most frequent computer activities involve, fun, entertainment and communication, which is not surprising. We could say that computer activities (especially use of the internet, and within that virtual social networking) have become an indispensable part of the everyday life of Slovenian youths, although some young people are nevertheless critical of internet use, especially Facebook, something indicated by the statements below from two interviewees in Youth 2010:

"I think they (young people) sit there (at the computer) all afternoon, as much time as they can... on the one hand it's interesting, it's OK, they have friends... but they no longer know how to communicate face to face. You can get useful information, don't get me wrong, but I'm not interested..."

(Špela, 25, young waitress)

"Too little actual socialising, too much internet... Even mobile phones are no longer fashionable, everything's on Facebook... It's good for the business world, a great opportunity, but it's not good for society."

(Stane, 26, young entrepreneur)

7.3.1 Socio-demographic factors and psychosocial correlates of ICT use

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In analysing factors of frequency of computer activity, we first analysed the correlates of internet use. Of the socio-demographic variables, only living in an urban environment (living there currently: $r = 0.100$; $p < 0.001$; living there while growing up: $r = 0.106$; $p < 0.001$) is associated with more frequent use of the internet. The following psychosocial constructs turned out to be statistically significant correlates of frequency of internet use: anomaly ($r = 0.057$; $p < 0.05$), narcissistic grandiosity ($r = 0.090$; $p < 0.01$) and opportunism ($r = 0.062$; $p < 0.05$), hedonistic ($r = 0.083$; $p < 0.01$) and fatalistic ($r = 0.075$; $p < 0.01$) orientation to the present. Those that more frequently use the internet also more frequently experience stress ($r = 0.101$; $p < 0.001$) and are less satisfied with their health ($r = -0.076$; $p < 0.01$). It is interesting that permissive socialisation is also associated with more frequent use of the internet ($r = 0.060$; $p < 0.05$).⁹²

Since the use of the internet in itself does not show what kind of online content use is involved, we also analysed some specific content – firstly the frequency of use of social networking sites. It turned out that the majority of correlates are statistically significant, as follows: narcissistic grandiosity ($r = 0.106$; $p < 0.01$) and opportunism ($r = 0.080$; $p < 0.01$), alienation ($r = 0.134$; $p < 0.001$), anomaly ($r = 0.102$; $p < 0.001$), orientation to the future ($r = -0.075$; $p < 0.01$), hedonistic ($r = 0.156$; $p < 0.001$) and fatalistic ($r = 0.188$; $p < 0.001$) orientation to the present and deviance ($r = 0.097$; $p < 0.001$). Equally, young people who spend more time on social networking sites on average sleep more than their peers ($r = 0.121$; $p < 0.001$), but show greater fear⁹³ associated with various areas of life, and have been less exposed to an authoritative socialisation style ($r = -0.187$; $p < 0.01$).

The other computer activity we analysed is playing computer games, where in view of previous research (e.g. Mathers et al., 2009; Weaver et al., 2009) we anticipated the greatest association with indicators of less adjusted development of the individual. The majority of the above-mentioned psychosocial correlates of internet use were statistically significant

92 Foreign studies have also shown that socialisation patterns influence the frequency of internet use (Sun et al., 2005).

93 The variable “fear” was formulated from five problems evaluated by young people (1 = not true for me at all, 5 = true for me): “I’m scared of not being able to get a job”, “Fear of failure in school, work, occupation”, “Fear of losing job”, “Lack of money” and “Housing problem”.

in this case, too, while at the same time computer games more frequently involved young people who did not get on so well with their mothers ($r = 0.142$; $p < 0.001$) and fathers ($r = 0.78$; $p < 0.01$), while they had less of a feeling that their parents loved them ($r = -0.134$; $p < 0.001$), and at the same time they had experienced more authoritarian ($r = 0.140$; $p < 0.001$) and especially permissive ($r = 0.170$; $p < 0.001$) socialisation styles. It is understandable that those young people who frequently play computer games do not have a critical attitude to them, something illustrated by this statement by one of our interviewees:⁹⁴

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“A gang of 6 or 8 of us playing different shooting games, three to four times a week, in the evenings, sometimes from eight to ten, or from five till three, depending on how much time anyone has, more during holidays and at weekends. You sleep all day and play all night. Playing games and voice chat... My mum doesn’t say anything, it doesn’t affect school.”

(Aleš, 20, virtualised young adult)

In this sense the findings point to a generally negative picture of computer and internet use. Playing computer games was also the only activity that showed a statistically significant correlate of social exclusion. Our research does not offer any basis for conclusions about the direction of causality (whether for instance more anomic youths use the internet more frequently or whether use of the internet increases the individual’s sense of anomy), but most probably this involves a reciprocal process or two-sided effect.⁹⁵

Equally, it should be pointed out that playing computer games does not have a necessarily negative influence on adolescent development. Some studies have indeed shown that playing computer games is a way of grappling with stress and loneliness (among Slovenian youth this association

94 There is also an illustrative statement from a 15-year-old girl in the *Kaiser Family Foundation* study (Rideout et al., 2010), who says with regard to studying and playing computer games: “I don’t study at home. My method is to be very attentive in class. Studying at home is just a waste of time intended for Xbox” (see Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010).

95 We should add that a positive association does not necessarily mean that more frequent use of ICT also means a higher value of psychosocial maladjustment among its users. Indeed there are known cases where the average (mean) use of ICT is positively associated with certain indicators of development (e.g. pro-education orientations), and below and above-average use is associated negatively (e.g. Willoughby, 2008).

was not statistically significant), so playing computer and video games is also an opportunity for relaxation and socialising (Wack and Tantleff-Dunn, 2009). This is illustrated by statements from our interviewees:

“When I do everything I need to do for work and for school, I go for a beer or play games, I don’t have a band at the moment, but I’m working on it.”

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to the Pekarna youth gathering place)

“Most of my friends are in the virtual world, and some of them outside it. Those ones I know from secondary school. We used to play football and go for walks. But I can’t be bothered any more, it’s easier to just play games and talk, but I’ve had a few moments when I thought I could be doing something else. Most of my virtual friends are scattered around Slovenia. Sometimes we arrange to meet at somebody’s place, everyone brings their console and monitor, we get together and play games over the weekend. The other day we gathered at a friend’s in Tržič, got food for a few days and played shooting games from Friday to Tuesday.”

(Aleš, 20, virtualised young adult)

We may therefore conclude:

Use of computers for entertainment purposes (social networking sites, playing computer games) is positively associated mainly with less favourable psychosocial properties of young people.

7.3.2 Use of ICT and political and civil society participation

In our study, political participation has been shown to be associated positively with the frequency of “using a computer” ($r = 0.106$; $p < 0.001$), and also with the frequency of internet use ($r = 0.082$; $p < 0.01$). It is interesting

to note that some foreign studies have shown that users of social networking websites are more active in civil society (Park et al., 2009; Pasek et al., 2009), while in the Slovenian youth sample this association was not statistically significant either for political or civil, society participation.

306 Given the findings to date, we could summarise by saying that more time is devoted to ICT by psychologically less stable youth and that in this sense of media use the internet has a certain compensational role (Ko et al., 2005). This is especially true of those adolescents that spend more time on social networking sites (Park et al., 2009; Quan-Haase and Young, 2010).⁹⁶ Our analysis has also shown that alongside forms of activity, future research should also analyse in particular the content of virtual/computer activity, since different types of activity (online social networking, study and education, general information-gathering, work activities etc.) are associated with psychological constructs in varying directions and with varying strength. On the other hand there is generally a positive association between political participation and the frequency of ICT use (but not use of social networking sites), but none of the analysed ICT activities are associated with civil society activity.

The majority of authors nevertheless agree that the web offers opportunities for new forms of socio-political activity (e.g. Stanley and Weare, 2004; Lin et al., 2005; Anduiza et al., 2009) and that at the same time it is a unique basis for young people to fulfil their political identity (Collin, 2008). For this reason it is important that in measures in the area of youth policy account is taken of the potential of ICT (especially the internet) and the access to young people that it offers. Of course it is especially encouraging that the medium that is most popular among young people also has a positive effect among young Slovenians in terms of their political activity, irrespective of the fact that young people see the important role of the internet as being in “fun” (see Chan and Fang, 2007; also Tufekci et al., 2008). Indeed we should remember that a large share of young people also give “work and studying” as a reason for using the internet (78 percent) along with “communication with family and friends” (77 percent, see Vromen, 2007). The combination of different motives for using the internet is simply an additional advantage of it.

96 All of this of course does not mean that use of social networking websites necessarily has negative consequences (or put differently, that the frequency of use is associated with undesired phenomena). Bosch (2009) for instance has found that *Facebook* has great potential for learning and teaching.

7.4 **Traditional media: entertainment and information and political content**

In addition to the various newer forms of ICT (computer, internet) and activities (playing computer games, communicating by mobile phone and on social networking sites etc.), a study should also be made of how frequently Slovenian youth keep up with “traditional” mass media (television, radio, newspapers and magazines, see McQuail, 2005). A distinction should be made in particular between two forms of media content: entertainment, and information and political content. We may anticipate that there will be differences between young people who frequently expose themselves to entertainment media content (watching entertaining films, TV shows, reading tabloids etc.), and young people who more frequently expose themselves to information and political media content (e.g. information programmes, news, daily reports etc.). We may expect the two types of content to be associated with psychosocial constructs, although in different directions relative to what has already been established. This is also confirmed by previous studies, which have shown that entertainment content is mainly (but not exclusively) associated with negative aspects of psychosocial development (Bryant and Miron, 2002; Comstock, 2004), while political and information content is associated mainly with positive aspects (Fleming et al., 2005; Norris and Inglehart, 2009). Of course the findings in past studies have not always been unequivocal. Watching entertainment content on TV (such as soap operas) and listening to music in one’s free time have been shown in one study to be associated with positive psychological states and feelings (see Hills and Argyle, 1998).

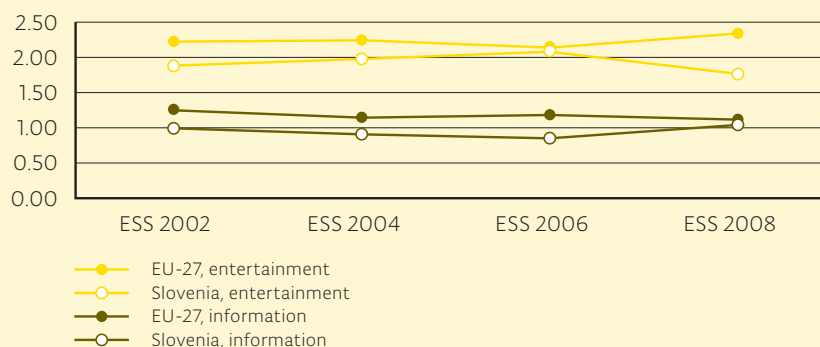
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Before we embark on an analysis of socio-demographic factors, and in particular the psychosocial correlates of being exposed to the two types of media content, it makes sense first to be familiarised with the longitudinal trends of such media exposure. Data for such an analysis are available to us in the *European Social Survey* (research carried out in 2002, 2004, 2006 and 2008), which measured the total media exposure and following of news/information content via the traditional mass media (television, newspapers/magazines and radio).⁹⁷ In the graph below we show for three mass media the frequency of exposure to information and political content on the one hand and entertainment on the other

97 In line with ESS data, for each respondent we took away the frequency of keeping up with informational content from overall exposure to media, and thus obtained an insight into the average value of exposure to entertainment content.

hand. For both types of content we added up using three forms of media (exposure to entertainment television programmes, radio and reading magazines formed the variable “entertainment media”, while keeping up with informational content on television and radio and reading newspapers formed the variable “informational media”). This instrument was formulated on a scale of 0 (I am not exposed to such content) to 7 (I expose myself to such content for more than 3 hours a day).

Graph 81: Exposure to entertainment and informational media content, Slovenia and EU-27, 2002–2008



SOURCES: ESS 2002, ESS 2004, ESS 2006 and ESS 2008

The above graph shows that Slovenian youth: 1) on average are exposed to media less frequently than the average for the EU-27 countries, regarding both entertainment, where the difference between Slovenia and the EU-27 average is greater, and informational content, where the difference is small; 2) are more frequently exposed to entertainment content than information and political, 3) compared to adults, they keep up less frequently with political and information content (not shown).

It is especially interesting to note that it was “only” in 2008 that Slovenian youth started being exposed more frequently to informational media content, while a decline can be observed between 2002 and 2006. In comparative terms it is also clear in this indicator that compared to EU-27 youth, young Slovenians more rarely show any interest in political and information events by following information and political media

content, which is in line with the findings in the chapter Participation. In view of the perceived trends, we may conclude that among Slovenian youth the interest in entertainment media content has probably declined in favour of informational content (perhaps because informational content is becoming increasingly “entertaining”). At this point we may conclude that among Slovenian youth we cannot discern any shift towards greater exposure to traditional media entertainment (as is typical of EU-27 youth), and the trend is precisely the opposite.

In the period from 2002 to 2008, in exposure to traditional media among young Slovenians there has been a slight increase in the frequency of exposure to informational content, and a decrease in the frequency of exposure to entertainment.

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7.4.1 **Socio-demographic factors and psychosocial correlates of the use of entertainment and informational media content**

Analysis of socio-demographic factors of using content in the context of traditional media has shown that entertainment content more frequently involves female respondents ($r = 0.119$; $p < 0.001$) and young people with lower average monthly incomes ($r = -0.061$; $p < 0.05$), and informational content on the other hand is more frequently followed by young people in older age groups ($r = 0.201$; $p < 0.001$), respondents with higher education ($r = 0.202$; $p < 0.001$)⁹⁸, respondents whose fathers have higher education ($r = 0.086$; $p < 0.01$) and respondents who live in cities ($r = 0.059$; $p < 0.05$) and who have on average a higher monthly income ($r = 0.138$; $p < 0.001$).

Of the psychosocial correlates, exposure to entertainment media content among Slovenian youth has been shown to be associated with lower

98 This coefficient is a result of the association between age and education. When we controlled age, the association between education and informational content remained statistically significant.

satisfaction with life ($r = -0.094$; $p < 0.001$; informational content: $r = -0.075$; $p < 0.01$), more frequent experiencing of stress ($r = 0.089$; $p < 0.01$; informational content: $r = 0.129$; $p < 0.01$), lower satisfaction with one's own physical appearance ($r = -0.109$; $p < 0.001$), greater anomie ($r = -0.068$; $p < 0.05$), hedonistic ($r = 0.057$; $p < 0.05$) and fatalistic ($r = 0.081$; $p < 0.01$) orientation to the present, authoritarianism ($r = 0.127$; $p < 0.001$), narcissistic opportunism ($r = 0.094$; $p < 0.001$), alienation ($r = 0.101$; $p < 0.001$), permissive socialisation ($r = 0.137$; $p < 0.001$) and deviance ($r = 0.064$; $p < 0.05$).

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On the other hand we can find certain statistically significant correlates exclusively in information and political content: an orientation to the future ($r = 0.075$; $p < 0.01$), social tolerance ($r = 0.092$; $p < 0.001$) and authoritative socialisation ($r = 0.064$; $p < 0.001$). Young people who frequently keep up with informational content also more frequently have a healthy diet⁹⁹ ($r = 0.093$; $p < 0.001$), and on average sleep less hours each day ($r = -0.111$; $p < 0.001$).

Our findings therefore dovetail with studies pointing to an association between frequent exposure to entertainment and indicators of less adjusted psychosocial development of young people (Romer et al., 2009). As Romer and associates state, media entertainment can offer young people an escape from reality (something that can be indirectly concluded among Slovenian youth, since for instance among young people who more frequently expose themselves to entertainment content, the level of "fears" is greater; $r = 0.154$; $p < 0.001$),¹⁰⁰ while at the same time entertainment media involve a relatively low level of cognitive demands (see also Rubin, 1994). In any event, in view of these findings it should also be stated that entertainment content is not always associated with negative aspects of the individual's development, but mainly when it involves *excessive* exposure.

Regarding informational content, the findings are predictable: as is the case in Youth 2010, in other studies the use of informational content is associated with indicators of more favourable development of young people and with certain indicators of being active in society (e.g. Norris and Inglehart, 2009; Romer et al., 2009).

99 They eat fruit and vegetables more frequently.

100 Interestingly, the variable "fears" is also associated with exposure to informational media, although this association is significantly less strong ($r = 0.059$; $p < 0.05$).

7.4.2 Political and civil society participation and entertainment and information and political content

Alongside the psychosocial correlates of the use of traditional media, we are also interested in their possible association with political and civil society participation. Some authors ascribe the decline in socio-political activity chiefly to the phenomenon and increasing viewing of television (Putnam, 1995), but as we have seen above, other authors justifiably point out the differing significance of media content. While overall watching of television has been shown to have a negative association with numerous indicators of political activity in society, watching political and informational content is associated positively with them (Norris, 1999; Norris and Inglehart, 2009; for Slovenia see Gril et al., 2009: 109). In other words, past research has shown that in studying the relationship between media exposure and participation, the most important thing is media content.

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Youth 2010 data indicate that there is a positive association between political participation and the two kinds of media content:¹⁰¹ it is associated predictably strongly with informational content ($r = 0.307$; $p < 0.001$), but more weakly with entertainment content, although still positively ($r = 0.089$, $p < 0.01$). Civil society participation is also positively associated with the two kinds of content, again more strongly with informational content ($r = 0.172$, $p < 0.001$), but there is also a statistically significant association with entertainment media content ($r = 0.146$, $p < 0.001$). So it would appear that entertainment media content (albeit much less than informational) is associated with a higher level of political and civil society participation among Slovenian youth.

7.5 Use of telephone

Finally we also present an analysis of the use of telephones among young people. As we know from previous research, among Slovenian youth communication by mobile phone is occupying an increasing share of total communication, with mobile phones bringing changes to communication patterns and interpersonal relations (Kuhar, 2007). Our data in the graph below show that on average, Slovenian youth talk by tel-

101 The cumulative measure of informational and entertainment media was the same as the measure in the described ESS survey.

ephone¹⁰² for just under 35 minutes a day, and every day they send just over 13 SMS/MMS messages.

Graph 82: Average daily use of telephone (talking and sending messages), Youth 2010



SOURCE: Youth 2010

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Women talk statistically significantly more frequently on the telephone ($r = -0.095$; $p < 0.001$), as do younger people ($r = -0.096$; $p < 0.001$) and less educated respondents ($r = -0.067$; $p < 0.05$). On average, text messages are also sent more frequently by younger ($r = -0.343$; $p < 0.001$) and less educated respondents ($r = -0.258$; $p < 0.001$) and those with lower monthly incomes ($r = -0.215$; $p < 0.001$).¹⁰³

Statistically significant psychosocial correlates of talking on the phone were seen to lie in satisfaction with health ($r = -0.095$; $p < 0.001$), experiencing stress ($r = 0.131$; $p < 0.001$), not getting on so well with one's father ($r = -0.060$; $p < 0.05$), anomie ($r = 0.170$; $p < 0.001$), hedonistic ($r = 0.120$; $p < 0.001$) and fatalistic orientation to the present ($r = 0.109$; $p < 0.001$), narcissistic grandiosity ($r = 0.079$; $p < 0.01$) and opportunism ($r = 0.060$; $p < 0.05$), alienation ($r = 0.069$; $p < 0.05$), as well as authoritarian ($r = 0.090$; $p < 0.01$) and permissive socialisation ($r = 0.142$; $p < 0.001$) and deviance ($r = 0.105$; $p < 0.001$). To a great extent similar psychosocial correlates appeared in the analysis of quantity of text messages sent. It is interesting to note that among Slovenian youth (in addition to use of a computer and the web), more frequent use of the telephone is also associated with the above psychosocial correlates, while studies from certain other countries show that some of these associations are not statistically significant (Mathers et al., 2009).

¹⁰² Mobile and/or stationary.

¹⁰³ Lower income is also associated with age.

As we have already found in analysing computer activities, we can extrapolate a similar conclusion regarding use of telephones:

More frequent communication by phone is associated with the poorer psychosocial state of the individual.

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It would be possible to summarise that the use of ICT among Slovenian youth is associated with positive as well as negative aspects of the development of young people and their integration into society. On the one hand greater frequency of using ICT is associated with numerous psychosocial correlates indicating a less favourable psychosocial state of young people, while on the other hand it is positively associated with political and societal activity and with the frequency of direct interpersonal contacts between young people and their friends/peers and partners. The media therefore cannot be viewed in any one-sided way (i.e. negatively), and in particular in the future attention will need to be focused on media content, not just the form of media. Indeed content is of major importance: informational ICT content is for the most part associated with indicators of “desired” psychosocial development, and entertainment with mainly “undesired” development. Yet we cannot “blame” entertainment content in the media for the less desired psychosocial traits of young people. Entertainment ICT content is not in fact (necessarily) a problem in itself, since it often represents just a softener and a way of grappling with difficulties for those young people with less favourable psychosocial traits. More frequent pursuit of such media may be an indicator of difficulties in young people, although it is probable, as we have already mentioned, that such content also has a reverse (negative) influence on the viewer, and in this sense there is a reciprocal effect.

7.6 Key findings

The key findings from this chapter, together with recommendations for the implementation of youth policy, may be condensed into the following points:

1. A total of 82 percent of young people use the internet (almost) every day. The proportion of such users in Slovenia is above the average for the EU-15 and EU-27 countries.
2. The use of information and communication technology does not detract from face-to-face interpersonal communication, and is primarily positively associated with it. Among Slovenian youth a similar positive relationship is evident between the more frequent use of ICT on the one hand and cultural, artistic, humanitarian and political activities on the other hand.
3. Young people use the computer primarily for entertainment and communication.
4. Use of computers for entertainment purposes (social networking sites, playing computer games) is positively associated mainly with less favourable psychosocial properties of young people.
5. In the period from 2002 to 2008, in exposure to traditional media among young Slovenians there has been a slight increase in the frequency of exposure to informational content, and a decrease in the frequency of exposure to entertainment.
6. More frequent communication by phone is associated with the poorer psychosocial state of the individual.

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8 Health and wellbeing

8.1 State of health of Slovenian youth

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Health and wellbeing are important indicators of young people's experiences and their adaptation to physical and mental changes in adolescence, while at the same time they indicate the response to wider social changes. The state of physical and mental health is indeed not just linked to the individual's personal aspect of living, but also indicates his integration into the interpersonal and wider social space.

Health as a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing is defined as an area for action by the European Council in the Resolution on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010–2018) (OJ EU C 311, 2009). The aim in this area is to ensure the health and wellbeing of young people, with an emphasis on promoting mental and sexual health, sports, physical activity and a healthy lifestyle, and on preventing and treating injuries, dietary disorders, addictions and abuse of drugs (ibid.: 7).

Health is also an important individual life goal or project, since among the values in the Youth 2000 and Youth 2010 research it occupies first place in terms of perceived importance in the life of the individual.

Below we will set out the main findings to date of research and analysis of health and wellbeing among young people that specifically deal with Slovenian youth (the age group between 15 and 29) or where Slovenian youth is included in comparative analysis of European countries. The findings of various studies of the health of Slovenian (and comparatively also European) youth will be included in greater detail in the analyses of specific indicators of health and wellbeing in the Youth 2010 survey.

In the analysis of the health of adolescents and young adults in the publication *Med otroštvom in odraslostjo /Between Childhood and Adulthood: Analiza položaja mladih v Sloveniji/Analysis of the status of young people in Slovenia 2009*, Rok Simon and Mihevc Ponikvar (2009) find that young Slovenians are generally healthy, and their health problems and diseases are for the most part associated with the characteristics of the developmental period (puberty and adolescence) and lifestyle; mortality is low among young people, and serious chronic illnesses are rare, while there are some relatively common illnesses, such as allergies, neck and back pain, headaches, fatigue and depression (p. 95). New forms of illness among young people are associated with risky behaviour and unhealthy pastimes. Indicators of the health of young adults (aged 20 to 29) are worse (Rok Simon, Mihevc Ponikvar, 2009).

State of health is analysed in greater detail and in terms of several indicators in the proceedings of expert discussions for the national report *Mladina v devetdesetih/Youth in the Nineties: Analiza stanja v Sloveniji/The situation in Slovenia (1996)*. The main findings of analyses may be condensed into these conclusions: 1) subjective assessments of young people's health are higher than the assessments of those of people over 30, with young men assessing their health better than young women; 2) young people use health services more frequently than older people, which is mainly a reflection of the extensive medical supervision of youth; 3) young people report a lower number of health issues than those over 30; 4) in 1994 young people were more frequently hospitalised owing to injury and poisoning, with the level of general hospitalisation being higher among women, while the specific rate of hospitalisation owing to injury and poisoning is much higher among young males; 5) at the beginning of the nineties the state of health of the great majority of secondary and university students was assessed as good; 6) mortality among young people (aged 15 to 29) is much lower than in the general population, with male mortality being three times that of females, the most common cause of death among young people being injury and poisoning, where injury is most commonly a consequence of traffic accidents; 7) the number of smokers among young people is declining, and the most common drug is alcohol; 8) in 1994/95 around 81 percent of young people aged 15 to 29 had sexual relations, with a pronounced growth in the use of contraceptive methods in first sexual relations from the sixties to the nineties (Tivadar, 1996: 194–198).

An analysis of the state of health of Slovenian youth is of course interesting in comparison with European Union countries. From the Eurostat publication *Youth in Europe* (2009) we may conclude that in 2006 more than 91 percent of European youth (aged 15 to 24) assessed their health as good or very good, with the Slovenian sample recording a 87.6 percent assessment, ranking it in 21st place out of 25 European countries covered (p. 51). In the age group between 25 and 34 this assessment of their own health was given by 80.2 percent of individuals in the Slovenian sample, with Slovenia and Latvia standing out in that more than 4 percent of individuals in this age group reported a poor or very poor state of health. The average life expectancy at birth in 2006 in the EU countries was around 81 years, with Slovenia occupying 17th place out of 27 countries (78.3 years). The life expectancy for Slovenian women was 82 years, and for Slovenian men 74.5 years. Slovenian youth aged 15 to 24 take 17th place out of 26 analysed European countries in the proportion of individuals with excessive weight or obesity (15.7 percent), and in the age group between 25 and 34 together with Latvia they occupied 21st and 22nd place (32 percent); as for the share of young people with low body weight, young Slovenians aged 19 to 24 were in 23rd place (5 percent), but in the age group 25 to 34 they were in second place (6.9 percent). The most common cause of death among young Europeans is injuries from traffic accidents, where Slovenia together with Greece, Lithuania, Estonia, Cyprus, Bulgaria and Luxembourg are among the EU countries where the mortality rate from traffic accidents is considerably above the European average. In the mortality rate from deliberate self-injury (including suicide), Slovenia is also above the average of European countries for men and women. Young Slovenians aged 15 to 29 are below the European average for the percentage of newly diagnosed HIV cases, with the great majority of them being associated with infection through homosexual sexual relations. With regard to the share of individuals that regularly use tobacco, in the 15 to 24 age group young Slovenians are in 11th place out of 26 European countries (28.8 percent), and in the 25 to 34 age group they are in 9th place (36.7 percent). The average age of first drunkenness is somewhat higher for Slovenian girls and boys than for 24 European countries (between 13 and 14), and by share of young people (between 15 and 16) who had in the past 12 months used alcohol or were drunk in the same period, Slovenia is a little above the average of 26 European countries.

European statistical data on young people can be condensed into points prepared by the European Commission in the *EU Youth Report* (2009):

1) young people will live longer; 2) young Europeans believe themselves to be healthy; 3) around a third of young people have problems with their body weight, although there are big differences among European countries; 4) the majority of young people die owing to external causes, such as traffic accidents and deliberate self-injury and suicide; 5) around a quarter of young Europeans use tobacco, and the average age of first inebriation is between 13 and 14.

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In order to assess the state of health and wellbeing of young Slovenians within the Youth 2010 survey we used a combination of general indicators accessible in official records (SORS, Eurostat), such as life expectancy at birth and mortality rate with causes of death, and special indicators relating to the self-reporting of young people, such as an assessment of satisfaction with life and assessment of one's own state of health, satisfaction with physical image, frequency of experiencing stress, healthy diet, frequency of pursuing sports, use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, and an indirect indicator based on self-assessment – index of body mass. We subjected these indicators to a comparative analysis with data from major domestic and international studies (Youth 1985, Youth 2000, SJM, EHIS, WVS, EVS).

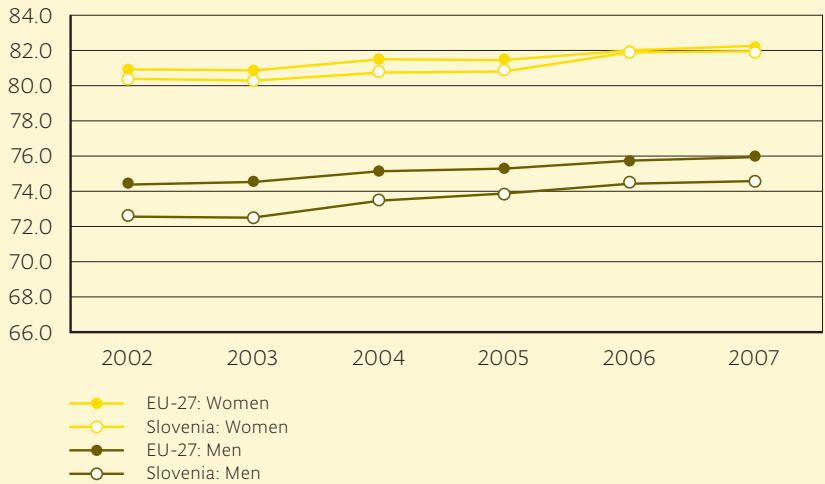
8.2 Life expectancy, mortality and most common cause of death of young people

Social changes through economic development, improved living conditions and healthy lifestyles, as well as changes in healthcare systems throughout Europe, are having the consequence of raising life expectancy at birth. Viewed from another angle, according to Eurostat data the level of mortality in all European Union countries has declined (on average by 30 percent), and Slovenia with a 47-percent reduction in mortality is actually in third place among European Union countries (behind Estonia and Italy) (OECD, 2010).

In the European Union countries, between 2002 and 2007 life expectancy among women rose from 80.9 to 82.2 years, and among men from 74.5 to 76.1 years. In Slovenia during the same period life expectancy among women rose from 80.5 to 82 years, and among men from 72.6 to 74.6 years. In comparative terms, Slovenian men have closed the gap somewhat to the European average, and in the comparative period women are much closer to the European average. While the difference in average life

expectancy between the sexes in European countries is around 6 years, the difference between women and men in Slovenia is between 7.5 and 8 years. Among the possible causes of the greater variance of Slovenian men from the European average and the life expectancy of Slovenian women, Rok Simon and Mihevc Ponikvar emphasise (2009: 96) high mortality owing to traffic accidents and suicide.

Graph 83: Trend of life expectancy at birth for women and men in Slovenia and EU-27, selected years



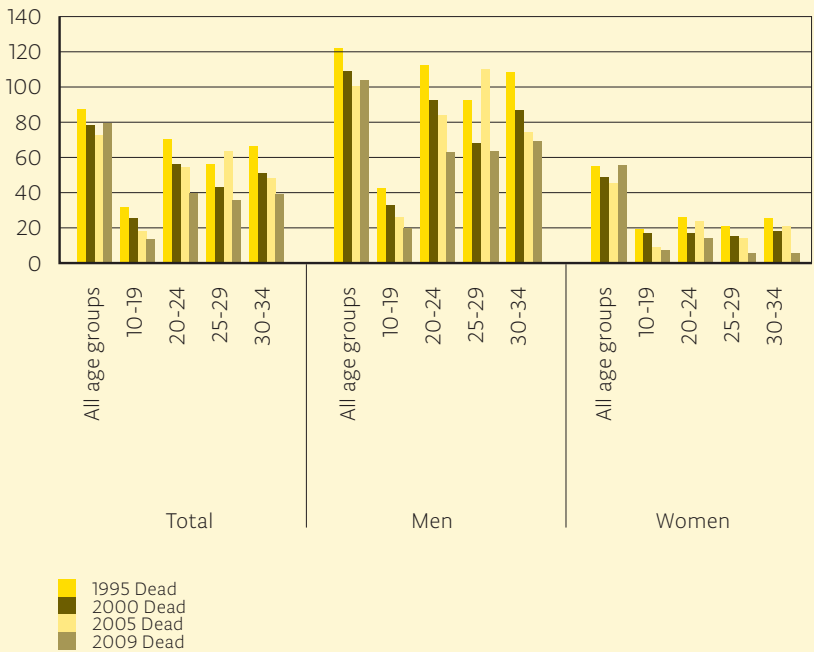
SOURCE: Eurostat

In the age group of young people the most common causes of death are external, with the highest proportion accounted for by traffic accidents and suicide. In the general population, in 2008 Slovenia was in 10th place compared to other European countries in the mortality rate from traffic accidents, and in 4th place in the mortality rate from suicide (OECD, 2010).

Below we present the trend of mortality by external causes of death in five-year periods from 1995 to 2009, where given the possibility of comparison we expressed the number of deaths using population data in the years covered and the number of inhabitants in an individual age group, and to provide a better illustration, multiplied this by 100,000.

Thus we obtained population and age-specific mortality rates per 100,000 inhabitants.

Graph 84: Trend of age-specific mortality rates (per 100,000 inhabitants) from external causes in selected age groups for women and men in Slovenia, selected years



SOURCE: SORS

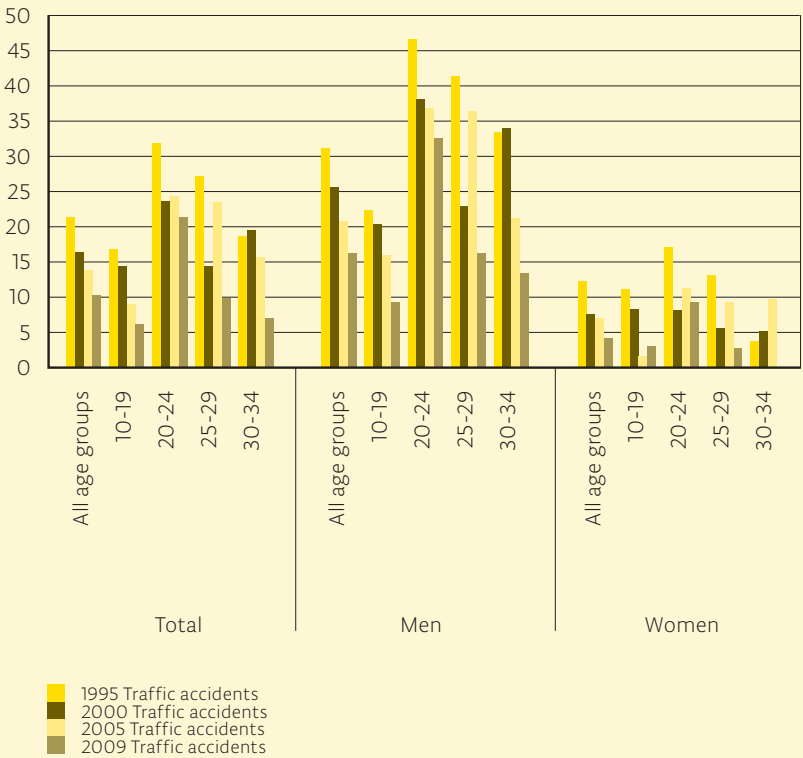
The above graph shows that the mortality rate in all age groups in the entire period from 1995 to 2009 fell from 86.8 to 78.7 cases per 100,000 inhabitants, but there has also been a noted growth since 2005, when it stood at 71.8. Given the figures by gender, this is associated primarily with the mortality trend in women, which involved a considerable increase from 45.3 cases in 2005 to 55 cases in 2009.

Among young people the mortality rates are much lower, but as in the overall population there is a significant difference in the mortality rates

of men and women (in all age groups together the differences are 121.2 in 1995 and 103 in 2009 for men and 54.4 in 1995 and 55.0 in 2009 for women). In the period from 1995 to 2009 the mortality rates fell in all compared age groups of young people and for both genders.

Below we analyse in detail two groups of the most common external causes of death in young people, traffic accidents and suicide. In traffic accidents the mortality of young people between 20 and 24 years old is generally higher than the population rate, with males standing out particularly. A comparison between 1995 and 2009 shows that the mortality rates fell in all age groups.

Graph 85: Trend of age-specific mortality rates (per 100,000 inhabitants) from external causes – traffic accidents in selected age groups for women and men in Slovenia, selected years



SOURCE: SORS

Analysis of the other major group of external causes of death in young people, suicide, also shows a generally visible trend of declining mortality in all the analysed age groups, with the decline being smallest and in the comparative period non-linear in the age group between 25 and 29 among men, while among women aged 20 to 24 a slight growth was observed in what was otherwise a very low base rate of mortality owing to suicide. As with traffic accidents, the mortality rate from suicide is much higher among men.

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Graph 86: Trend of age-specific mortality rates (per 100,000 inhabitants) by external causes – suicides in selected age groups for women and men in Slovenia, selected years



SOURCE: SORS

The trend of declining mortality in young people in terms of the most common cause of death is in line with data on the decline in mortality rates from traffic accidents and suicides in the overall populations of European countries. According to Eurostat data, with a 56-percent

reduction in mortality from traffic accidents between 1994 and 2008, Slovenia is in fourth place among European countries (behind Estonia, Portugal and Sweden) and with a 43-percent reduction in mortality from suicide it is in third place (behind Estonia and Latvia) (OECD, 2010). These changes in mortality from traffic accidents and suicides among Slovenian youth may indicate the effectiveness of policies in the area of transport and traffic safety, and also in strengthening mental health.

Indeed suicide is closely linked to depression and the use of alcohol and other psychoactive drugs, and early detection of these psychosocial difficulties and of high risk groups is part of preventive actions, effective measures and help (OECD, 2010; Rok Simon and Mihevc Ponikvar, 2009).

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Based on the analyses in this chapter we may therefore conclude:

In the last fifteen years the young person age group has shown a decline in mortality from traffic accidents and suicides, the two most common causes of mortality in that period of life.

8.3 Satisfaction with life, body image and assessment of state of health

Among the most important indicators of experiencing health and well-being are satisfaction with life, a subjective assessment of one's state of health and satisfaction with one's body image. The first of these is an important indicator of a positive orientation or sense of wellbeing, and is associated with mental health, while the assessment of one's state of health includes mental and physical aspects, and satisfaction with body image is associated with the aspect of the physical scheme that has an important effect on the individual's experience.

The table below shows assessments of these indicators that we obtained in the Youth 2010 survey, in the sample of all participating young people and separated up by gender, age and size of settlement in which they live.

Table 16: Satisfaction with life, health and build for the entire sample and separated by gender, age and size of settlement

	All	By gender		By age			By size of settlement		
		female	male	15–18	19–24	25–29	village	small town	large town
Satisfaction with life	7.26	7.18	7.33	7.53	7.35	7.04	7.33	7.38	7.04
Satisfaction with health	4.17	4.11	4.24	4.11	4.27	4.12	4.19	4.21	4.11
Satisfaction with body image	3.55	3.41	3.68	3.48	3.65	3.49	3.53	3.54	3.60

NOTE: Satisfaction with life was measured using a 10-point scale (1 – entirely dissatisfied, ... 10 – entirely satisfied), while satisfaction with health and body image were measured with a 5-point assessment scale (1 – very dissatisfied, ... 5 – very satisfied).

A total of 71 percent of all young people in the survey indicated that they were satisfied with their own lives (marks between 7 and 10), 80.5 percent of young people were satisfied or very satisfied with their health (marks 4 and 5), while 53.6 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with their body image (marks 4 and 5). A “more critical attitude” to one’s own physical build may be a consequence of greater media emphasis on the body, which through mechanisms of social influence and social comparison sets up a reference point outside the individual. Satisfaction with life is statistically significantly associated with assessment of health and body image ($r = 0.341$ and $r = 0.214$; $p < 0.01$), as is satisfaction with health ($r = 0.190$; $p < 0.01$). Higher marks for the first indicator are associated with higher marks for the other two.

These data are comparable with the findings of the survey HBSC Slovenia 2006, in which in samples of Slovenian primary and secondary school pupils, researchers found that the majority of young people are satisfied with their lives and the majority also assess their health as good or excellent (Jeriček, 2007: 29). Equally, there is evidence of satisfaction with health and wellbeing in the qualitative interviews.

"If you just listen to yourself, there's nothing to fear. Of course I'd like to be healthy, but I'm not afraid of illness. Hey, I'll give you an example: I haven't taken my temperature for ten years, and I haven't had a temperature for ten years."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

"I'm healthy and I feel good."

(Matjaž, 29, young unemployed)

In the assessments by gender and age of respondents and size of settlement, the bold type indicates groups that are at variance from the others in a specific criterion, wherein we verified the differences between the averages with a t-test (gender) and variance analysis (age, size of settlement). In satisfaction with life, there are statistically important differences between age groups, with the age group between 25 and 29 standing out as less satisfied, and in the comparison of settlement size, with young people from large towns being less satisfied. Males are more satisfied with their health and body image, as is the age group between 19 and 24.

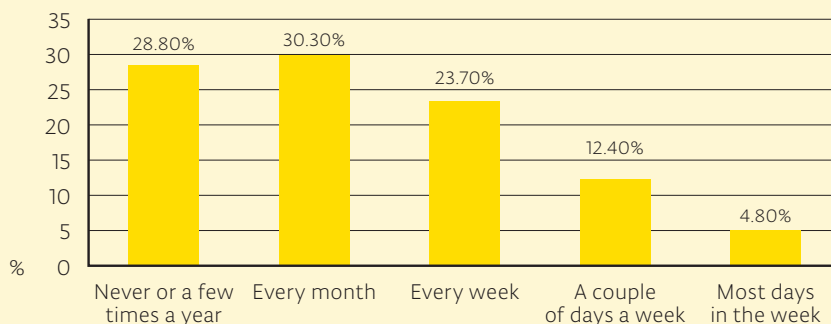
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Among the other statistically significant associations, we can point out the positive association of satisfaction with a life orientation to the future ($r = 0.232$; $p < 0.01$) and with authoritative (democratic) socialisation ($r = 0.188$; $p < 0.01$) and a negative association with alienation ($r = -0.340$; $p < 0.01$) and authoritarian socialisation ($r = -0.203$; $p < 0.01$). The correlations with subjective assessment of material standing and education of father and mother were low ($r < 0.150$).

All these indicators of satisfaction are also negatively associated with the frequency of stress felt by the individual. The graph below shows that the highest number of respondents experience stress every month, with a difference apparent between the sexes, since stress is experienced at least once a week by 47.9 of women but by 34.9 percent of men. There are also differences in terms of size of residential settlement, with stress being experienced at least once a week in large towns by 48.8 percent of young people, in small towns by 40 percent and in the countryside by 37.3 percent.

Graph 87: Frequency of experiencing stress among young people, Youth 2010

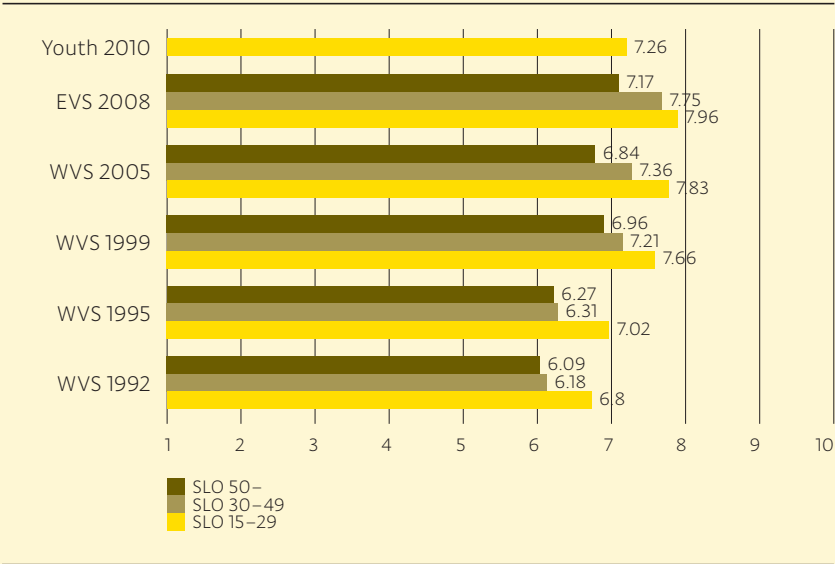
How often do you feel stress?



We compared the results of the Youth 2010 survey with the findings of internationally comparable research, for we were thus able to observe in time intervals the trend of satisfaction with one's life and health.

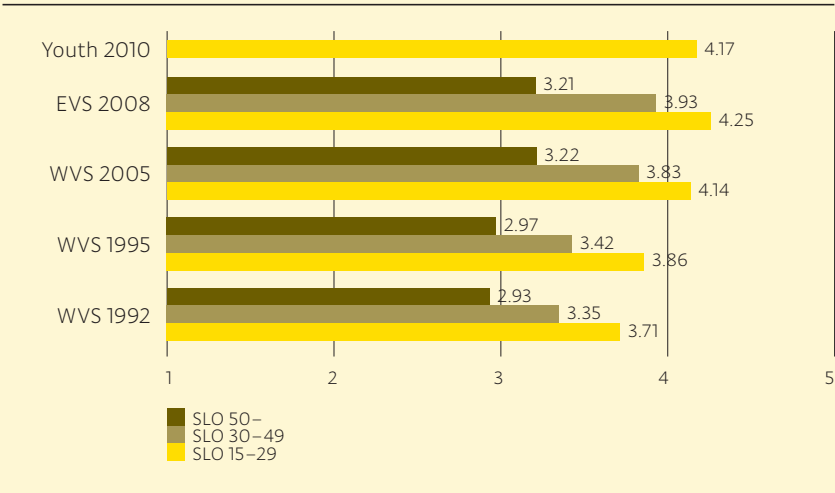
The next two graphs show that in the period from 1992 to 2008 satisfaction with life and satisfaction with health increased, with the young person's age group ascribing the highest marks to these indicators. In the Youth 2010 survey the scores in both scales are lower, with a more marked fall noted in satisfaction with life, since the average assessment from young people in 2008 (EVS) fell from 7.96 to 7.26 in 2010 (Youth 2010). For a more detailed explanation of this decline we would need to obtain measurements for the other age groups, since this comparison would give us a clearer picture regarding the actual decline in the perception of satisfaction with life. Of course the decline could be a consequence of the world economic and financial crisis, which can have a very direct influence on the perception of living conditions and the basic (positive) orientation of the individual. As for satisfaction with health, the impact is less direct, since this assessment changes with a change to the basic feeling (in other words satisfaction with life) and the perception of wider structural changes that impact health (lower standard of living, deterioration of conditions in society and thereby also a deterioration in the state of the healthcare system).

Graph 88: Trend of satisfaction with life in various studies by age group, selected years



SOURCES: WVS 1992, 1995, 1999, 2005, EVS 2008 and Youth 2010

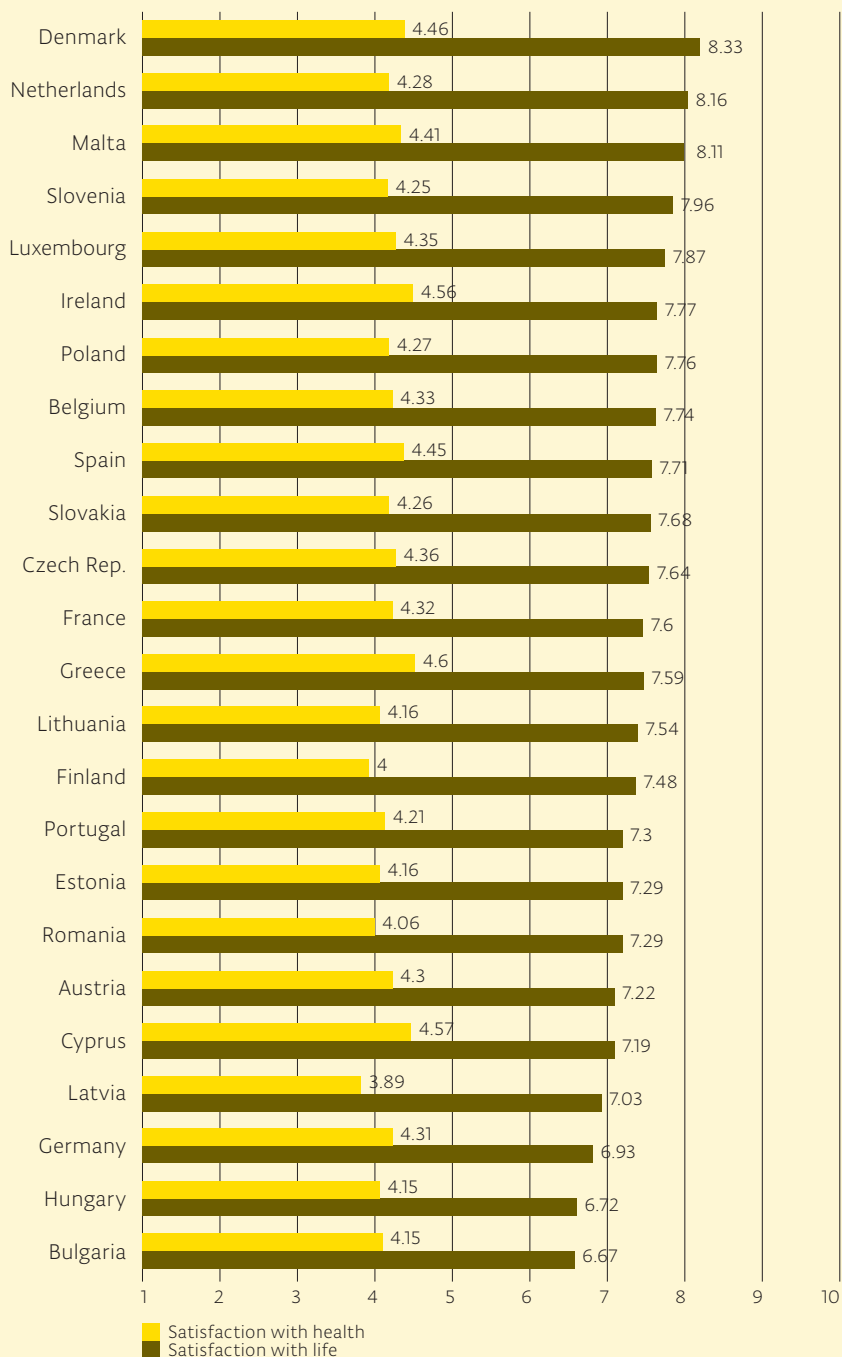
Graph 89: Trend of satisfaction with health in various studies by age group, selected years



SOURCES: WVS 1992, 1995, 1999, 2005, EVS 2008 and Youth 2010

Equally, it is interesting to compare Slovenian youth with young people from other EU countries. The graph below shows that in terms of satisfaction with life, Slovenia is in 4th place, and in satisfaction with health it is in 16th place. We may therefore state that young Slovenians are relatively satisfied with life in general. Regarding the assessment of satisfaction with health, the differences among European countries are quite small, while in Slovenia young people are less satisfied with their health than their European peers. This is also confirmed by comparisons of European data for the general population (OECD, 2010: 45).

Graph 90: Satisfaction with life and health in EU countries, 2008



SOURCE: EVS 2008

Based on the analyses in this chapter we may therefore conclude:

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The satisfaction of young people with their lives and health is greater than that of other age groups. In comparison with other European countries, young Slovenians are relatively satisfied with life in general. In the assessment of satisfaction with health, the differences among European countries are quite small, while four fifths of young Slovenians are satisfied or very satisfied with their health.

8.4 **Body mass index**

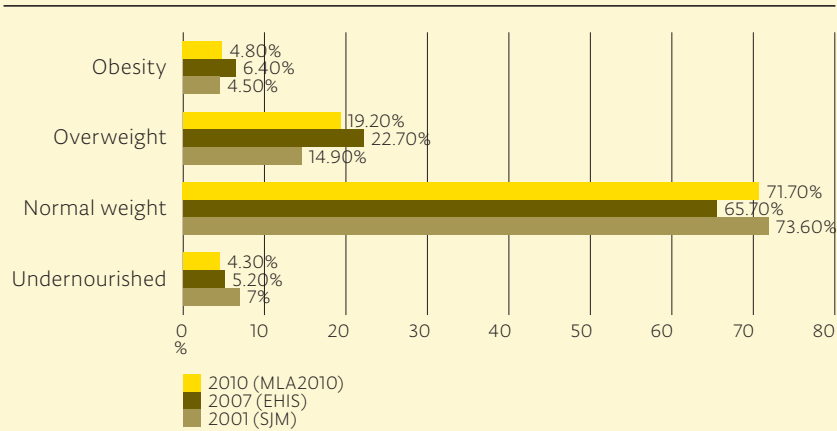
An important indicator of health is obesity, which is one of the main challenges for public health in the 21st century, since in Europe alone there are more than 5 million overweight schoolchildren, and they are joined each year by 300,000 more (Vertot, 2009: 105). Equally, data show that excessive weight and obesity in the European Union are growing among children and adults (Božič, Zupančič, 2009: 18). Among European countries, Slovenia is in 8th place in the proportion of its children aged between 11 and 15 who are overweight or obese (OECD, 2010: 65). The main reasons for excessive weight are the changed eating habits of young people (fast food) and the increased idleness of young people, which is linked to changes in how they spend their free time (television and computer).

The Youth 2010 survey included questions on the height and weight of individuals, from which we could calculate their body mass index (BMI), their nutritional indicator and indirectly also obesity. For further analysis we used the generally accepted classification under the criteria of the World Health Organisation (WHO) with general categories of malnutri-

tion (BMI below 18.5 kg/m²), normal nutrition (BMI between 18.5 and 25 kg/m²), excessive nutrition (BMI between 25 and 30 kg/m²) and obesity (BMI over 30 kg/m²).

The graph below shows three studies that covered Slovenian youth (aged 15 to 29) for whom it was possible to calculate the BMI. In comparative terms there is a slight variance in the EHIS (European Health Interview Survey; IVZ, 2009), which has found slightly fewer young people with normal weight and slightly more with excessive weight. In general there is a noted trend of a declining proportion of undernourished youth and an increasing proportion of overweight youth.

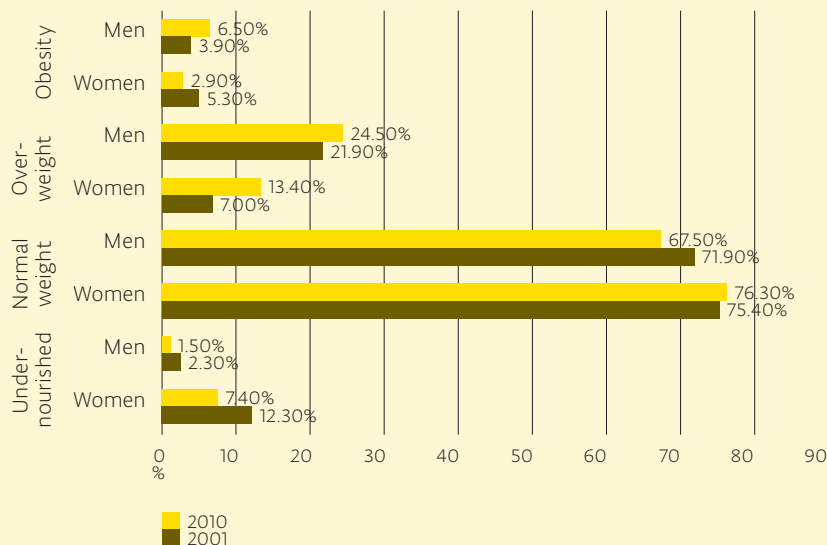
Graph 91: Youth nutrition in terms of body mass index, selected studies



SOURCES: SJM 2001/3, EHIS 2007 and Youth 2010

There are gender differences (see graph below), with many more males being overweight and fewer being underweight. These differences have been maintained from 2001 to 2010, with a decreasing percentage of women being underweight and more becoming overweight, while the proportion of overweight and obese men has increased. In this period the proportion of obese women fell from 5.3 to 2.9 percent.

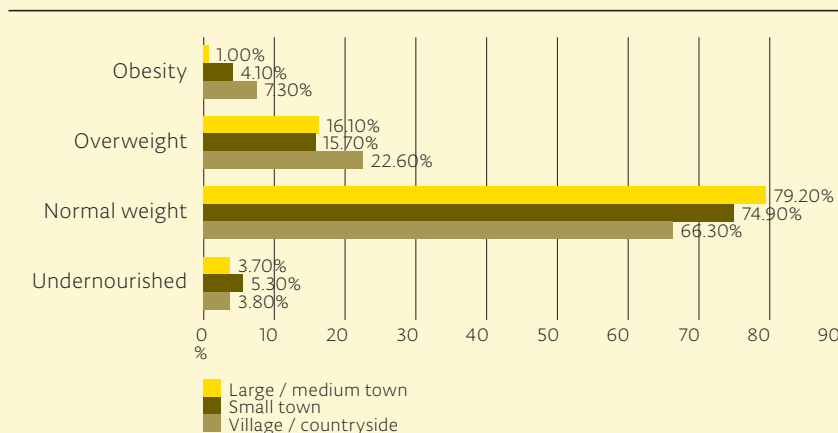
Graph 92: Youth nutrition in terms of body mass index by gender, selected studies



SOURCES: SJM 2001/3 and Youth 2010

To summarise, more than two thirds of Slovenian youth still have a normal weight. Judging from the studies of young persons in full-time education, future trends are shifting towards an increased share of overweight and obese youth (OECD, 2010; Rok Simon, Mihevc Ponikvar, 2009). By individual age group, there is also a general trend of growing numbers of overweight and obese young people. In the age group from 15 to 18 the proportion is 13.6 percent, in the 19 to 24 age group the proportion rises to 23.3 percent and between 25 and 29 years it is 30.7 percent. There are also some rules regarding size of settlement, with the highest proportion of overweight and obese people, 29.9 percent, living in the countryside, while they account for 19.8 percent in small towns and 17.1 percent in large towns. This can be seen in the next graph.

Graph 93: Youth nutrition in terms of body mass index by size of settlement



SOURCE: Youth 2010

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Among other variables, we can stress a negative association with satisfaction with one's build ($r = -0.241$; $p < 0.01$) and a positive association with the subjective assessment of material standing ($r = 0.171$; $p < 0.01$).

Important preventive aspects that are linked to excessive weight and obesity are healthy diet and sports. According to the Youth 2010 survey, 85.5 percent of young people eat fruit and vegetables at least several times each week, and of these 23.4 percent do so several times a day. A total of 92.9 percent of young people actively pursue sports, and of these 62.7 percent do so at least once a week. Relative to the Youth 2000 survey, the proportion of young people doing sports has grown, for at that time 89.5 percent of young people actively pursued sports.

Based on the analyses in this chapter we may therefore conclude:

More than two thirds of young people in Slovenia are of normal weight, but relative to the start of the decade the proportion of overweight and obese youth has grown. There are more overweight or obese young people among males and in the countryside.

8.5 Behaviour risky to health

The behaviours that pose a risk to health and which we examined in the Youth 2010 survey include the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs. The table below shows data on the proportions of young people who reported that at least occasionally they use alcohol or tobacco, as well as the proportion of those that have at least tried marijuana or hashish and hard drugs.

Table 17: Percentages of young people who have at least occasionally used tobacco or alcohol and have at least tried marijuana, hashish or hard drugs, for the entire sample and separated by gender, age and size of settlement

	All	By gender		By age			By size of settlement		
		female	male	15–18	19–24	25–29	village	small town	large town
Tobacco	44.5	42.1	46.8	34.5	48.8	44.5	41.4	45.3	48.1
Alcohol	89.5	87.8	91.1	89.7	91.6	87.7	88.5	89.1	91.4
Marijuana or hashish	50.1	48.6	51.6	33.8	53.8	55.1	42.6	54.2	60.2
Hard drugs	13.3	11.2	15.3	8.1	13.9	14.1	10.5	17.0	14.0

SOURCE: Youth 2010

The great majority of young people at least occasionally use alcohol and many more of them have experiences of using marijuana or hashish

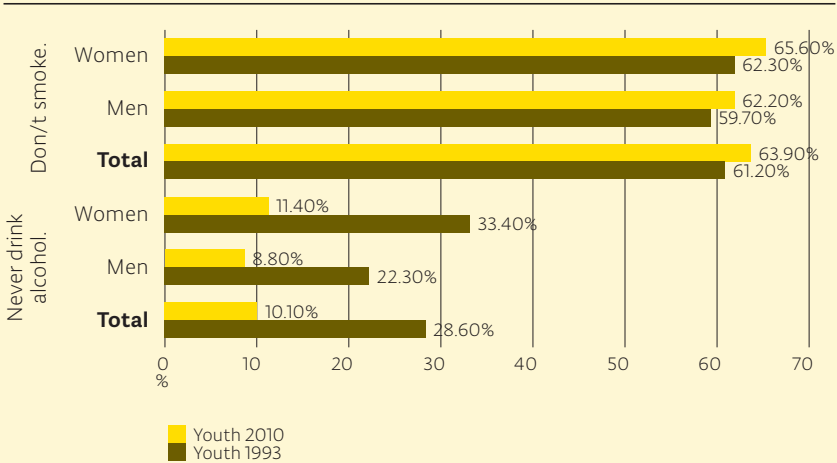
than hard drugs. At the same time, health-risk behaviours are more common among males, especially alcohol and tobacco in the 19 to 24 age group. All the substances under scrutiny are more present in urban environments.

If the above findings are quite expected, it is interesting to compare data from the Youth 2010 survey with certain previous studies.

The graph below shows a comparison of the proportion of those that do not use alcohol and tobacco in the Youth 93 and Youth 2010 surveys. For comparability of samples, in both cases young people aged between 15 and 19 were included. The proportion of young people that do not use alcohol fell from 28.6 to 10.1 percent. In the period of comparison there was a rise in the number of young people that do not use tobacco, among both males and females. A similar reduction in the use of tobacco among Slovenian primary and secondary school pupils is reported in the study HBSC Slovenia 2006 (Bajt, 2007: 129). In 2008, compared to other European countries Slovenia was among the three countries in which the proportion of regular smokers in the entire population over 15 year old was lowest (under 20 percent) (OECD, 2010: 68).

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Graph 94: Proportions of young people (aged 15 to 19) that do not drink alcohol and do not smoke, selected years



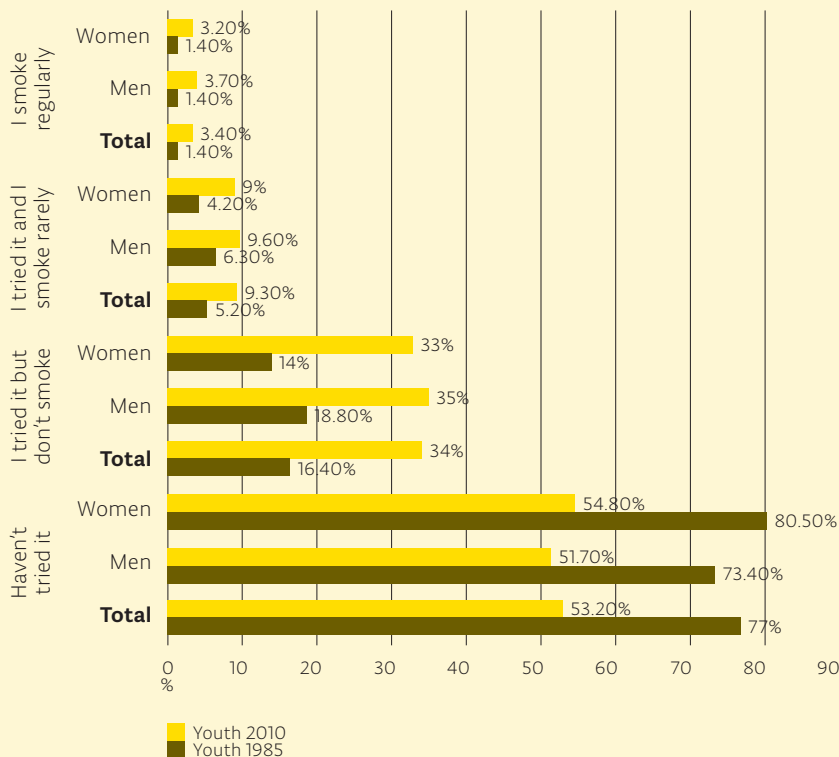
SOURCES: Youth 1993 and Youth 2010

While the regulations in society regarding the use of tobacco point to certain changes in the direction of reduced use of tobacco and tobacco products, the situation is quite different regarding the use of alcohol. Where data show that the image of tobacco and its use among young people are moving in the direction of being more socially undesirable, the use of alcohol (despite more regulations) is still in the domain of what is informally permissible and in a certain social group (including young people) it can even be desirable. Some research points to a shift in alcohol, too, and specifically to a reduction in the share of regular alcohol drinkers among Slovenian 15-year-olds (Bajt, 2007: 136), but these data do not afford any reliable findings of significant changes in the use of alcohol among young Slovenians. According to comparable data for the population aged over 15, in 2008 with 10.9 litres of alcohol per capita Slovenia was close to the European Union average (10.8 litres per capita), and in the period 1980–2008 there was no change in the quantity of alcohol drunk per capita (OECD, 2010: 71).

A comparison of the proportion of young people who have tried marijuana or hashish in the Youth 1985 and Youth 2010 surveys is shown in the graph below. For comparability of samples, both cases included young people aged 15 to 24. Since 1985, owing to the reduction in the proportion of non-users, among young people (of both genders) there has been the biggest increase in the proportion of those that have tried marijuana or hashish, and at the same time there has been an increase in the proportion of occasional and regular smokers of marijuana or hashish.

Graph 95: Proportions of young people (aged 15 to 24) that have tried or use marijuana or hashish, selected years

Have you ever tried smoking marijuana or hashish?



SOURCES: Youth 1985 and Youth 2010

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Based on the analyses in this chapter we may therefore conclude:

The use of tobacco and tobacco products has declined slightly among young people, but more young people have experiences of using alcohol and illicit drugs. There is greater

use of tobacco and alcohol among males, among the “student” age group and in urban environments, while experiences with illicit drugs are more typical of males in urban environments.

8.6 Key findings

1. In the last fifteen years the young person age group has shown a decline in mortality from traffic accidents and suicides, the two most common causes of mortality in that period of life.
2. Compared to other age groups, young people show greater satisfaction with life and health. In comparison with other European countries, young Slovenians are relatively satisfied with life in general. In the assessment of satisfaction with health, the differences among European countries are quite small, while four fifths of young Slovenians are satisfied or very satisfied with their health.
3. More than two thirds of young people in Slovenia are of normal weight, but relative to the start of the decade the proportion of overweight and obese youth has grown. There are more overweight or obese young people among males and in the countryside.
4. The use of tobacco and tobacco products has declined slightly among young people, but more young people have experiences of using alcohol and illicit drugs. There is greater use of tobacco and alcohol among males, among the “student” age group and in urban environments, while experiences with illicit drugs are more typical of males in urban environments.
5. If we summarise all the findings of the analysis of young Slovenians' state of health and in doing so exclude the subjective assessments of satisfaction with life, health and body image, as expected, males are the most differentiated risk group.

6. With regard to the most common causes of death in young people (traffic accidents, suicides) and behaviours risky to health, the group that stands out in particular is those aged between 19 and 24, i.e. “student” youth.
7. In nutrition, special attention should be focused on young people in the countryside, since among them there are 10 percent more overweight and obese individuals than can be found comparatively in urban environments.

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9 The economic status of young people

Where discussion turns to the economic status of young people, the focus is usually first on their disposable income and its primary sources, and then on the factors that determine the level of that income and their correlates. Here the emphasis is most frequently on categories such as employment status and level of educational qualifications, although it is not possible to get around issues associated with access to the labour market and education, mobility, housing and social policies, social protection and so forth. In this light, the economic and social status of young people is therefore associated closely with policies relating to the labour market, welfare state measures, education, family, social and other policies.

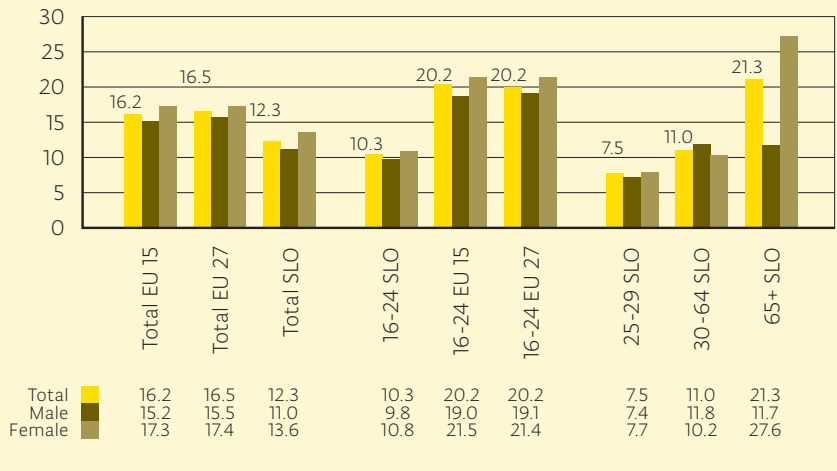
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9.1 **Poverty among young Slovenians below the European average**

The difficulties arising in this regard impact the level of employment among young people, the time they leave home, the conditions in which they live, the time they decide to start a family and so on, and indirectly and directly also the level of poverty among young people. Nagode, Smole and Boljka (2009) point out that in terms of their exposure to the risk of poverty, young Slovenians are in a relatively good position compared to their European peers, but here they also point out that this “cannot be attributed to the labour market, which is hard for young people to get into, but primarily to the functioning of an informal support network evident in young adults extending the time they live in their original family, and the relatively successful functioning of the social protection system» (ibid.: 57).

That the level of poverty among Slovenian youth (16-24 years) is indeed at a markedly lower level than the European average, is also indicated by the latest data available (2008; graph below).

Graph 96: Level of poverty risk by age and gender (income excluding income in kind), EU-15, EU-27, Slovenia, annual (2008)



NOTE: The level of poverty risk is expressed as the percentage of persons living in households with disposable equivalent income below the threshold of poverty risk (60 percent of median income per equivalent member. For an explanation of the calculation method, see footnote¹⁰⁴).

DATA source: Eurostat, SORS

104 We obtain disposable equivalent income or disposable income per equivalent member by first calculating for each household the annual disposable net income (all net incomes from all household members are added up: from employment, including reimbursement for food and travelling to work, from self-employment, pension, unemployment benefit, reimbursement for sick leave, stipends, family and social benefits, interest, dividends, cash transfers received from other households, credit for the use of a company car for private purposes and part of the proprietary production of self-employed persons – the value of products transferred to the household from one’s own workshop, company or shop; deducted from this are transfers paid to other households and property tax, including compensation for the use of building land). Then for each household disposable net income per equivalent member is calculated using the OECD adjusted equivalence scale. The scale gives the first adult member a weighting of 1, the second member aged 14 or over a weighting of 0.5, and children under 14 a weighting of 0.3. A four-member household of two adults and two children will thus have 2.1 equivalent adult members (calculation: 1 * 1 + 1 * 0.5 + 2 * 0.3 = 2.1). Income per equivalent member of household is calculated by dividing annual disposable net income of the household by the number of equivalent members of the household (SORS, 2010).

The level of poverty risk in the 16-24 age group in Europe exceeds that of Slovenia by almost 100 percent, although it is also true that the level of poverty risk in Slovenia is below the European average, which is clearly contrary to public opinion. Indeed a full 78 percent of Slovenians believe that poverty is very widespread in Slovenia (on average 73 percent of Europeans believe this) (Eurobarometer, 2010).

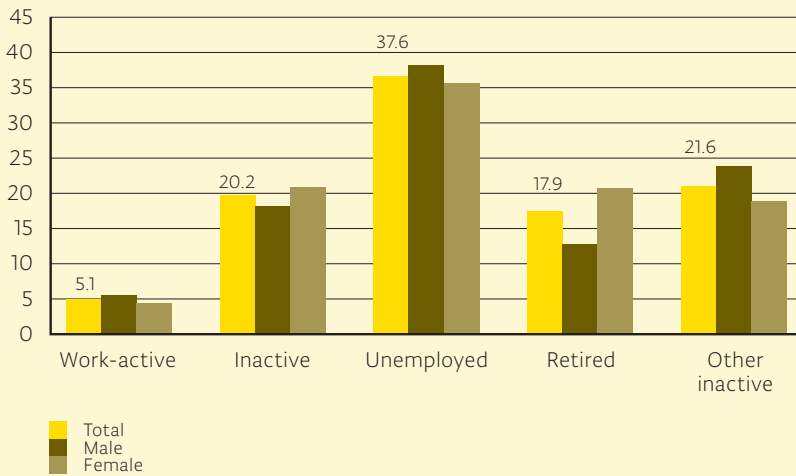
The presented data also show one more Slovenian variance from Europe. While young people in Europe are more exposed to poverty risk than the average European, the exact opposite is true in Slovenia. As has already been indicated, this difference may be at least partly ascribed to the system of informal support, and more precisely to the fact that young people in Slovenia are very late in leaving their parental home (Mandič, 2009; see also the chapter *Housing and living conditions of young people*), meaning that the late departure from home is actually functional in terms of maintaining a relatively favourable picture presented by Slovenia regarding poverty among young people.

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The level of poverty risk among young people in Slovenia is distinctly lower than the level of risk encountered by young people elsewhere in Europe. Part of this difference may be explained by the late departure of Slovenian youth from their parental homes.

Of course there is the danger that in circumstances where young people are finding it increasingly difficult to get into the jobs market, and they are being forced to accept increasingly insecure employment, this picture will deteriorate. The highest levels of poverty in Slovenia can indeed be found among the unemployed (graph below).

Graph 97: Level of poverty risk by status and gender (age 18+, income excluding income in kind), Slovenia, (2008).



NOTES:

* The level of poverty risk is expressed as the percentage of persons living in households with disposable income below the threshold of poverty risk (60 percent of median income per equivalent member).

** The level of poverty risk by most frequent status of activity is calculated relative to the predominant status of activity of the person over the entire year. Persons who are younger or older than the set age are not used in calculating this indicator. Predominant status of the person's activity is the status that the person had for at least seven months in the income reference year. Persons for whom it is not possible to determine any status of activity for at least seven months of the year are not used in calculating this indicator. Work-active relates to those persons that were employed or self-employed for at least seven months in the year. Work-inactive relates to all persons that were unemployed, retired or otherwise inactive for at least seven months in the year. Other inactive persons are housewives, school and university students and people unable to work.

DATA SOURCE: Eurostat, SORS

From the above data we may therefore conclude that the increasingly difficult transition to the labour market will place young people at increasing risk of falling into poverty.

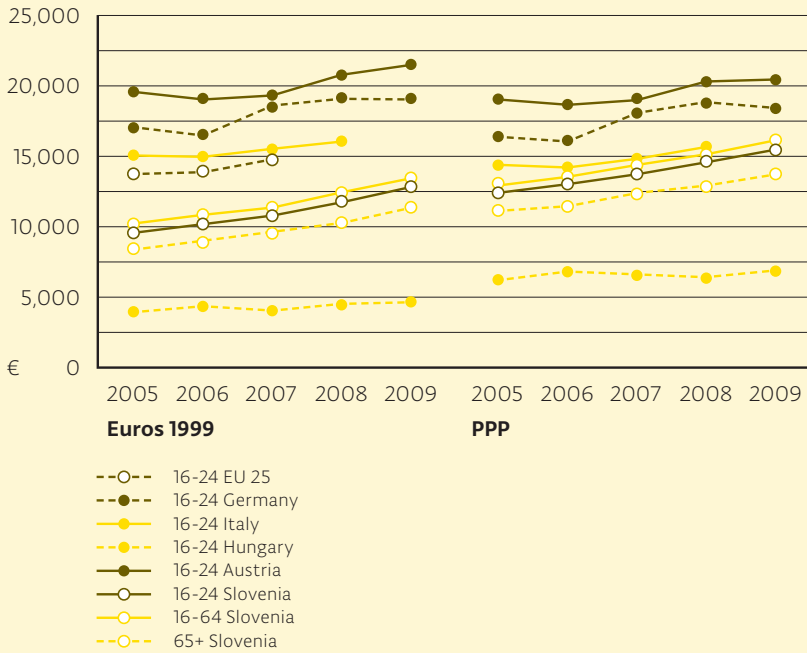
9.2 **Incomes of young people in Slovenia – discrepancy between official data and self-assessment**

An analysis of young people's incomes (16–24 years) shows that in 2007 the average annual equivalent net disposable income of young people in EU-25 was around 40 percent higher than the income of young people in Slovenia (Nagode, Smolej and Boljka, 2009; in Rakar and Boljka, 2009), with the difference being even greater if we compare Slovenian youth to Italian, German or Austrian youth. Judging from Eurostat data, in 2009 youth in those countries on average “disposed” of¹⁰⁵ almost 70 percent higher incomes. Yet on the other hand this same age group in Slovenia disposed of incomes that were on average as much as 170 percent higher than those at the disposal of Hungarian youth, who in this regard are lagging behind increasingly (graph below).

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105 As is evident in the previous footnote, this is not income received by persons at a certain age, but income calculated on the basis of the equivalent income of persons of a certain age (which depends on the income of the household in which the persons live).

Graph 98: Average annual equivalent disposable net income of young people in Slovenia* (expressed in euros 1999 and PPP2) compared to other age groups and young people in Europe3, 2005–2009



NOTES:

* The basis for the calculation is the annual equivalent disposable net income of households that participated in the survey of income and living conditions (silc; for a detailed description of the calculation of annual equivalent disposable net household income, see footnote 107), on the basis of which the disposable net income per equivalent member is calculated. This then provides the basis for calculating average income for Slovenia overall and by specific age group. Average income is not calculated on the basis of income received by persons at a certain age, but on the basis of the equivalent income of persons of a certain age (which depends on the income of the household in which the persons live). The (weighted) equivalent income of persons in the age group is added up and divided by the number of persons (weighted) in the age group (sors, 2010).

** PPP – purchasing power parity (excludes the effect of price differences).

*** Since the latest available data from Eurostat do not include data for the EU, for the period 2005–2007 we used data cited in the report by Nagode, Smolej and Boljka (2009: 60; in Rakar and Boljka, 2009).

SOURCE: Eurostat – Population and social conditions/Living conditions and welfare/Income and living condition/Income distribution and monetary poverty; Rakar and Boljka, 2009

Here there is no need to stress that the differences between countries are smaller when price differences are taken into account (right side of the above graph). In this way the aforementioned difference in the net disposable income of Austrian and Slovenian youth falls from 70 to just over 30 percent. The reduction in the difference is even more noticeable when young Slovenians are compared to their Italian counterparts. While in 2008 young adults in Italy on average had disposable income that was, in absolute terms, just under 40 percent higher than the disposable income of young Slovenians, on average that amount would only buy them under 7 percent more comparable goods.

Meanwhile young Slovenians are also in a relatively good situation when their disposable income is compared to the oldest age group (65 and over). In 2009 their average disposable income was around 11 percent lower than the disposable income of young people aged 16 to 24 years, while official Eurostat data also indicate that all age groups in Slovenia, including youth, are gaining in real terms, irrespective of whether the income is expressed in fixed prices or PPP.

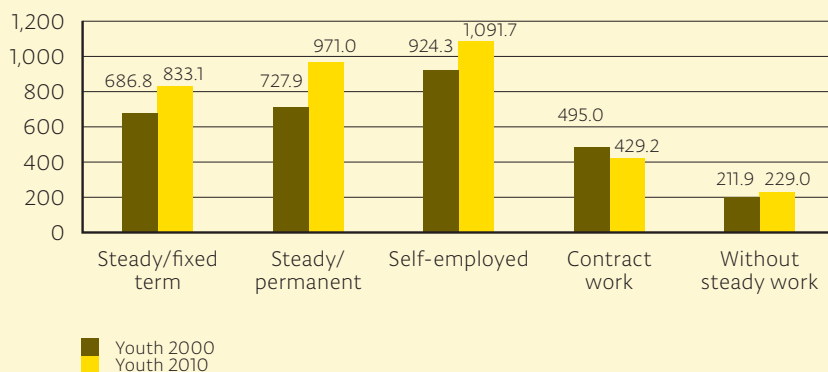
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Although official Eurostat data show that the disposable income of young Slovenians is noticeably less than the EU-25 average, these same data indicate that the disposable income of young people (16-24 years) is growing in real terms, and taking into account price differences, the purchasing power of young people in Slovenia is even approaching that of young people in economically more advanced EU countries (Italy, Germany and Austria).

The findings of our study paint a slightly different picture. Based on the estimates of young people regarding their total disposable income, we can establish that in the last ten years only certain groups of young

people have gained, mainly those that have steady employment or who are self-employed. Those doing contract work, in other words including those young people who do a variety of jobs via the student employment services, are in real terms today in a worse position than their peers in 2000 (graph below).

Graph 99: Estimate of average monthly disposable income of young people (15–29 years) by employment status, in euros, Youth 2000* and Youth 2010



NOTE: * Average disposable income in 2000 was converted at the official exchange rate into euros and then revalued, with the starting and ending date taken as 15 June (2000/2010).

The decline in average monthly disposable income in real terms of contract workers, with the concurrent swelling of their numbers, means that the average monthly disposable income of young people today is practically identical to that of ten years ago (2000: 487 euros, 2010: 489 euros).¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ The data also show that the amounts presented are also noticeably lower than those given by Eurostat. Indeed our research indicates that the average disposable annual income of young people (16–24 years) hovers around 4,052 euros (as can be seen in Graph 98, the equivalent annual disposable income in 2009 for the same age group in Slovenia amounted to 12,727.50 euros, in other words around three times more). Although this is a different method of calculation (“equivalisation”), it still seems that the Eurostat data in no way show the real situation. This amount is indeed higher than the amount obtained by multiplying average net pay, which according to SORS data amounted to 963.80 euros in September 2010.

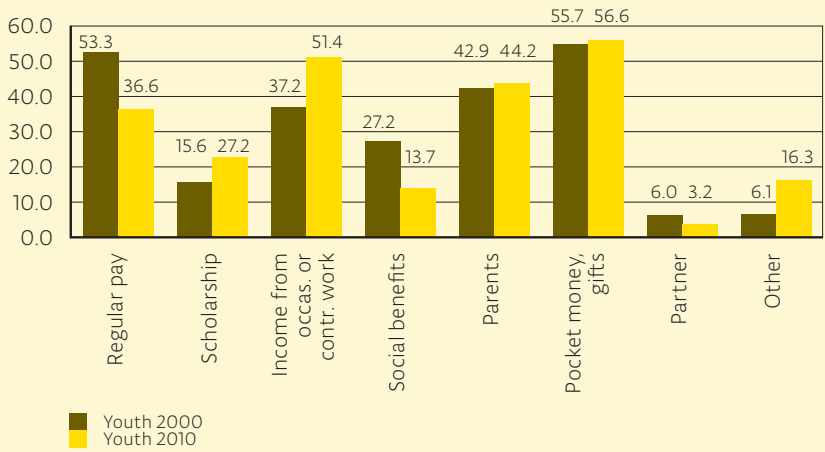
Analysis of the estimated total monthly disposable income of young people reveals that the average disposable income of young people in 2010 relative to 2000 has not changed in real terms, and is around 500 euros. More detailed analysis reveals that this is a consequence of the reduction in the number of young people with steady employment (who indeed were earning more in real terms in 2010 than they were in 2000) and an increase in the proportion of contract workers (who were earning less in real terms in 2010 compared to 2000).

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9.3 **Main source of youth income is pocket money, gifts and earnings from occasional or contract work**

The reduction in earnings from contract work can without doubt be linked to the increased scope of student work, which also includes increasingly poorly paid work, for which growing numbers of eligible people are competing (expansion of tertiary education). The fact that there is increasing contract work can be deduced from the breakdown of source of income for young people (graph below).

Graph 100: Sources of income of young people (15-29 years), Youth 2000 and Youth 2010



NOTE: The graph shows the proportions of those that have indicated that a category is the source of their income. The total amount is greater than 100 percent since young people have various sources of income.

In line with the previously presented data, which indicate the greater (frequently just apparent) involvement of young people in education, the extension of studies and the growth of unemployment (among young graduates), it is no surprise that in 2010 the proportion of those that are funding themselves (in part) through occasional or contract work (which includes student service work), is noticeably higher than in 2000. These shifts are also apparent in the proportion of young people whose source of income is regular wages (now just over a third of the total) and on the other hand scholarships.

Longitudinal analysis reveals that there has been a change in the structure of young people's sources of income. There has thus been a reduction in the proportion of those receiving regular wages or social benefits, and an increase in the proportion of those receiving scholarships, and in particular an increase in the proportion of those receiving income from occasional or contract, i.e. student service, work.

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The qualitative part of the survey also points to the conclusion that the personal budget of young people is largely combined, and in terms of frequency involves three pillars: permanent income, partly permanent income and variable income. Young people regard scholarships, grants and other incomes (for instance pocket money) that they receive and that are relatively constant and stable as permanent income. For the most part young people use this income to cover their permanent expenses, such as student meals and halls of residence. They themselves estimate that this amount covers around 30 to 40 percent of their entire personal monthly budget. The greatest part of their personal monthly budget is covered by partly permanent income, which is based especially on officially arranged student and pupil work. The majority of young people questioned work via the student service, while some additionally do the odd cash-in-hand job, in other words unregulated. Young people believe that this source of income covers 40 to 50 percent of their personal monthly budget, and this money is used primarily for personal needs.

The young people in our interviews regard income that is least steady and on which, although extremely welcome, they cannot rely, as variable income. For the most part this comprises various donations and gifts from relatives and friends, and respondents use them mainly for hedonistic purposes. It should be pointed out here that the majority of respondents assessed their material situation as relatively good.

"In principle I've never had real financial problems, there was somehow always enough for luxuries..."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

"(My material situation) Very good now, I have a scholarship and I work. I have a lot of my own income. It really suits me, I'm financially independent of my parents and I can plan certain things with my boyfriend... a car."

(Mojca, 23, successful psychology student)

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"Fairly okay... I don't feel any shortages, although I can't buy much. I usually have enough left for smokes and coffees, I give Mum some money for expenses..."

(Matjaž, 29, young unemployed)

"I can't say I have a hard time... I can go for a beer and I have enough for fags... I live and eat with my parents, for luxuries I make my own money... I make money with odd jobs..."

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to the Pekarna youth centre)

"Not rosy, but I can afford almost everything. I have to think what I want, and then save up to buy it."

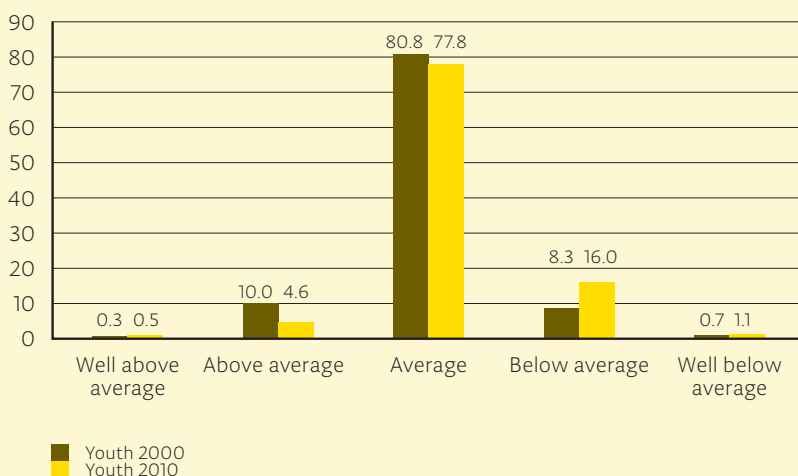
(Helena, 18, excellent grammar school student)

"I'm happy with it... I don't have to count every cent I spend. As an economist I'm very thrifty by default."

(Davor, 22, young politician)

It should also be pointed out, however, that the young people included in the qualitative part of the survey strictly separate their own material situation from that of their parents, for whom the majority of respondents say that it is stable but not that good. This is also apparent in the analysis of survey data (graph below).

Graph 101: Assessment of material situation of family, Youth 2000 and Youth 2010



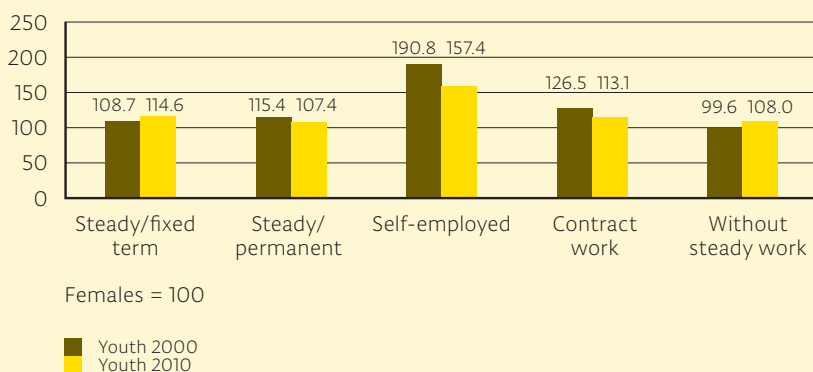
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Although the great majority of young people perceive the material situation of their family as average, the average assessment from 2000 ($M = 3.0$; $SD = 0.47$; range: 1 = well below average, 3 = average, 5 = well above average) shifted in 2010 to a slightly lower level ($M = 2.9$; $SD = 0.51$), as can be seen in the graph.

9.4 Young males still earning more than young females

A comparison of income by gender showed that in all types of employment status, young men earn more than young women, but the difference is only statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) where it involves steady fixed-term employment and self-employment (graph below).

Graph 102: Differences in income by gender, by specific employment status, Youth 2000, Youth 2010



Longitudinal analysis reveals that in the past ten years the differences between the incomes of young males and young females have been reduced in three, and increased in two types of employment status. While young men with steady fixed-term employment in 2000 were paid on average 8 percent more, in 2010 this difference had grown to more than 14 percent. There was a slightly bigger growth in the group of those that are without steady work. Where incomes in this group were practically the same in 2000, in 2010 the average earnings of young males were 8 percent higher than their female counterparts.

Young men earn more than young women, irrespective of employment status. The biggest differences are in the incomes of self-employed persons, and the smallest among those with steady permanent employment. Longitudinal analysis reveals that in the past ten years, the differences between the incomes of young men and young women have diminished

in three types of employment status (permanent, self-employed, contract work), but have increased in two types (fixed-term, without steady job).

9.5 Key findings

The key findings from this chapter, together with recommendations for the implementation of youth policy, may be condensed into the following points:

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1. The level of poverty risk among young people in Slovenia is distinctly lower than the level of risk encountered by young people elsewhere in Europe. Part of this difference may be explained by the late departure of Slovenian youth from their parental homes.
2. Although official Eurostat data show that the disposable income of young Slovenians is noticeably less than the EU-25 average, these same data indicate that the disposable income of young people (16-24 years) is growing in real terms, and taking into account price differences, the purchasing power of young people in Slovenia is even approaching that of young people in economically more advanced EU countries (Italy, Germany and Austria).
3. Analysis of the estimated total monthly disposable income of young people reveals that the average disposable income of young people in 2010 relative to 2000 has not changed in real terms, and is around 500 euros. More detailed analysis reveals that this is a consequence of the reduction in the number of young people with steady employment (who indeed were earning more in real terms in 2010 than they were in 2000) and an increase in the proportion of contract workers (who were earning less in real terms in 2010 compared to 2000).
4. Longitudinal analysis reveals that there has been a change in the structure of young people's sources of income. There has thus been

a reduction in the proportion of those receiving regular wages or social benefits, and an increase in the proportion of those receiving scholarships, and in particular an increase in the proportion of those receiving income from occasional or contract, i.e. student service, work.

5. From conversations with young people we may deduce that young people are relatively satisfied with their material situation.
6. Young men earn more than young women, irrespective of employment status. The biggest differences are in the incomes of self-employed persons, and the smallest among those with steady permanent employment. Longitudinal analysis reveals that in the past ten years, the differences between the incomes of young men and young women have diminished in three types of employment status (permanent, self-employed, contract work), but have increased in two types (fixed-term, without steady job).

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Dem_soc.asp/](http://www.stat.si/pxweb/Database/Dem_soc/Dem_soc.asp/), 1. 9. 2010.

Vertot, N. (2009). *Mladi v Sloveniji*. Ljubljana: Statistical Office
of the Republic of Slovenia.

10 Residential and housing conditions of young people

As established by Mandič (2009; in Boljka and Rakar 2009), analyses of the residential and housing conditions of young people are interesting and important from the aspect of the functioning of the housing supply system (youth housing conditions as an indicator of the functioning of the housing supply system), from the aspect of demographic reproduction (independent residence as a function of establishing an independent household) and the aspect of the housing vulnerability of youth (youth access to housing, suitability).

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With regard to youth housing problems, the relatively late moving away of young people from their parents' homes has been a particularly pressing recent problem among the Slovenian public. The transition to an independent household is frequently understood in the literature and in public debate as one of the key markers of the transition to adulthood. As Mulder (2009) finds, the transition coincides with the taking on of adult roles, such as e.g. running your own household, making independent decisions about financial matters, consumption, spending of leisure time etc., and is also usually accompanied by a change in the relationship between children and their parents. However, as researchers have found, this transition is often multi-layered and fluid. Many young people for instance return to their parents' home after leaving (college students, people who have financial and other difficulties), sometimes young people live at home and at their (new) address at the same time, and sometimes their leaving home does not denote "true" independence, since despite having their own home they are to varying degrees still financially, socially and emotionally dependent on their parents (for more on this see e.g. Goldscheider and Goldscheider 1999; Mitchell 2000). Therefore several dimensions of leaving home appear in the literature, and are analysed separately. De Jong Gierveld et al. (1991) e.g. speak of

leaving because of a partner, leaving because of work or education and leaving because of a desire for independence.

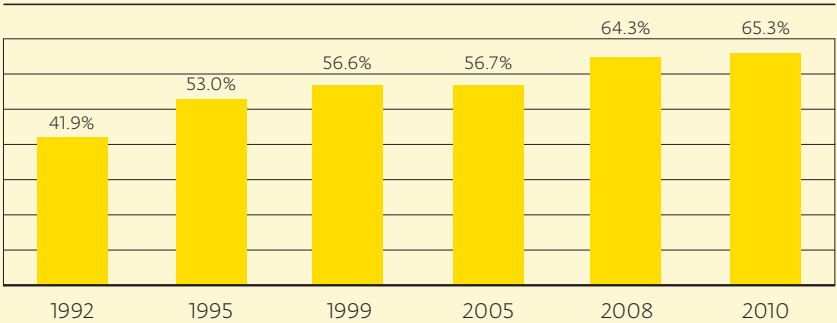
10.1 **Why Slovenian youth delay leaving home**

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Research of the age at which youth leave their parents' home indicates that there are substantial differences between societies. As Mulder (2009) finds in her analysis of the most economically well developed societies, the greatest differences lie on the north-south axis: young people leave their parents' home earliest in Northern Europe (led by young people from Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark) and North America, and latest in Southern Europe (Italy, Spain). Slovenia ranks among the European countries with the highest percentage of youths, men and women between 18 and 34, who live with their parents (Mandič 2009; 2008). While Mandič (2009) on the basis of data from 2003 states that 48 per cent of youth in this age group live with their parents (the percentage is higher for men and lower for young women), Vertot (2009) finds on the basis of data from 2004 that the percentage is even higher for the group between 25 and 35 – a full 57 per cent of whom still live at home.

Data from the World Values Survey (2009) together with data from our survey (for 2010) give a clearer picture over time.

Graph 103: Percentage of young people between 25 and 29 who live in households with their parents, 1992-2010



SOURCES: World Values Survey 2009 and Youth 2010

The data from the Slovenian Youth surveys from 2000 and 2010 on the percentages of youth who live in families together with their mother is even more telling:

In the period 2000-2010, the percentage of youth between 25 and 29 who live in a shared household with their mother increased from 45.4 per cent to 66.8 per cent.

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Although the data are slightly different from the data on the percentage of youth who live in their parents' households, the basic trend is entirely clear and indicates a stable and relatively steep trend of delaying leaving the parents' home.

According to Eurostat data (Choroszevycz and Wolf, 2010), Slovenia was in second place in the EU-27 with regard to the percentage of youth between 18 and 34 who in 2008 still lived with their parents. Choroszevycz and Wolf list the following as the primary factors of the differences between the countries:

1. material opportunities for creating independent households. In this respect the key factors are access to suitable employment and conditions on the real estate market;
2. inclusion of youth in education. Higher inclusion percentages correlate with remaining in the parents' household longer;
3. moving necessitated by education or job. The small size of the country in which the majority of the youth can drive to school/university or work in larger towns appears in this respect as a factor of leaving later. The objective living situation in the parents' household is also important here. The better it is (e.g. a large house), the lower the interest in moving out. The (modest) accommodations in university and secondary school dormitories have a similar effect;

4. cultural factors such as the importance of the nuclear family and adjustments by the original family with respect to providing independence for youth at home can have a significant impact on motivation to leave home;
5. the percentage of youth who cohabit in a partnership relationship; the formation of cohabitation partnership relationships increases the likelihood of moving away from the parents earlier.

This list allows us to determine the reasons for delaying leaving home until a relatively late age in Slovenia. Below, we will discuss the individual factors in order of their (estimated) importance in Slovenia.

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10.1.1 **The material opportunities for moving out are narrowing, and young people want their own houses**

Material factors such as regular employment, income, housing prices and rents are according to many researchers a key factor in youth leaving home late (cf. Nillson and Strandh 1999; Vertot 2009; Choroszevicz and Wolf 2010).

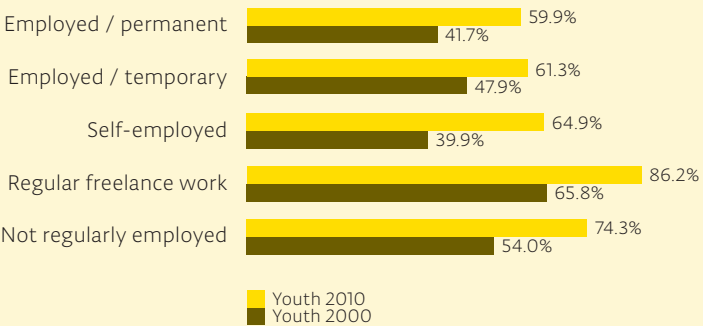
According to the data of the World Values Survey, the percentage of full-time employed youth in the 15 to 29 age group in Slovenia fell from 58.4 to 44.4 per cent in the period from 1992-2005 (WVS 2009), and in 2010 according to the data from our survey it amounted to only 28.5 per cent. According to Eurostat data, at the same time in the period 2000-2009 the percentage of temporarily employed youth (15-24) increased dramatically, from 43.2 to 65.5 per cent. Slovenia leads the EU in temporary employment among youth. In this respect according to the results of the latest research of Slovenian youth, the percentage of youth employed in permanent positions has decreased from 29 per cent to 16.3 per cent (we discuss this problem in greater detail in a separate chapter). The key insight here is that the position of youth on the labour market during the transition period in Slovenia has steadily worsened, particularly (from the point of view of stability and employment security) in the last decade.

The influence of employment on the likelihood of leaving the parents' home is indicated by the datum that 59.3 percent of young people (25-29) who were employed in a permanent position lived at home (both, occa-

sionally and entirely) in 2010, and 70.9 per cent of all other respondents in that age group.

However, as shown in the graph below, the tightening of the conditions on the labour market cannot substantially explain the increased percentage of youth between 25 and 29 who live with their parents.

Graph 104: Percentage of young people (25-29) who live in a family together with their mother with respect to employment status, Youth 2000 and Youth 2010



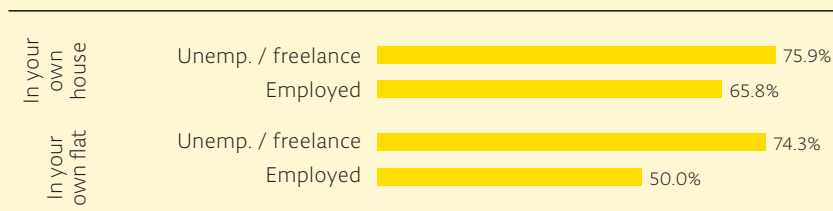
The percentage of youth who live with their parents¹⁰⁷ has increased roughly proportionately in all groups with respect to employment status, including those employed in permanent positions.

However, the indicator of regular employment (in both periods surveyed) turns out to be an important factor in leaving home later, so it is therefore still reasonable to conclude that the decreased percentage of regularly employed youth contributed its share to youth leaving home later. In view of the tempo the above graph indicates that the reasons for this phenomenon have to be sought elsewhere.

We obtain a much clearer picture if we combine the effect of employment with the effect of the real estate in which the parents of our respondents live.

¹⁰⁷ We used the indicator of living with the mother, which allows comparability with the data from the 2000 survey.

Graph 105: Percentage of youth between 25 and 29 who live in households with their parents with respect to employment status and the real estate in which the respondents' parents live



SOURCE: Youth 2010

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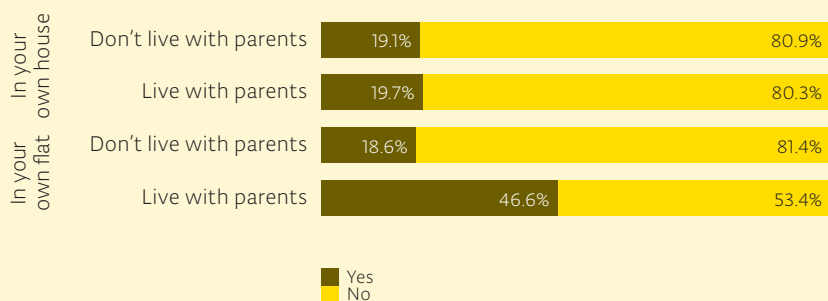
This graph shows that youth whose parents live in a house very often remain at home even if they are employed (we combined all forms of employment). Employment thus clearly encourages youth to move away from home only if there are spatial pressures.

The markedly low (50 per cent) proportion of young people (25-29) whose parents live in a flat indicates that the high percentages of youth living with their parents in Slovenia are correlated primarily with the absence of regular employment and their parents' living in a house.

The influence of the parents living in a house can be explained through the lower probability of a lack of residential space in a house (in comparison with a flat).

Graph 106: Percentage of young people between 25 and 29 who experience a lack of residential space with respect to living with their parents and the type of real estate in which the parents live

Do you experience a lack of living space in your home?



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The above graph clearly shows that young people have a more pronounced experience of a lack of space only if they remain with parents who live in a flat. Moving away from parents who live in a house almost does not change perceptions of lack of space. Here the key datum is that over 67 per cent of these youth (25-29) are those whose parents live in a house. The group of employed youth whose parents live in a flat comprises just over 13 per cent of all youth between 25 and 29. The relatively early independence of this group therefore has a small effect on the average of all youth in this age group.

Income also has a significant effect on the likelihood of leaving home (cf. Mulder and Clark 2000). If we restrict ourselves only to employed youth with monthly incomes of 1000 euros or more, the percentage living with their parents falls to 52 per cent of those whose parents live in a house, and under 31 per cent of those whose parents live in a flat.

Material factors are a very important factor of the likelihood that youth will move away from their parents. Over three fourths of youth (25-29) whose parents live in a house and are not employed live with their parents, and less than a third of those whose parents live in a flat, have regular employment and monthly incomes of at least 1000 euros.

The importance of employment with sufficiently high income (which could e.g. enable renting a flat or paying back a housing loan) is therefore clear. With regard to the qualitative interviews conducted, the expectations of the youth in this respect seem relatively large. The typical responses to the question “Where do you see yourself in 10 years?” with respect to housing issues were:

“... I have two children and a house next to a forest.”

(Maja, 30, unemployed graduate)

“... in a nicely-arranged single-storey house... in a village, with a lot of greenery, or in the forest.”

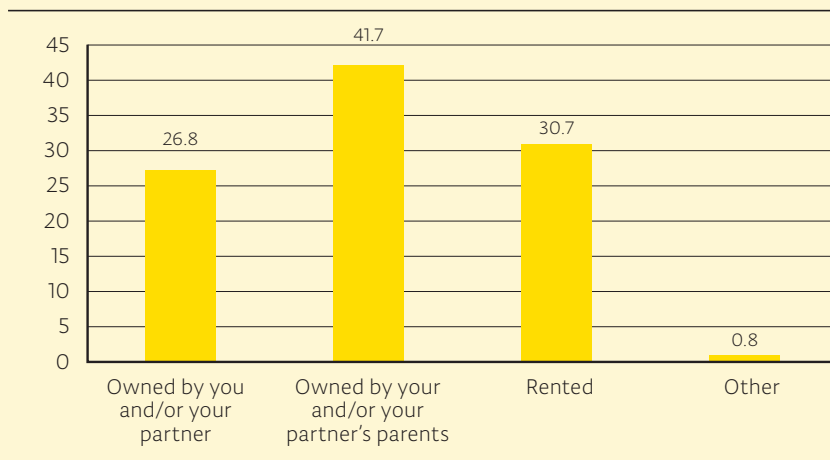
(Oto, 28, car mechanic)

“We live in a larger flat or in a smaller house in the suburbs with easy access to the centre of town, with a lot of greenery, near a stream, sports facilities in the vicinity, and enough room for a dog.”

(Mojca, 23, student)

The real possibilities for purchasing their own flat (much less financing a house in an idyllic spot) are on the other hand relatively small for the majority of young people.

Graph 107: Young people (15-29) and place of residence with respect to ownership, Youth 2010



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As can be seen from the data, the majority are rented residences and residences owned by the respondents' or their partners' parents. Those who own the residence they live in acquired them primarily through inheritance (48.7 per cent) or by taking out a loan (32.9 per cent). Cash purchases are rare (funds from parents or relatives: 7.6 per cent, own funds 10.8 per cent). In other words:

Only a little more than 15 per cent of youth who moved away from home purchased the real estate they live in with their own money or by taking out a loan.

It is therefore clear that the situation on the real estate market combined with the available income make buying a flat without the parents' help possible only in exceptional cases. It is telling that among those who moved away from home, undoubtedly the largest group (41.7 per cent)

are those who live in real estate owned by their parents.¹⁰⁸ If you add to this those whose parents (co-)financed the purchase of the real estate, we find that for the majority (55.4 per cent) of youth who moved away from home, that move was made possible in an economic sense directly by the parents.¹⁰⁹

The importance of material factors is also indicated by the major discrepancy between wishes and reality regarding moving out. The following finding is telling in this respect:

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92.1 per cent of youths aged 15-18 want to move away from home by the time they are 29. However, at age 29 only 31.6 per cent live completely separately from their parents.

In view of the above, the material possibilities for living independently (particularly with regard to the wish to own one's own real estate, especially a house) are shown to be the key factor in delaying moving away from the parents. The decline of the position of youth on the labour market alongside good conditions of (co)habitation in their parents' houses in the last decade logically lead to youth delaying moving away from their parents.

10.1.2 **Living with parents relatively favourable for young people**

Among the many factors of moving away from parents, authors also mention the level of family discord (less harmony contributes to faster departure) (Mulder 2000). In terms of quality of relations between children and parents, Slovenia sits at the very top of European countries

108 77 per cent of them live in a house with their parents. This leads to the conclusion that a large part of this group live at the same address as their parents, but (by their own estimation) have independent households.

109 In view of these data it is no surprise that nearly 89 per cent of the youth in our survey rely on help from their parents in resolving housing issues.

(Currie et al. 2004). Slovenian national surveys of youth also reflect a high level of cohabitation. According to data from 2010, 84.5 per cent of all respondents assess their relationships with their mothers as good or very good. With respect to fathers, this figure is 76.4 per cent, and a full 88.8 per cent mostly or entirely agree that their parents love them. This is also confirmed in the descriptions by our interviewees:

"I'm very happy I have such a family, I'm very proud of my parents and grandparents. I feel very good in my home environment. I like it very much there are so many of us at home."

(Vali, 23, young representative of the Hungarian minority)

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"You can't do anything without parents... It's good to have your own family, but it's not enough. My grandpa always helps me... emotional support, social support, financial support."

(Enver, 20, young Roma)

"Our family is open-minded, everyone uses their head, different opinions are tolerated, and we talk about things and reach a consensus. We work well together!"

(Davor, 22, economics student)

"... we do everything together. I am happy to have my things put away... my brother helps my father... Otherwise we want for nothing. Our flat is rather small, but we love each other."

(Afrodita, 21, disabled)

Our data however do not indicate a statistically significant correlation between family relations and the likelihood of moving away from home, which indicates that youth do not leave their parents' homes due to bad relationships. More precisely, the percentage of those who do not feel comfortable at home is just as low (15 per cent) among those who live with their parents and those who have (already) moved out.

After moving away from their parents' home to a new home, youth on average do not feel

any better, which is a clear sign that living with one's parents does not constitute a major sacrifice for young people in the emotional sense.

378 It seems logical that the generally high level of quality relations with parents paired with relatively favourable spatial opportunities (living in a house) increases the likelihood that youth will remain at home in conditions of risky transitions to material independence.

Our results on the other hand indicate a negative influence of permissive upbringing on the likelihood of moving away from the parents in the 25-29 age group ($r = -0.103$; $p < 0.05$). This datum is not surprising as various studies have clearly indicated a correlation between permissive socialisation in childhood and lower levels of social and instrumental competence later in life (cf. Baumrind 1991), which are of course crucial to establishing independence. In connection with this, the finding that younger youths (15-18) who have experienced very permissive upbringing on average plan to leave their parents substantially earlier than their peers whose upbringing was less permissive (21.3 vs. 23.8 years respectively). Permissively raised youths want to establish their independence as soon as possible, but in reality they manage to do so relatively late. It seems reasonable to seek for the reason for this in a lack of key competences that influence this transition into adulthood, as well as in the seeking of comfort that is supposed to be particularly characteristic of permissively raised people (cf. Godina 2009: 8). Here we also have to take into consideration the fact that permissive parents are probably still oriented towards increasing their children's comfort during the youth period.

Unfortunately, we did not find any reliable data on whether the scope of permissive upbringing by parents in Slovenia increased during our respondents' childhoods, so we cannot make a suitable estimate of the effect of its scope on the delaying of moving away from home. Despite this we have to take into account the assessments of various analysts (cf. Novak 2005, Godina 2009, Godina 2010) that in the past few dec-

ades the permissiveness of socialisation within the family has increased in Slovenia (as well). In a separate study, Katarina Vodopivec (2008) demonstrates that a trend of permissiveness is also clearly indicated in the school system. Using these assessments as a starting point, we can conclude:

In view of the available data, the increasing permissiveness of socialisation along with reduced structural opportunities for establishing independence could be an important factor of extending living with parents in Slovenia.

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In connection with the comfort associated with living in one's parents' household, we should also mention the finding that the social lives of youths who stay at home are significantly more virtualised. In the 25-29 age group, youths who live at their parents' home use the Internet significantly more to download music and films ($r = 0.213$; $p < 0.01$) and to watch and upload videos ($r = 0.114$; $p < 0.05$) They also play computer games more often ($r = 0.110$; $p < 0.05$) and send more text messages on average ($r = 0.121$; $p < 0.01$).

In this regard we can state that the characteristics attributed to “Generation Y”¹¹⁰ in popular discourse contribute their share to extending living with the parents. It certainly seems logical that such living arrangements, given good relationships with the parents and information/communications technologies support is a substantially more attractive (or at least less unattractive) option. From the available data we can conclude that the progress of digital and communications technologies in the past decade have contributed to the increased appeal of deciding to live in a shared household with one’s parents.

10.1.3 **The cultural factor: it’s better to stay at home than to risk poverty**

Studies are indicating an interesting trend that (primarily) in countries with a liberal model of the transition to adulthood and the associated early leaving home, the risk of poverty for youth who do not live with their parents is substantially higher than for those that stay at home. In countries with a subprotective (Mediterranean) transition model these differences are nearly nonexistent (Aassve, Iacovou and Mencarini

110 The fundamental quality of Generation Y (born roughly between 1985 and 2000) is growing up in the world of digital technology. It is the first generation that had digital technology “in the cradle”. For this reason members of this generation are continuously connected to digital forms of information transfer, which to a great extent affects their everyday functioning. Another one of the qualities of this generation emphasised by the majority of authors is a highly expressed need for entertainment. The assessment also holds for Generation Y that they rate family life relatively highly and get along with their parents well (Brečko 2005).

2006). The authors of this report find that this can be explained purely through cultural factors. In countries with a liberal model of transition, the period of risking poverty and social exclusion (including the risk of this period extending throughout one's entire life) is acceptable and in the sense of a particular kind of initiation of youth perhaps even desirable. In countries with the subprotective model, youth typically accept risking poverty substantially more rarely and prefer to stay in the shelter of the home of their parents for a longer period of time.

Unfortunately we do not have any data that would confirm such a (poverty-intolerant) cultural pattern for Slovenia in a direct and internationally comparable manner. Indirectly, Slovenes' low-tolerance threshold with regard to poverty can be concluded from the Eurobarometer survey (2010), according to which a full 78 per cent of Slovenes believe that poverty is very widespread in the country (the EU-27 average is 73 per cent). This discrepancy is telling primarily in view of the fact that according to Eurostat data for 2008 the level of risk of poverty (including among youth) in Slovenia is far below the EU average.¹¹¹

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Prioritising domestic stability and comfort and the associated caution of youth in moving away from their parents is also neatly expressed in the statements of our interviewees. However, all of them expressed a desire to live in their own house or flat:

"Why should I move out when I have half the house? And being at home rules... you know? Hey, I'm not proud of it, it's just the way it is."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

Even more telling are the thoughts of Dani, who makes his living doing freelance work:

"It's good at home... I have everything I need, there's enough of everything... well, the fridge is always full and we've got heat too..."

Would you like to live on your own? (A.N.)

"Sure, someday... But it's not just that easy here. You've got to think carefully about the hows and whats. You can't just do it on the spur

111 We discuss this further in the chapter on the economic status of youth.

of the moment, now I'm going to live on my own... You've got to think it out, otherwise things could get worse for you."

What would have to happen for you to leave home?

"I don't know. I'd have to win the lottery. Or if they threw me out of the house. For now I don't have to."

(Dani, 24, engaged in unregulated employment)

10.1.4 Slovenia's small size and good traffic infrastructure

Slovenia is a relatively small country with a relatively well-organised (road) infrastructure, which allows youths to commute daily to work and school and thus reduces the need for moving away from home. This is confirmed by the data from the Eurostudent survey (Orr et al. 2008), in which Slovenian students at 49 per cent are among the leading countries in Europe (4th place) according to the percentage who live with their parents. Our data also confirm a low need for such mobility, since there is practically no evidence of youth moving from the country to the city (there are no significant differences between type of settlement of current residence and type of settlement during childhood). Furthermore, according to surveys in other countries, youth from smaller towns on average move away from their parents sooner (Mulder and Clark 2000), which is logical from the viewpoint of better employment and educational opportunities in cities. In Slovenia the direction of correlation is exactly the opposite: while (only) 59.8 per cent of respondents among youth (15-29) from towns of over 10,000 inhabitants live at home, for youth from smaller towns and rural areas this figure is 67.3 per cent.

The data that over 91 per cent of youth travel to school or work by car, bus or train and that Slovenian youth on average travel 22 km to work or school is also telling. It is therefore clear that access to education and work can be achieved through daily commuting throughout Slovenia, which reduces the pressure on youth to move away from their parents.

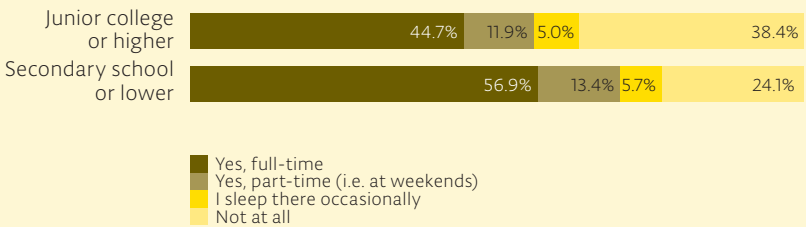
10.1.5 **Substantial extension of period of inclusion
in the education system**

Slovenia sits at the top of the EU-27 in terms of inclusion of youth in regular education. According to data cited by Choroszevicz and Wolf, Slovenia at 77 per cent is first in Europe by a wide margin in terms of percentage of youth (18-24) who live at home and are enrolled in education at the same time (for the entire EU-27 this figure is 58.8 per cent). Kuhar (2009) notes the relatively high student drop-out rate (one third) and length of studies, which is longer than seven years on average. Higher education in her opinion “serves mainly as a kind of incubator which enables people to delay their entry onto the labour market” (p. 29). In her opinion, a major role is played by student labour, which contributes considerably to extending the study period and the mass enrolment in higher education. Our data in this respect present a slightly surprising picture.

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Graph 108: Young people between 25 and 29 with respect to highest level of education completed and (not) living with parents

Do you live in a household with your parents or guardians?



As follows from the above graph, youth who study leave home much earlier on average ($r = 0.145$; $p < 0.01$) than their less educated peers (25-29 age group). This is undoubtedly connected with the much higher total monthly income earned by more educated people (those who have completed at least junior college earn an average of 922.3 euros a month, those with at most secondary education average 705.4 euros), as well as various psychological characteristics of those who are more successful in school (more highly educated people are e.g. more focused on the future) ($r = 0.137$; $p < 0.01$).

We can therefore conclude:

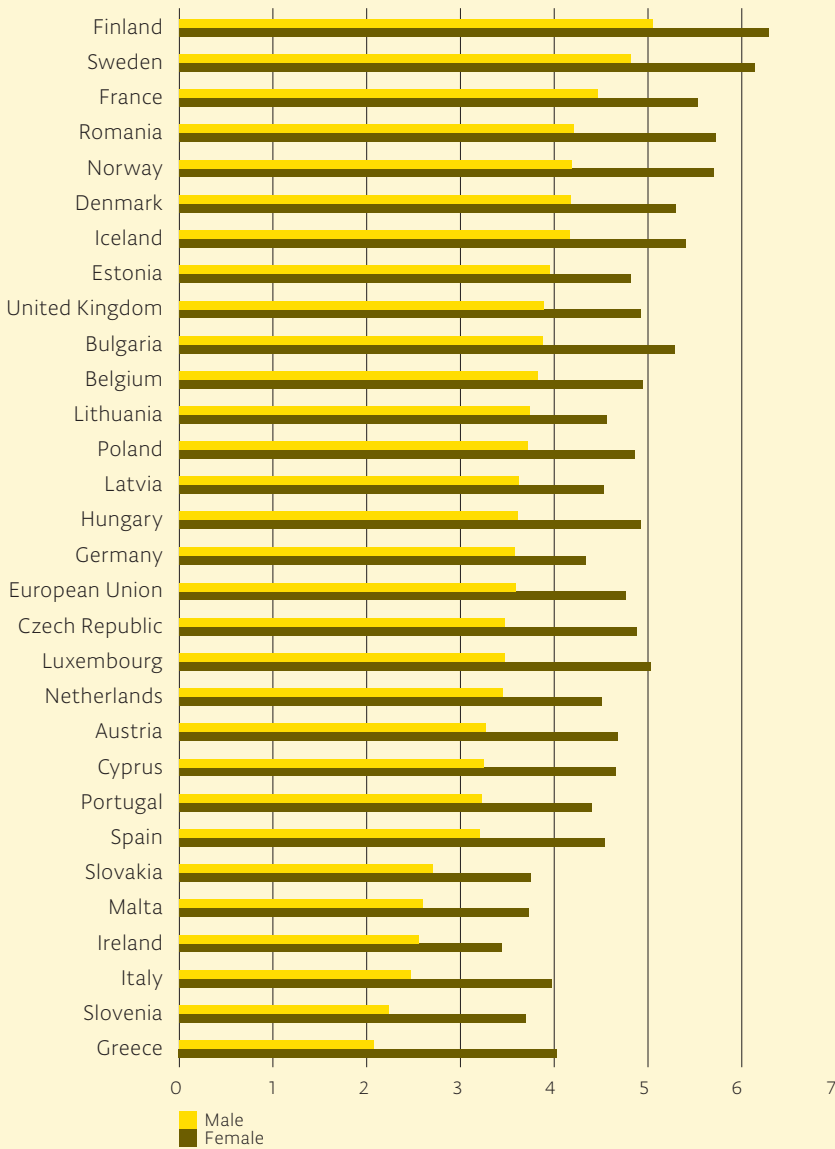
Despite the substantial extension of the period of inclusion in the education system, this inclusion does not correlate as an important factor in extending the period of living with the parents.

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10.1.6 **Young people find “together and apart” partnerships convenient**

As the graph below indicates, the percentage of youth who live together in partnership relationships in Slovenia is exceptionally low. However, Slovenian youths who live in cohabitation partnership relationships in fact leave their parents' homes at an above-average rate in comparison with the EU. According to the data of Choroszevicz and Wolf (2010: 4) the percentage of Slovenian youths who cohabit in long-term partnership relationships and at the same time live with their parents is slightly lower than the percentage of such youths at the EU level (which is 4.5 per cent).

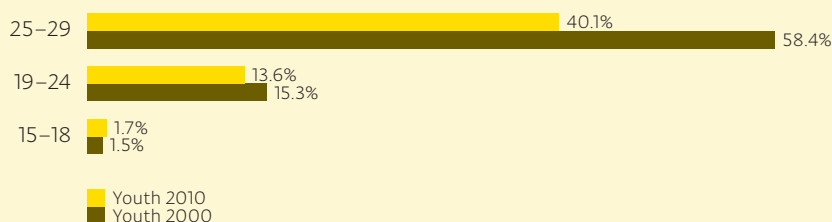
Graph 109: Percentage of men and women (18-34) who in 2008 lived in cohabitation partnership relationships, EU-27



SOURCES: Choroszevicz and Wolf, 2010

Here it is not surprising that the percentage of youths who live in partnership relationships in Slovenia has decreased substantially.

Graph 110: Percentage of young people who live with a partner with respect to age group, Youth 2000 and Youth 2010



A substantial drop occurred in the oldest group (25-29), from 58.4 to 40.1 per cent. Of course, this delay can be closely associated with other factors that have a slowing effect on moving away from home. But here we have to take into account the fact that in both of the last two surveys of Slovenian youth (2000 and 2010), the youths have stated their (expected) moving away from their parents approximately one year before their (foreseen) cohabitation with a partner (Graph 110). Therefore, Slovenian youth are relatively (and increasingly) late in cohabitating with partners, which clearly decreases the motivation for an earlier move away from home.

10.1.7 **The psychological traits of young people are not characteristically associated with moving out**

Here we have to briefly analyse the socio-psychological factors of youth moving away from home. In our analysis we first used the variable of the respondents' own estimate of the age at which they would move away from their parents and restricted our analysis solely to the oldest youth (25-29), as only a little over half (52 per cent) in this age group still live in a household with their parents, and therefore their responses are the most reliable with respect to the real time frame for moving out. According to our data the correlations between the (expected) age of moving away from home and both measures of narcissism (grandiosity and exploitation) are far from statistically significant. Similarly, the

correlation between permissive upbringing during childhood and age of moving out is not statistically significant. According to our data there are also no statistically significant correlations between age of moving away from home and the various indicators of hedonism. Youths who leave home (or intend to leave home) later are no more oriented towards enjoying “today regardless of tomorrow”, and fun and entertainment, enjoying food and drink, idleness, sex and love etc. are no more important to them.

Our data do not confirm the hypothesis that the increase in the average age at which youths leave home is associated with hedonism and young people’s lack of willingness to accept responsibility.

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Another telling finding here (which we discuss in greater detail in the chapter on employment and entrepreneurship) is that youth are increasingly open to geographical mobility and accepting temporary employment in order to increase their employment opportunities (which are an important springboard for moving away from one’s parents). Based on this it would be difficult to support the thesis that the increase in the average age at which youths leave home is associated with psychological factors such as hedonism and young people’s lack of willingness to accept responsibility.

10.2 Is leaving home late (necessarily) a problem?

Although we should not underestimate the importance of moving away from the parents to the development of independence and the related psychological development of youths, it nevertheless seems reasonable to evaluate the phenomenon of late moving away from home from other perspectives. Extended staying under the same roof with the parents can e.g. be understood as economically rational behaviour which reduces living costs, and at a macro level also pressures on goods consumption.

In this sense such behaviour could be understood as a move away from consumerism and considered a sustainable manner of social functioning, which we discuss in a separate chapter. We should also think about the opportunities that the “social shock absorber of large houses and friendly parents” allows for the development of entrepreneurship, as it clearly reduces the existential risk of (potential) young entrepreneurs.

On the other hand one has at least to be aware that among Slovenian youth the creation of one’s own household is a crucial condition for creating a family.

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By 29 years of age, 50 percent of the young people managing their own households have at least one child, while this percentage of young people living with their parents is as low as 15 percent.

The importance of moving away from home is shown to be a key factor ($\beta = 0.331$; $p < 0.01$) in the number of children even when its influence in a regression analysis is controlled by the effect of income (which in this combination is not significant) and employment ($\beta = 0.108$; $p < 0.05$).

If moving away from the parents and the creation of one’s own family seem too demanding, there is a considerable likelihood that young people will not decide to do so:

“My mom had my brother at 19, and me at 25. To me this seems so far away... I want more out of life than a sour face at 65 and a thank you for a pension. It’s sad you can’t have kids unless you kill yourself working, and I don’t want that.”

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

Often, particularly for women, it is also difficult to balance the demands of a career with the desire to have a family – especially taking into account the Slovenian ideal family, which lives in an idyllic house:

“It would be nice to have children. At this point I’m looking more at my career than at having kids. I would like to live in my own house, but I can’t afford it. I have a whole floor at my parents’ house and that’s it. I don’t have a family, which I should have by 29 according to the social norms. These norms bother me a little.”

(Mateja, 29, employed in the parliament)

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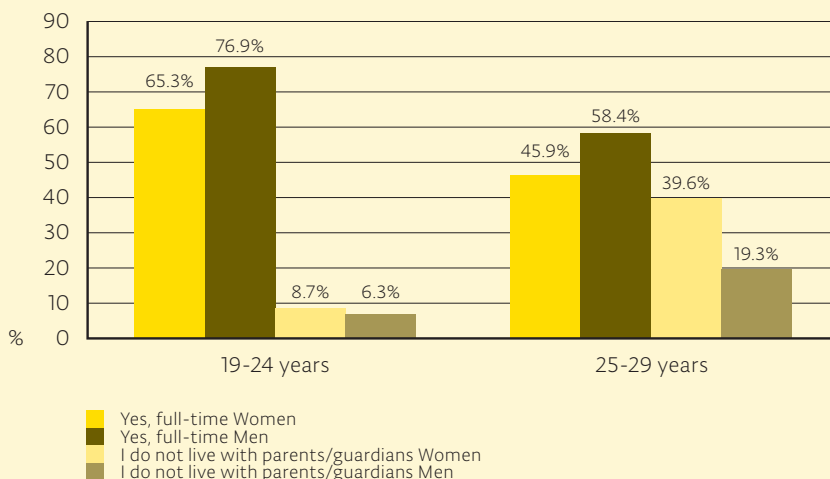
If therefore the goal of youth policy is to support the increasing/maintenance of the birth rate (which seems expedient in view of the expected decrease in the number of youth), we urgently have to provide young people with better opportunities for creating independent households. This is particularly clear if we consider the data that only around 23 per cent of respondents (15-29) in the group of young people who have moved away from their parents and who live in real estate owned by their parents or rented have children, compared with 42 per cent of those who own their own real estate or whose partners own it.

10.3 **Tangent: why girls move out sooner**

According to our data, the percentage of young men who live full-time in their parents’ or guardians’ household is higher than the percentage of women regardless of age group. While nearly 40 per cent of women 25-29 do not live with their parents, this is true of as few as 19 per cent of men in the same age group.

Graph 111: Young people and place of residence (with parents/guardians – independently) with respect to age and sex, Youth 2010

Do you live in a household with your parents or guardians?



Mulder (2009) explains such differences with the hypothesis that moving away from home requires a certain level of maturity and that women move away sooner because they mature earlier than men. Here it seems that the key question is whether women leave home sooner because of help from an (older) partner, or because they want to live alone as suggested by Mulder (2002). This seems unlikely, since among women who do not live at home (19-29),¹¹² only 4.9 per cent live alone (men: 12.9 per cent). Similar results are obtained if we consider only those in the same age group who are single. Among women who do not live with their parents, only 4.9 per cent are single, while the same figure for men is 16.4 per cent. On the other hand, there are slightly more men with partners who live with their own parents than women with partners who live with their own parents (32.4 per cent/34.7 per cent), which means that slightly more women move in with their partners' families than young men. Young women who do not live with their parents are also much more

¹¹² All of the results presented from this point on (unless otherwise indicated) relate to the 19-29 age group. As Mandič (2009) indicates, in Slovenia it makes no sense to do an analysis of the independent residential status of those younger than 19 (the percentage of youth under 19 who do not live with their parents or guardians is practically negligible).

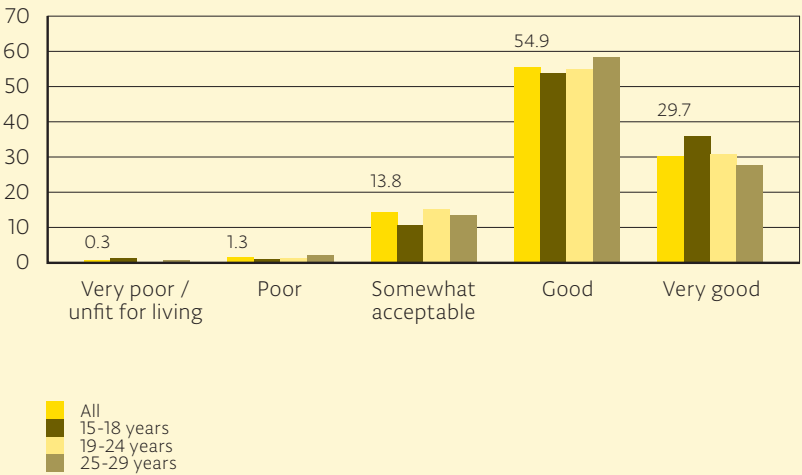
frequently supported by their partners (14.9 per cent/1.7 per cent). It can therefore be concluded that women do not leave their parents' homes sooner than men only because they mature earlier or want to live alone, but also because they usually form partnership relationships with slightly older men who are willing/able to support them and with whom they live in their own (rented or owned) residence or their parents' residence.

10.4 **Young people mainly assess their residential standard as acceptable**

Young people assess the space in which they spend the most time as satisfactory, as only 1.6 per cent assess their housing conditions as very poor or poor, whereby the differences between age groups are not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$).

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Graph 112: Youth satisfaction with housing conditions by age group, Youth 2010



This assessment by youth is slightly surprising, particularly if compared to the results of the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS). Here we find that approximately a quarter of young people (15-29) in Slovenia live in unsuitable housing conditions (Mandič 2009: 82–83). The data on lack of

space are more comparable. 22.4 per cent of youth experience a feeling of a lack of space (15-18: 18.3 per cent, 19-24: 21.5 per cent, 25-29: 23.6 per cent), which is slightly higher than what was found in the EQLS (15-18: 15 per cent, 19-24: 16 per cent, 25-29: 21 per cent) (loc. cit.).

Relative satisfaction can also be concluded from the interviews. Young people don't complain about spatial shortage or general quality of life. Each of the respondents had a space which they described as their private space, and given the fact that the majority of youth live in their parents' house or flat, we can conclude that housing conditions are well provided for.

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Regardless of age, young people in Slovenia assess their residential standard as acceptable, as only 1.6 per cent state that their living conditions are poor or very poor.

10.5 **Key findings**

The key findings from this chapter, together with recommendations for the implementation of youth policy, may be condensed into the following points:

1. The percentage of youth between 25 and 29 who live in a shared household with their mother increased from 45.4 per cent to 66.8 per cent from 2000 to 2010.
2. Material factors are a very important factor of the likelihood that youth will move away from their parents. Over three fourths of youth (25-29) whose parents live in a house and are not employed live with their parents, and less than a third of those whose parents live in a flat, have regular employment and monthly incomes of at least 1000 euros.
3. After moving away from their parents' home to a new home, youth on average do not feel any better, which is a clear sign that living

with one's parents does not constitute a major sacrifice for young people in the emotional sense.

4. In view of the available data, the increasing permissiveness of socialisation along with reduced structural opportunities for establishing independence could be an important factor of extending living with parents in Slovenia.
5. From the available data we can conclude that the progress of digital and communications technologies in the past decade have contributed to the increased appeal of deciding to live in a shared household with one's parents.
6. Despite the substantial extension of the period of inclusion in the education system, this inclusion does not correlate as an important factor in extending the period of living with the parents.
7. Our data do not confirm the hypothesis that the increase in the average age at which youths leave home is associated with hedonism and young people's lack of willingness to accept responsibility.
8. By 29 years of age, 50 percent of the young people managing their own households have at least one child, while this percentage of young people living with their parents is as low as 15 percent.
9. Regardless of age, young people in Slovenia assess their residential standard as acceptable, as only 1.6 per cent state that their living conditions are poor or very poor.

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11 Globalisation and youth mobility

11.1 What is globalisation and what does this phenomenon mean for young people

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Globalisation has without a doubt become the most used, and certainly the most abused, misunderstood and politically most effective, disputed and striking word of the last few years. The looseness and slipperiness of the concept, whose generality does not permit a single clear definition, can be a very useful quality, especially when its singular dimension is emphasised because of subjective interests and goals. Thus we have among the general definitions, which speak about spatial and temporal compression, interdependency and connection, working and (shared) living over distances (cf. Giddens 2000, Guillen 2001, Harvey 1989) first of all those that emphasise its positive aspects (e.g. supranational cooperation, cost reduction, the permeability of borders, economic growth etc.; see e.g. Levitt 1983, Ohmae 1990), and then those which warn about its negative aspects (e.g. global crime, increasing differences, the undermining of social security, increased unemployment, environmental pollution, increased uncertainty etc.; cf. Beck 2004, Rodrik 1997).

This survey demonstrated that young adults perceive globalisation as a contemporary phenomenon related to modernisation, capitalisation and democratisation of the world. In their perception it is primarily linked to technology and culture, and in these respects they see it as primarily negative. In their understanding, the core of globalisation processes is tendencies towards cultural colonialism destroying local features of diverse autochthonous cultures, and they most frequently identify the USA as the source of these processes:

“MTV is everywhere, not just on MTV. McDonald’s is everywhere, not just at McDonald’s.”

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

In the opinion of some young people, the globalisation trend is reaching into other areas as well:

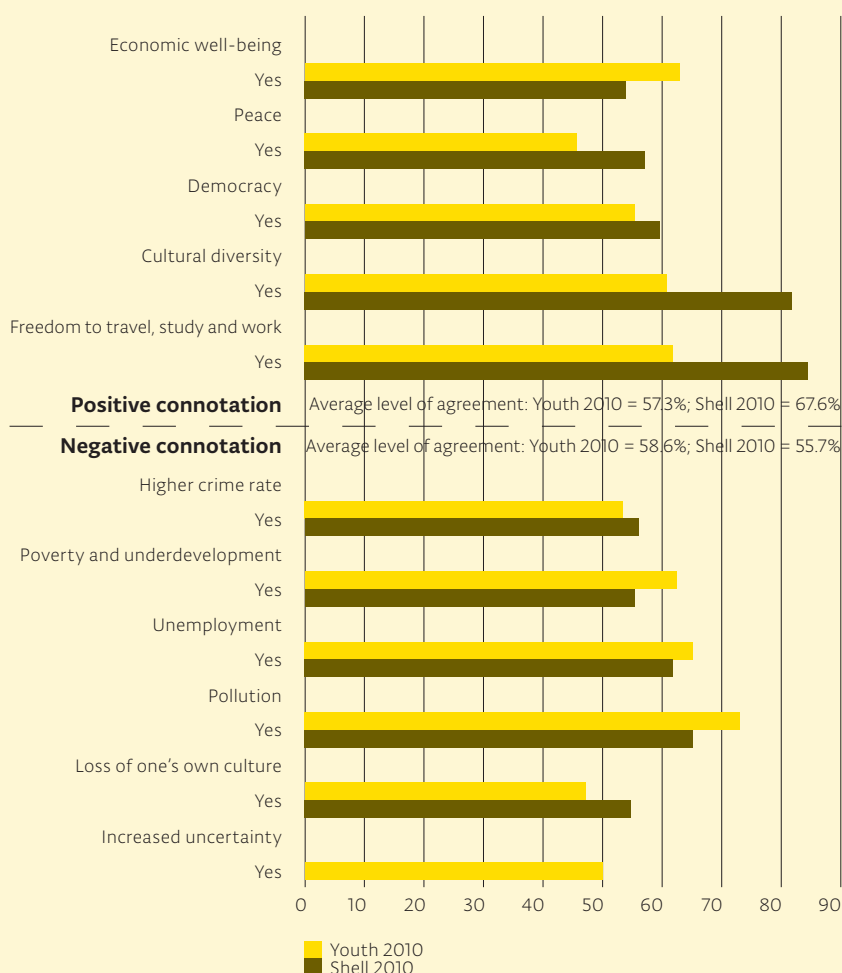
“Yeah, I think the main goal of globalisation is training individuals to serve [the interests of] capital.”

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to the Pekarna youth centre)

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The empirical data for Youth 2010 also indicate that Slovenian youth have an ambivalent attitude towards globalisation, which can also be detected in the writing of authors of professional and scientific literature. The majority of young people connect the phenomenon of globalisation with “civilising” as well as “destructive” processes (Guillen 2001) (see graph below). Put another way, young people’s attitude towards globalisation is reflected in the title *Globalisation: Neither Hell Nor Paradise*.¹¹³

Graph 113: What young people (15-25) associate with the phenomenon of globalisation, Youth 2010 and Shell 2010



As can be seen from the graph, in comparison with their German peers (Shell 2010), Slovenian youth on average associate globalisation more often with economic growth, and more rarely with other non-material categories such as e.g. peace, democracy, cultural diversity and mobility. This is also the main reason why the average level of agreement with the idea that globalisation has positive effects among Slovenian youth (57.3 per cent) is lower than that of German youth (67.6 per cent). On the

other hand, Slovenian youth more often associate the phenomenon of globalisation with negative outcomes than do German youth, although the difference here is smaller. We should point out here that Slovenian youth associate globalisation less often with the loss of their own culture than do German youth (47 per cent vs. 55 per cent). This is undoubtedly interesting taking account of the conventionally accepted wisdom that globalisation primarily threatens smaller, economically and politically weaker cultures (see e.g. Schnurr and Holtz, 1998).

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Slovenian youth have an ambivalent attitude towards globalisation. They associate it with “civilising” (democratisation, freedom to work, travel and study) as well as “destructive” processes (cultural colonialism, pollution, poverty, crime).

A more detailed analysis showed that in terms of perceptions of the phenomenon of globalisation, young people are a relatively homogenous group (an analysis of averages did not demonstrate statistically significant differences ($p < 0.001$) with regard to categories such as e.g. sex, family's socioeconomic status, age or employment status).

11.2 Mobility and its significance for the individual and society

Needless to say, the phenomenon of mobility¹¹⁴ is closely connected to the phenomenon of globalisation, since e.g. Held et al. (1999) define globalisation using the concept of mobility itself: “Globalisation is a process which is driven by intensified cross-border mobility of goods, services,

114 Although mobility can roughly be divided into social and geographic, in this chapter we will speak only about geographic mobility, where the phenomenon, unless explicitly stated otherwise, refers to cross-border mobility. The phenomenon of mobility itself will thus be conceptually equated with the phenomenon of migration, which in the most general sense of the word can be defined as “the movement of people between two geographic places in a certain time period” (Boyle et al., 1998: 34).

capital, information, culture and people” (Held et al. 1999: 16). Mobility is therefore a fundamental part of global social reality. It is simultaneously its expression, result and fuel, where the mobility of people is frequently addressed from the point of view of the positive effects it is supposed to have on the well-being of individuals and society as a whole.

Thus Bertoni et al. (2008) conclude that youth mobility contributes to their general ability to adapt, or more precisely to their easier (re)integration into the (supra)national labour market (see also Findlay et al. 2006). Mobility supposedly allows the individual to acquire the knowledge and skills currently demanded by the global economy or the global labour market – knowledge of foreign languages, open-mindedness, tolerance, preparedness for intercultural dialogue and the capacity for cross-border cooperation. A study by King and Ruiz Gelices (2003) using the example of student mobility demonstrated that after completing their studies, mobile students more often took higher-paying jobs, applied for jobs abroad more frequently and more frequently viewed their careers within the context of the international environment.

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The effect of mobility on societal well-being is the subject of various reports being issued by European institutions. They most often connect this mobility with the competitiveness of Europe as a whole (CEC 2009), and its broader significance is best demonstrated in the introduction to the European Commission’s report *Youth on the Move* (2010: 3):

“The European Union sets ambitious objectives for smart, inclusive and sustainable growth. Young people are essential to achieve this. Quality education and training, successful labour market integration and more mobility of young people are key to unleashing all young people’s potential and achieving these objectives.”

However, various studies indicate that the importance of mobility should not be sought merely in individual and societal well-being (i.e. material well-being), but more broadly. Here we should in particular point out that mobility with direct contact increases independence, leads to improved understanding of and therefore solidarity with and tolerance of “others”, which can be understood as a necessary condition for coexistence and peace and not just in the national or European space, but also in the world as a whole (for more on this see e.g. Deutsch et al. 1968; Findlay et al. 2006; Fligstein 2008; Sigalas 2010). The Council of the European Union Resolution on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field 2010-2018

(Official Journal of the EU/C311, 2009) can also be understood from this perspective, since mobility is referred to in it directly and primarily in connection with the understanding of differentness, respect for human rights, strengthening European identity and the idea of European citizenship etc.

The idea that mobility also has multilateral positive effects is also demonstrated by the opinions of the young people who were included in the qualitative part of that survey. Young people who have direct experience with mobility describe their experience as extremely positive and believe that everybody should take advantage of this possibility:

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"In 2003 I went to Germany to do practical work for 6 months, and if I hadn't needed a visa, I'd have stayed there."

(Maja, 30, unemployed graduate)

"Studying abroad rules. It's a pity so few people do it."

(Mojca, 23, psychology student)

11.3 Obstacles to mobility

If a decision is adopted that mobility is something that has positive effects on the individual and society,¹¹⁵ the next step is to determine what the obstacles are which prevent or limit it. They can roughly be divided into two groups, objective and subjective. While the objective can be associated primarily with the absence of legal and economic capacities or opportunities (e.g. difficulties with recognition of qualifications, high cost of mobility) and the lack of institutional support (provision of information about opportunities, potential benefits etc.), the subjective can be associated primarily with young people's attitudes towards mobility (i.e. subjective perceptions of the benefits or rewards and potential dangers, ideas about and attitudes towards others etc.).

According to data from the United Nations, the objective obstacles are the largest for the poorly educated, and smaller for the young, particularly for

¹¹⁵ The word society is used here in the sense of the human community, which is not limited to national borders (specifically, the society that comprises the European Union). We should not forget that mobility can have entirely negative effects on national society, particularly the phenomenon usually referred to as "brain drain" or "forced mobility" (Bertoncini et al. 2008). 16).

college students (HDR 2009: 2). However, limitations to people's mobility are succinctly expressed by the data that the percentage of migrants in the total (i.e. global) population, despite the lower costs associated with mobility, has not changed in the past fifty years. It fluctuates at around 3 per cent (HDR 2009). It can therefore be concluded that the borders, when speaking about people's mobility, are most permeable for (future) highly educated young people, who however often do not take advantage of it. As Bertoncini et al. (2008) demonstrate in their study of European youth, quite a few young people do not express any interest in mobility, and this is particularly true of those from the lower classes. In his opinion, one of the crucial tasks of national and supranational institutions in the European Union is therefore to present the concrete effects of mobility to young people more clearly, while continuing to remove the objective obstacles and simultaneously endeavouring to include everything from programmes for learning foreign languages and various initiatives intended to increase intercultural awareness to international scholarships, exchanges of practice and other forms of exchange.

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When we speak of youth mobility, we cannot ignore the question of student mobility, since students comprise a significant part of the youth in the majority of European countries. According to data from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, in the 2008/09 school year nearly half of everyone from 19 to 24 years of age was enrolled in tertiary education (Vertot 2009), and this study indicates that the enrolment of young people in tertiary education is a pronouncedly positive trend. With regard to obstacles to student mobility, we have to take account of the findings of Schnitzer and Zempel-Gino (2002) and Findlay et al. (2006). While the former find that "upper-class white girls" are represented above average in student mobility programmes (ibid.: 115), Findlay et al. (2006) find that in Great Britain a full 80 per cent of students list a lack of financial resources as an obstacle to mobility, primarily the fear that upon their return they would lose their part-time employment and with it the income that allows them to study at domestic universities. However, the same research indicated that the second-most pressing concern was that of (lack of knowledge of) languages, followed by non-recognition of coursework, extension of studies, leaving partners and families, and nearly half expressed concerns about living in a foreign country/culture (ibid.: 305). From this we could conclude that measures whose objective is to increase student mobility should include not just greater financial incentives, but also support of the non-material advantages or benefits that mobility brings, which was also mentioned by one of the interviewees.

»I think young people (students) don't really know of all the possibilities. These programmes should be more heavily advertised... more presentations. Plus we should establish closer links (with education institutions abroad) in order to take better advantage of our ECTSs.»

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to the Pekarna youth centre)

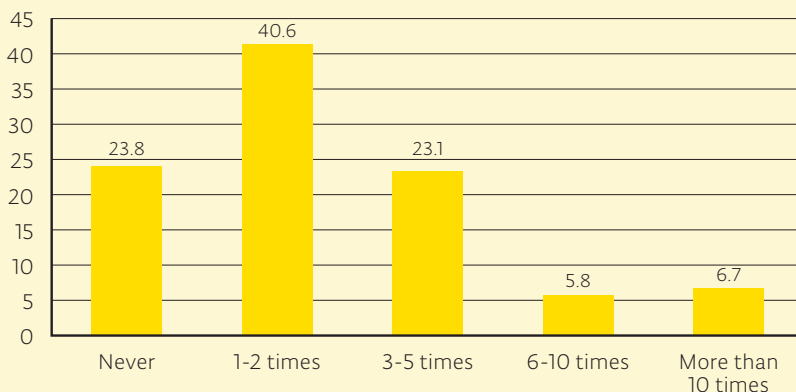
11.4 Youth mobility and obstacles in Slovenia

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From the discussions with young people one can draw the conclusion that in the opinion of the young the notion of mobility is related primarily to study and mobility programmes promoted by the European Union, for instance Erasmus and Socrates. But study mobility is just a part of something that could be called general mobility. In this study we measured this by asking young people whether and how often in the past year they had been abroad (excluding holidays and shopping trips). The results indicated that “only” a quarter had not been abroad in the past year (“only” because it will be made clear below that other indicators of mobility give a substantially different picture), which means that more than 75 per cent of young people experience “otherness” in one way or another (see graph below).

Graph 114: General mobility of young people (15-29) - frequency of travel abroad in last 12 months (in per cent), Youth 2010

Not counting holidays on the Croatian coast and shopping trips near the border (up to 50 km), how often have you travelled abroad in the last 12 months?



A detailed analysis showed that there are no statistically significant differences between the sexes with regard to frequency of travelling abroad ($p > 0.05$), and the same was indicated for comparisons between age groups (15-18, 19-24, 25-29). According to expectations, those who travelled more frequently spent more time abroad, and such mobility is associated with the financial status of the respondents' families ($r = 0.12$; $p < 0.001$) as well as their own income level ($r = 0.13$; $p < 0.001$).

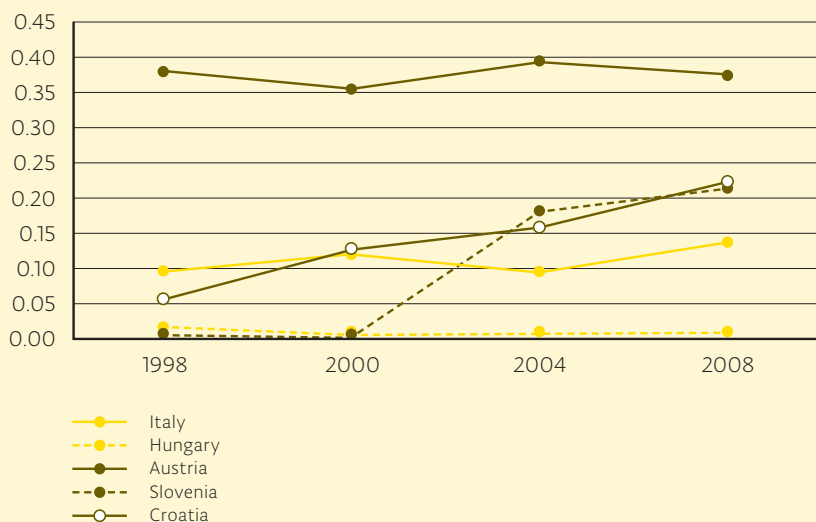
The experience of foreign countries among young Slovenes is a mass phenomenon regardless of their age or sex, but that experience is usually of short duration.

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From this data it can be concluded that the experience of foreign countries is a majority phenomenon among Slovenian youth regardless of age or sex. But it's a different picture when you look at the duration of these experiences. The percentage of young people who spent more than two months abroad in the past year is a modest 3.6 per cent. This percentage is even lower for periods of over 12 months.

According to Eurostat data, this percentage, like those of our neighbouring countries, is nearly negligible. It fluctuates around 0.25 per cent of young people. It should be noted that a growth trend is evident for Slovenia (see graph below).

Graph 115: Percentage of young people (15-29) living abroad for a period longer than 12 months



SOURCE: Eurostat – Population and social conditions/Employment and unemployment (Labour Force Survey)

Although the percentage of young people (15-29) in Slovenia who go abroad for periods longer than 12 months has grown steadily since 1998, that percentage is still practically negligible (in 2008 it was approx. 0.25 per cent).

A similar growth trend can be detected for student mobility within the framework of the Socrates/Erasmus programme, although here it should be stated that this programme's opportunities are still taken advantage of by a relatively small number of students (less than 1 per cent), despite the fact that the conversations with young people indicated that they are relatively well informed about the opportunities and content of the student mobility programmes and that in principle they like having the opportunity to study abroad.

Table 18: Percentage of students participating in the Erasmus mobility programme for study abroad out of all students enrolled in tertiary education in Slovenia, 2000/01 – 2008/09

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
%	0.20	0.25	0.39	0.45	0.55	0.74	0.88	0.84	0.89

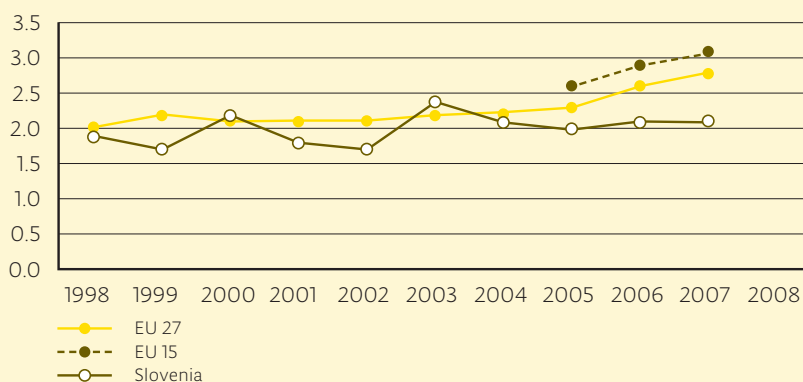
NOTE: Post-secondary students have been included in the Erasmus programme since the 2007/08 school year. In calculating the percentage of students, those enrolled in university study programmes were included up to 2007, and after 2007 all tertiary students were included.

SOURCES: SORS, CMEPIUS and figures from the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

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The percentage of mobile students is slightly higher if all mobility programmes are taken into consideration, but on the other hand these data indicate that total student mobility in Slovenia is not increasing, hovering around 2 per cent from 1998 to 2008, owing to which Slovenian student mobility is falling increasingly behind the European average.

Graph 116: Percentage of students (ISCED 5-6) of the entire population of students that study in other EU-27 Member States, EFTA or candidate states, 1998/99 – 2007/08



SOURCE: Eurostat–Population and social conditions/Employment and unemployment (Labour Force Survey)

The percentage of internationally mobile students in Slovenia is below the European average and demonstrates relative longitudinal stability. The only evident growth trend is in the Erasmus programme, enrolment in which continued to be below one per cent of students in 2008.

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The scope of mobility presented here is also undoubtedly interesting given the fact that in a study entitled *Social Profiles of Slovenian Students* (Flere et al. 2005), 12 per cent of the students surveyed (N=3.378) stated that they definitely intended to carry out part of their studies abroad. A similarly high level of intent among students, especially Bologna students, can be seen in the *Evroštudent* survey (2007).

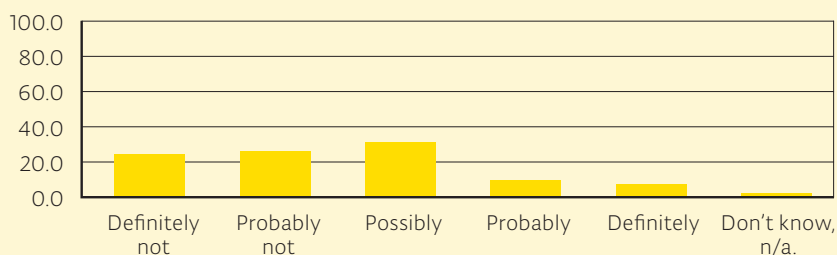
A relatively high presence of young people's intent to perform a part of their studies abroad (in comparison with reality) can also be concluded on the basis of this survey. The results indicated that 86.3 per cent of young people did not spend part of their study time abroad (this percentage is lower than that of the student population, but also includes short-term¹¹⁶ mobility, which is not included in the graph below), although only 24.6 per cent of young people indicated that they definitely did not intend to spend a part of their education abroad (see graph below). In other words, the results of this study indicate that young people display a considerable discrepancy between planned and actual study mobility.

¹¹⁶ All young people who carried out part of their education abroad and were there for one day or more were counted as "mobile". The percentage of short-term mobile young people (total duration of education abroad \leq 1 month) was 55.4 per cent of all mobile young people.

Results indicate that there is a relatively large discrepancy between young people's planned and actual study mobility.

Graph 117: Percentage of young people who intend to spend a part of their education abroad, Youth 2010

Do you intend to spend part of your education abroad?

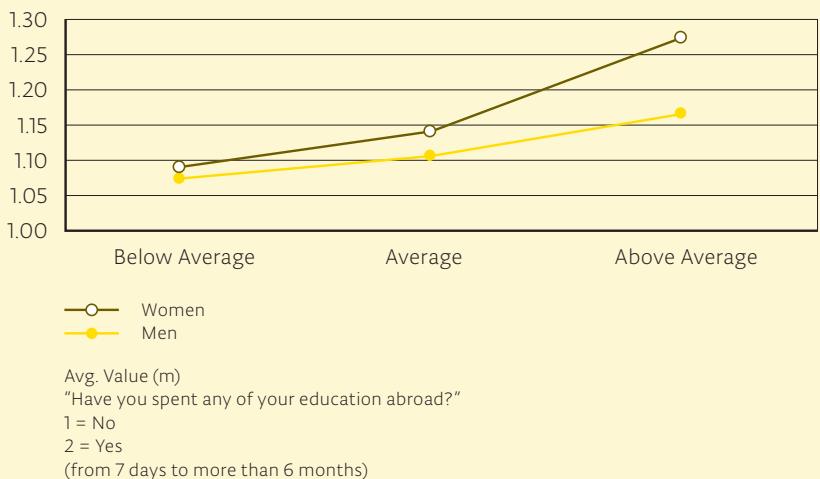


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Here it is of course reasonable to ask *what are the causes of this discrepancy?* One of the possible answers is a fact that was discovered by the aforementioned research by Flere et al. (2005). This study found that *only 3 per cent of respondents believed that scholarships for study abroad were large enough (this percentage was slightly higher among those who had already studied abroad – 8.7 per cent)*. A similar conclusion was indicated by the results of the Evroštudent survey, which showed that the largest share of the costs arising from mobility are covered by the participant and her/his family, which provide 56 per cent of the necessary funds on average (Evroštudent, 2007: 61). The fact that the family's material standing is important to study mobility can also be concluded from this research (see graph below).

Graph 118: Average youth mobility with regard to the material standing of the respondents' families and with regard to sex, Youth 2010

"How would you assess your family's material standing?"



The results indicate that the perceived material standing of the family correlates positively with study mobility, and applies slightly more to girls than boys (girls: $r = 0.14$; $p < 0.001$; boys: $r = 0.09$; $p < 0.05$), which also indicates a higher level of study mobility (while 16 per cent of girls have exercised at least one form of study mobility, this applies to only slightly over 11 per cent of boys). Therefore we could establish a parallel with Zempel-Gino's (2002) results, i.e. that girls from higher classes are prevalent with respect to study mobility.

The majority of young people who have spent at least part of their study time abroad are girls and those who come from wealthier families.

Despite the demonstrated connection, the measurements of correlation indicate that these connections are weak, which accords with the aforementioned Evroštudent survey, which showed that the financial factor is only in second place. The main obstacle to student mobility in their opinion can be found in the low level of support for mobility in their homeland, which relates to the accessibility of information, recognition of coursework, expected delay in studies, poor assessment of education gained abroad and limited access to mobility programmes. Knowledge of foreign languages and personal motivation were lesser factors (Evroštudent 2007: 62). From these data it is therefore possible to make the connection that obstacles to student mobility in Slovenia can be found primarily in objective factors (insufficient financial incentives, poor institutional support etc.).

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This conclusion can also be drawn from the conversations with young people (insufficient presentation of potential benefits, difficulties with recognition of coursework performed abroad), although the most frequently cited reasons for non-mobility in the interviews with young people were obligations associated with the domestic environment. They most often mentioned work, e.g. in connection with school, the Student Employment Service or home, but many young people do not completely rule out study abroad:

"I'm interested in going abroad, but not just yet... too much work here at home. Maybe for postgraduate studies or specialisation."

(Mojca, 23, psychology student)

Obstacles to student mobility include a combination of objective and subjective factors, of which the former are most prevalent (insufficient financial incentives, insufficient presentation of potential benefits, non-recognition of coursework performed abroad, responsibility for obligations associated with the domestic environment).

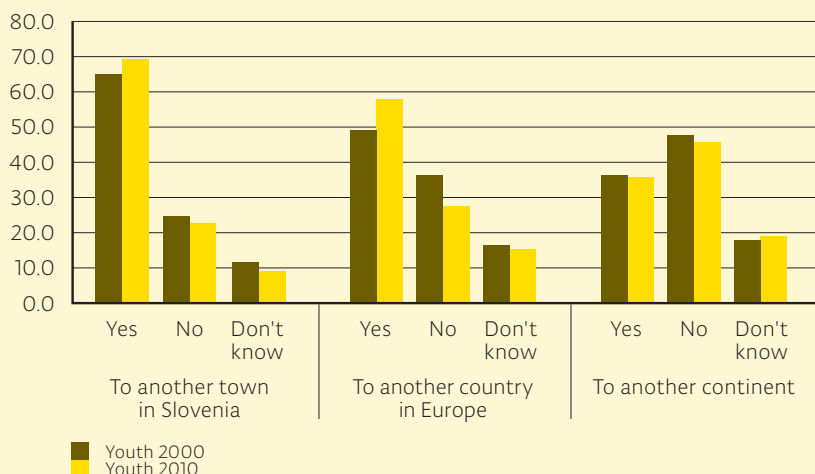
The results also indicated that the intention to “study abroad” shows a statistically significant correlation with previous experience of mobility (related to education: $r = 0.28$; $p < 0.001$; to frequency of travel abroad: $r = 0.15$; $p < 0.001$; to duration of living abroad: $r = 0.20$; $p < 0.001$), material standing of young person’s family ($r = 0.15$; $p < 0.001$), knowledge of one major foreign language ($r = 0.29$; $p < 0.001$) and social tolerance ($r = 0.16$; $p < 0.001$). It is therefore perhaps possible to conclude that any form of previous mobility operates in a stimulative manner with regard to attitude towards study mobility (more so if the duration of such previous mobility was long). As expected, the frequency of travelling abroad and the duration of the travel shows a statistically significant correlation with the young person’s material standing ($r = 0.13$; $p < 0.001$) or the material standing of the young person’s family ($r = 0.12$; $p < 0.001$).

Here we should also mention the encouraging finding that willingness to study abroad does not vary with regard to sex ($p > 0.05$), while the fact that the average willingness to study abroad decreases with the age of the respondents ($p < 0.001$) is probably less encouraging. This also holds when the relationship between the variables is controlled by sex, employment status and primary activity ($p < 0.05$).

The results of this study indicate that willingness to live in a foreign country is also relatively high. Specifically, the percentage of young people prepared to move to a foreign country in order to improve their creative and life opportunities fluctuates between 56 (willingness to move to another country in Europe) and 35 per cent (move to another continent, see graph below).

**Graph 119: Willingness of young people to move abroad,
Youth 2010 and Youth 2000**

If you were offered better creative and life oppotunities, would you be willing to move for a long time or permanently:



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A similarly high (or even higher) level of willingness to move abroad can be found among students. A full 63.8 per cent of respondents stated that they would be prepared to live abroad after completing their studies (not permanently, but for a longer period of time: 41 per cent; permanently if they had the opportunity: 20.7 per cent; permanently regardless of everything: 2.1 per cent; see Flere et al. 2005).

A longitudinal analysis of the data indicates that the inclination towards local and European mobility among young people has slightly increased. Young people's willingness to move to another continent in order to improve their station remained at practically the same level as in 2000 (Miheljak et al. 2000). The qualitative part of the research also indicates that moving abroad is an attractive concept for young people. Most of them believe it is easier to get a job abroad, and that pay and working conditions are much better than in Slovenia:

"In Austria, for instance, you can't afford to exploit people, politics won't allow it. But here many companies survive by taking advantage of the little people."

(Maja, 30, unemployed graduate)

"I ain't sayin' it's bad here. But it could be be'er. If it ain't get be'er, I'll go work in Italy."

(Dani, 24, engaged in unregulated employment)

"I'd like to work abroad, anything, just to go abroad."

(Mateja, 29, employed in the parliament)

I'd love to live in Barcelona. A beautiful city, the sea and a lot of people with great potential.

(Stane, 26, young entrepreneur)

Otherwise it follows from the empirical evidence that those who are inclined towards such mobility in Slovenia are more favourably inclined towards European and also global mobility ($p < 0.001$) and that such inclination is slightly higher among people who are employed full-time (young men when speaking about total mobility; when speaking about European or global mobility there is no statistically significant difference between the sexes) who have spent the majority of their life in the countryside in families whose material standing they currently assess as above average. In other words, the people least inclined towards local, European and global mobility are those who do freelance work (including students) in larger towns and who as a rule come from families of above-average prosperity.

On the basis of the above it is therefore possible to conclude that Slovenian youth have a relatively positive attitude towards study and general mobility, but it seems that in-depth research of the causes for the relatively low level of realisation is clearly called for.

11.5 Key findings

The key findings from this chapter, together with recommendations for the implementation of youth policy, may be condensed into the following points:

1. Slovenian youth have an ambivalent attitude towards globalisation. They associate it with “civilising” (democratisation, freedom to work, travel and study) as well as “destructive” processes (cultural colonialism, pollution, poverty, crime).
2. The experience of foreign countries among young Slovenes is a mass phenomenon regardless of their age or sex, but that experience is usually of short duration.
3. Although the percentage of young people (15-29) in Slovenia who go abroad for periods longer than 12 months has grown steadily since 1998, that percentage is still practically negligible (in 2008 it was approx. 0.25 per cent).
4. The percentage of internationally mobile students in Slovenia is below the European average and demonstrates relative longitudinal stability. The only evident growth trend is in the Erasmus programme, enrolment in which continued to be below one per cent of students in 2008.
5. The majority of young people who have spent at least part of their study time abroad are girls and those who come from wealthier families.
6. Results indicate that there is a relatively large discrepancy between young people’s planned and actual study mobility.
7. Obstacles to student mobility include a combination of objective and subjective factors, of which the former are most prevalent (insufficient financial incentives, insufficient presentation of potential benefits, non-recognition of coursework performed abroad, responsibility for obligations associated with the domestic environment).

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12 Values, sustainable social functioning and visions of the future

12.1 Trends in youth values and value orientations

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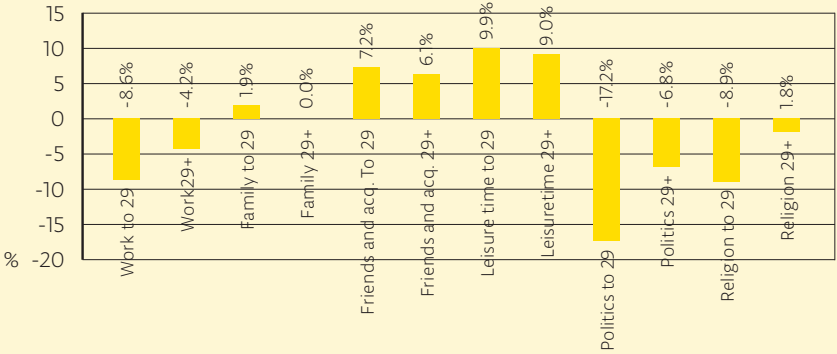
Values as beliefs about the desired are reflected socially in the psychological makeup of the individual. As ideals, goals or standards they create points of effort in individuals and guide their lives. As central motivating themes of society and social change, values have also been intrinsic to all research of Slovenian youth to date (cf. Ule, 1996a, 2008; Ule, Miheljak, 1995; Ule, Renner, 1998; Miheljak, 2002).

To summarise the most significant findings of studies of Slovenian youth, the general characteristic of the youth population in the nineties was an orientation away from engagement with society and towards engagement with the self (Ule 1996b: 23). At the level of individuals' values this is supposed to have manifested in a shift away from global, ideologically and comprehensively constructed value systems to individual, apparently fragmentary and concrete values, among which the prevailing ones were heightened sensitivity to interpersonal relations and the quality of everyday life (Ule 1996c: 241). The most important values of Slovenian youth are thus individual values such as health, true friendship, and family life, as well as global values such as peace on earth, environmental protection, securing the nation against enemies and careerist (success in school) and liberal values (free thought and action) (ibid: 243; Ule, Kuhar 2002). At the same time the research depicts a disinclination among young people towards interest in politics and political events, religion and religious life and the army and military matters (Ule 1996c: 257; Miheljak 2002: 243).

The decline of major ideational themes (politics, religion, work) and the growth of personal themes (such as family, friends, leisure time) can be seen in the graph below, which shows the rise or fall of the importance of individual value categories in the period 1992-2008 based on Slovenian

Public Opinion (SPO) research. Similarly to older people above 30, the changes in importance among Slovenian youth are similarly oriented in all value categories, but there are also surprises in every single case. Young people in particular reflected a pronounced drop in the importance of politics and religion in their lives.

Graph 120: Changes in the importance of individual value categories in the period 1992-2008, separated into younger (up to 29) and older (over 29) age groups



SOURCES: SJM 1992 and SJM 2008

Research of the social profiles of students indicates similar results (cf. Flere et al., 2001; 2002; 2004; 2005). With regard to individual values or life objectives, students ascribe greater importance to stable social bonds within the circle of family and friends, which also indirectly indicates the importance of the value of security. A tendency towards freedom or “being one’s own master” also stands out, which indicates the strong entrenchment of western liberalism and individualism in Slovenian culture (Fištravec, Lavrič 2002: 100). In later research of students, three value orientations stand out: individualism (e.g. to be independent, to have a reliable partner); conventionality (have a well-ordered family life, respect for state authorities, be responsible, security and career) and humanism (altruism, tolerance, creativity, social sensitivity, ecology) (Fištravec 2005: 70).

Below we present comparative data on the importance of values that were included in the Youth 2000 and Youth 2010 surveys.

The data clearly show that there were no major changes at the level of the hierarchy of values. In general the order of values by importance corresponds; in the Youth 2010 survey only the value *order and stability* is slightly higher, while a slight drop in importance and thus a shift into the group of less important values is recorded for *preserving traditional values*.

Graph 121: Importance of individual values* among Slovenian youth, selected research



NOTE: *The importance of values was measured using a 5-point scale (1 – not at all important, ... 5 – very important).

SOURCES: Youth 2000 and Youth 2010

The next general finding is that every single value in Youth 2010 except the value *having power over others* has a lower average assessment of importance than in the 2000 survey. However, the difference between the averages is minor. In connection with various other indices and their trends (e.g. satisfaction with life, which is analysed in the chapter Health and Well-Being, and notions about their future, which we will present in greater detail in this chapter in the analysis of young people's problems and visions of the future), the lower assessments of importance do not indicate the apathy of young people or a potential crisis of values, but could on a micro level express a critical stance towards society or its latent structural ideas.

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And what are the most important values of young people? *Health* remains in the top spot, followed by *true friendship*, *family life* and *freedom of action and thought*. The first three reflect a focus on traditionalism and personal matters, while the fourth is an example of an expressive value, which are connected with an idealistic conception of the world and of life (cf. Ule, Kuhar 2002: 35). Among the values that the respondents gave lower assessments of importance to is the distinctive group of status/materialistic or hedonistic values (*material well-being*, *exciting life*, *being an authority or leader* and *having power over others*). In further analyses (t-tests), among the more important values the group of traditional values was more expressed by the female respondents, while the status/materialistic group was slightly more expressed by the male respondents.

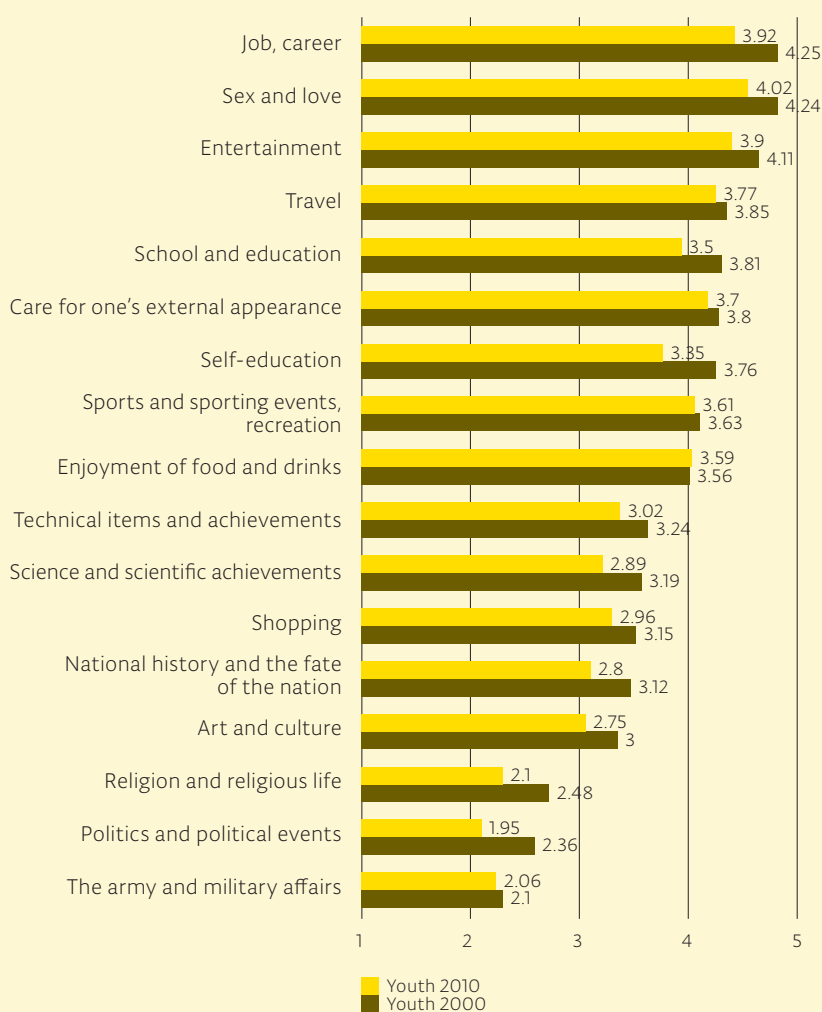
The trends with regard to age were as expected. The importance of traditional values and personal matters (Ule, Kuhar 2000: 55), in which we can include *health*, *order and stability in society*, *preservation of traditional values*, *family life*, and *environmental protection*, has grown over the years, while the importance of having an *exciting life* and *success in school and career* has decreased. It should also be pointed out that this group of values (focus on traditionalism and personal matters) correlates positively with orientation towards the future and authoritative socialisation, and negatively with authoritarian socialisation.

A similar view is also presented by comparisons of the assessments of areas of interest among young people in the Youth 2000 and Youth 2010 surveys. The hierarchy of interests is highly similar in both surveys. The greatest amount of interest is expressed in sex and love, work and career, and entertainment, and the least interest is expressed in politics and political events, the army and military affairs, religion and religious life.

In the hierarchy of interests, in terms of position and level the biggest drops were for interest in school, education and self-education, while in terms of level there were also significant drops for interest in science, national history, religion, politics and the arts. Similar to values, in the Youth 2010 survey in comparison with Youth 2000 all of the assessments of interest were lower except for a slightly increased interest in enjoyment of food and drinks.

The results relating to young people's interests confirm the trend of the decreasing importance of major social themes and the prevalence of interests associated with people's everyday individual existence. This is also illustrated by the tree structure from the analysis based on the statistical method of classifying into groups (cluster analysis) presented in the graph below. We can distinguish two groups of areas of interest. The first are areas in which the respondents demonstrate increased interest and represent individualistic interests (areas from sex to shopping). The second includes broader social themes in which the interest of young people is lower (from the army to nationality).

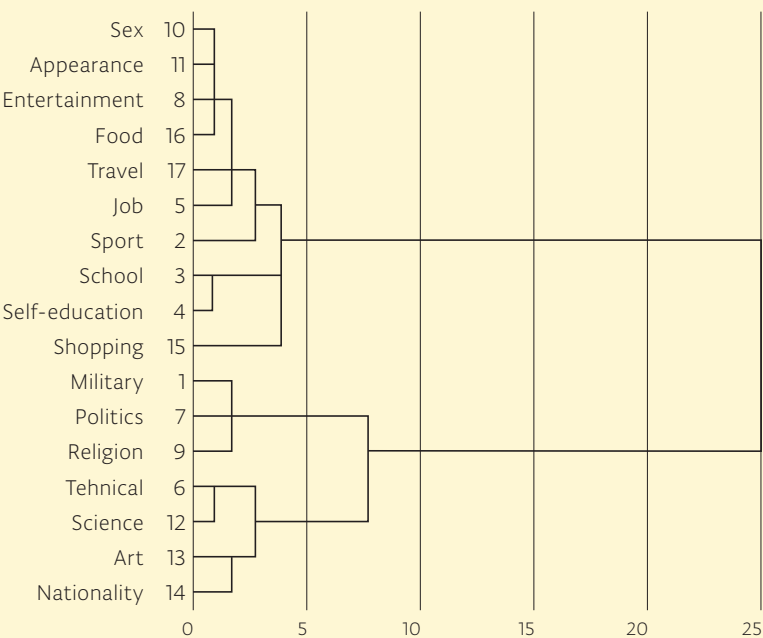
**Graph 122: Young people's interest in individual areas,*
selected research**



NOTE: *The importance was measured using a 5-point scale (1 – not at all important, ... 5 – very important).

SOURCES: Youth 2000 and Youth 2010

Graph 123: Dendrogram of areas of youth interest broken down into groups (cluster analysis)



NOTE: The Ward method was used for the cluster analysis.

Comparisons of averages (t-tests, variance analyses) indicate certain sex and age-related characteristics of areas of interest. The army and military affairs, sports and sporting events and recreation, technical items and technical achievements, science and scientific achievements, national history and the fate of one's nation were areas of interest for men, while interest in school and education, self-education, job and career, religion and religious life, care for one's appearance, art and culture, shopping and travel were more emphasised among women. In view of the above classification of areas of interest, socially broad themes were better rep-

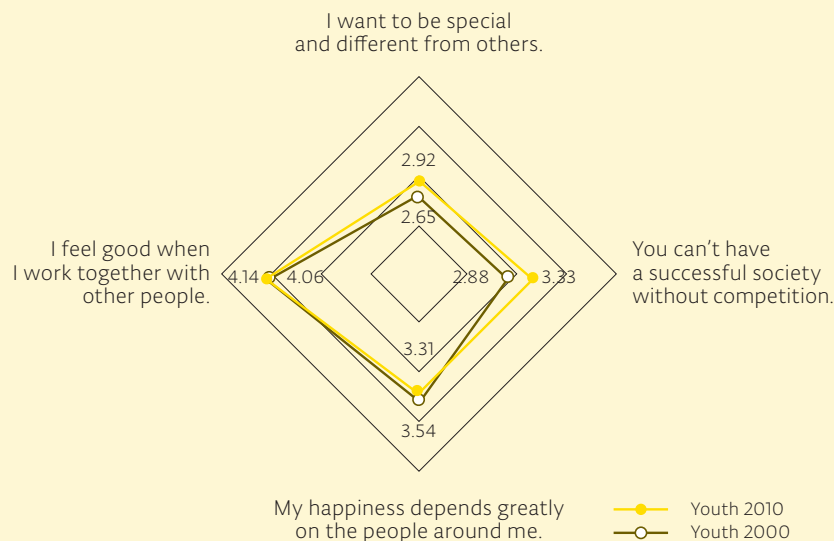
resented among men, while socially narrower themes (individualistic or intimate) were better represented among women, which correlates significantly with stereotypes about gender roles. As expected, interest in the army and military affairs, school and education and entertainment falls over time, while on the other hand interest in self-education, job and career, technical items and achievements, politics and political events, sex and love, science and scientific achievements, national history and the fate of one's nation and shopping increase over time.

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This move towards individuality also poses questions relating to personality dimensions, in which distinguishing between focusing on one's self and focusing on the group, i.e. individualist vs. collectivist orientation come to the fore. In the area where the two surveys (Youth 2000 and Youth 2010) overlap, we compared four items, of which two are associated with an individualist orientation ("I want to be special and different from others", "you can't have a successful society without competition"),¹¹⁷ and two with a collectivist orientation ("my happiness depends greatly on the people around me", "I feel good when I work together with others").

117 The statement "you can't have a successful society without competition" is an aspect of *vertical individualism*, in which individuals compete for recognition and the acquisition of status, which begins with an inclination to compete with others (Triandis 1995). In contrast, the statement "I want to be special and different from others" is an aspect of *horizontal individualism*, in which difference between individuals are assumed, but are not necessarily hierarchical.

Graph 124: Changes in average assessments of agreement with items of individualistic or collectivistic orientation,* selected research



NOTE: * Respondents ranked their agreement with the statements on a 5-point scale (1 – I don't agree at all, ... 5 – I agree entirely).

SOURCES: Youth 2000 and Youth 2010

A comparison of the studies indicates that a shift towards individualism occurred between 2000 and 2010. Young people's identification with both statements of the collectivist orientation fell, while identification with the individualist statements increased, with competitiveness standing out in particular. The percentage of people who agreed or agreed entirely with the statement "my happiness greatly depends on the people around me" fell from 84.2 to 79.8 percent, and those who did the same for the statement "I feel good when I work together with others" fell from 54.6 to 45.9 per cent. On the other hand, the percentage of people who agree or agree entirely with the statement "I want to be special and different from others" rose from 23.7 to 27.7 per cent, and with the statement "you can't have a successful society without competition" rose from 33.4 per cent to 46.7 per cent.

An analysis of the correlation of the statements “my happiness depends greatly on the people around me” and “you can’t have a successful society without competition” with values is fruitful. For the first statement we can show a correlation with *true friendship* ($r = 0.262$, $p < 0.01$), *order and stability in society* ($r = 0.218$, $p < 0.01$), *health* ($r = 0.209$, $p < 0.01$), *family life* ($r = 0.187$, $p < 0.01$) and *environmental protection* ($r = 0.186$, $p < 0.01$), i.e. with values associated with traditionalism and personal matters. For the second statement we can show a correlation with *being an authority or leader* ($r = 0.239$, $p < 0.01$) and *having power over others* ($r = 0.202$, $p < 0.01$), i.e. with values associated with status.

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Based on the above analyses we can conclude that two positions of Slovenian youth are crystallising over time: the individual as the measure and competition with others as a strategy, which could be young people’s response to the uncertain social conditions and transitions. Alongside the aforementioned data, we can add that 86.9 per cent of all respondents also agree or entirely agree with the statement “I believe that it is possible to succeed through hard work and perseverance”, which as an internal credo illustrates the Slovenian self-stereotype of the hard-working Slovene and at the same time indirectly indicates the most suitable strategy for the individual in social functioning, i.e. to rely on her/himself and her/his own perseverance.

To summarise from all of the above analyses of values, value orientations and interests:

The trend of diminishing importance of major social themes (e.g. politics) and the simultaneous growth of personal themes (e.g. health, family, friends) are continuing among Slovenian youth. Young people's interests are focused on everyday themes which directly impact their lives. Over time, there is an increasing emphasis on individualism and competition as strategies for coping with uncertainty and the changing social conditions in which the young people live.

12.2 A sustainable method of social functioning

The concept of sustainable social functioning is closely connected with the concept of social responsibility, which can be defined in the most general manner as humanity's obligation to achieve collective goals (Cooper and Vargas 2004, Brandon and Lombardi 2005). We can define it as a way of functioning that exceeds personal and narrow social (e.g. family, friendly) interests in the sense that it includes concern for the long-term stability and well-being of society in general. In the current social conditions, sustainable social functioning is expressed primarily in actions associated with concern for the natural environment, efforts towards peace on earth and social solidarity. This solidarity is manifested primarily in efforts to ameliorate social inequalities and concern for marginalised social groups, and from the point of view of youth primarily as preparedness for intergenerational solidarity. Below we will focus on concern for the protection of the natural environment, as the other aspects of the concept in question are discussed in detail in other parts of the report.

429

One of the most frequently used indices for measuring concern for the natural environment is the individual's willingness to contribute part of her/his income to preserving the natural environment.

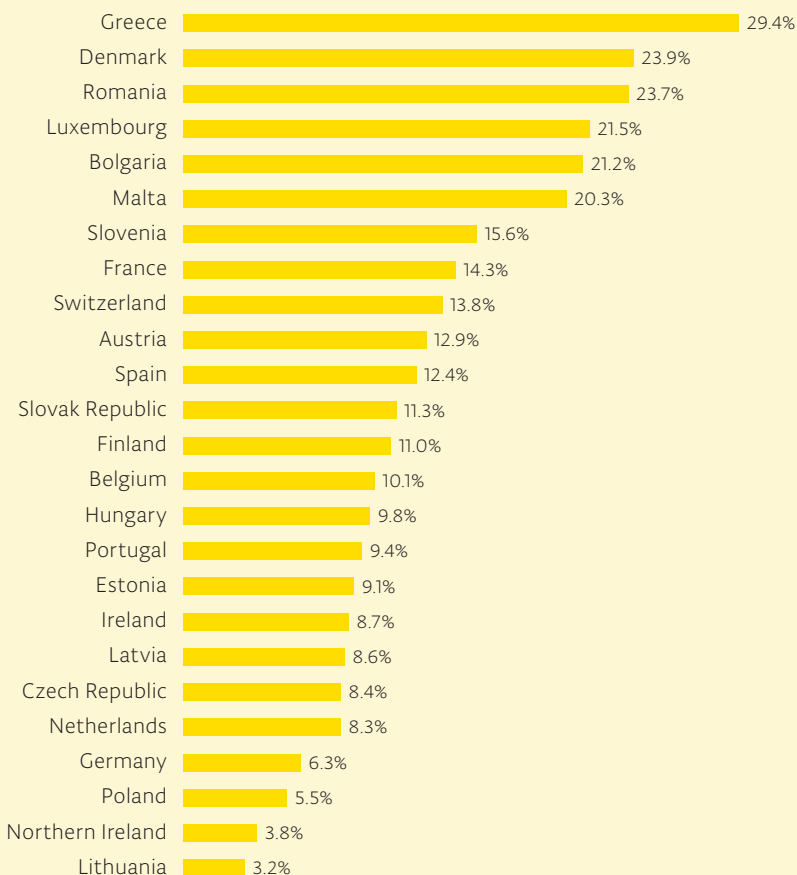
The graph below shows the percentage of youth in various European countries who report such willingness.

The data from the graph indicate above all:

1. The ecological consciousness of young people (measured using the aforementioned index) is not clearly connected with the country's level of economic development or level of development of representative democracy. Clearly at the level of international comparisons there is a very complex combination of factors, the analysis of which is outside the scope of this report.
2. Slovenian youth can according to this indicator with regard to ecological consciousness be ranked among inhabitants of European countries in which ecological consciousness is slightly more present.

Graph 125: Percentage of young people (15-29) from various European countries who strongly agree with the statement "I would contribute part of my income if I was sure that the money would be used to prevent environmental pollution"

I would contribute part of my income if I was sure that the money would be used to prevent environmental pollution. (Strongly agree)



SOURCE: EVS, 2008

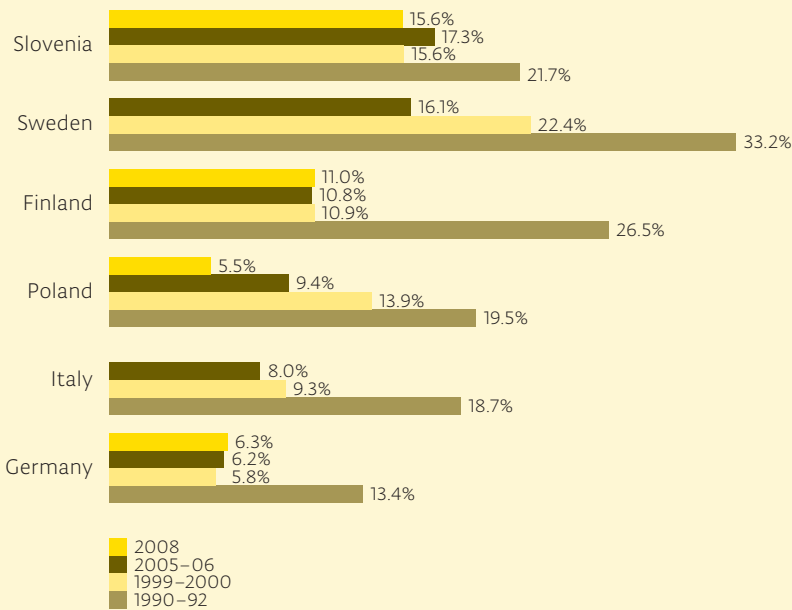
Slovenia ranks in a similar place in the Eurobarometer topical survey (2008), in which Slovenia ranks in fifth place in the EU27 in terms of ascribing the specific importance of environmental problems.

Data from the World Values Survey (2009) also give us a chronological comparison between the years 1995 and 2005. The comparison indicates that there were no major changes among young people (15-29) during that period. The percentage of (active and inactive) members of environmental groups grew slightly from 3.4 to 4.4 per cent. The percentage of those more committed to protecting the environment than to economic growth fell slightly (from 55.3 to 54.2 per cent).

The data from the World Values Survey allow us to monitor changes in ecological perspectives over a longer period of time.

Graph 126: Percentages of young people (15-29) willing to contribute part of their income to prevent environmental pollution, Slovenia and comparable countries,* 1990-2008

I would contribute part of my income if I was sure that the money would be used to prevent environmental pollution. (Strongly agree)



NOTE: * European countries for which comparable data exists were selected.

SOURCES: World Values Survey 1992-2005, EVS 2008

At least the following can be concluded from the graph:

In the nineties the level of willingness to pay an environmental tax decreased significantly in all of the countries surveyed.

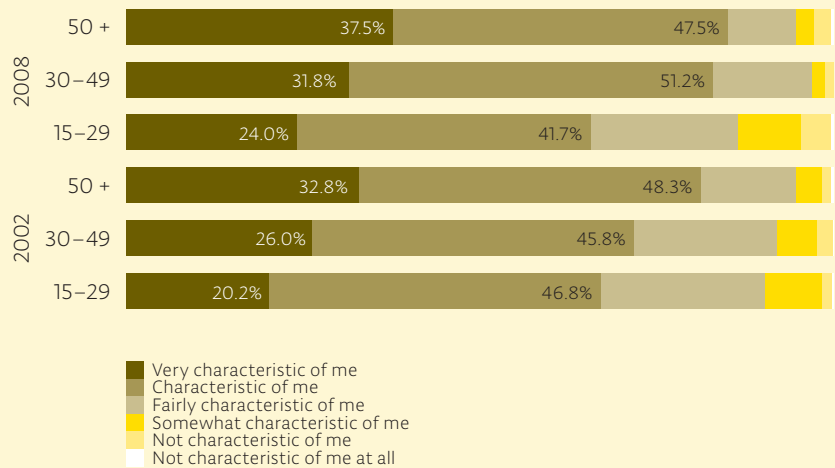
In the period 2000-2008 it did not significantly change or fell slightly in the majority of countries.

Slovenian youth demonstrate a relatively high level of ecological consciousness among the countries compared.

432 With regard to the first two points it should be mentioned that the same trends apply to the older generations (30 and over). We obtain a slightly clearer picture if we look at the data from the European Social Survey (ESS), which affords us an insight into a slightly different indicator of ecological consciousness.

Graph 127: Emphasising concern for nature and the environment, Slovenia 2002-2008

Ascribing major importance to nature and the environment



SOURCES: ESS 2002 and 2008

On the other hand, the graph above indicates:

In the period 2002-2008 the percentage of people who see themselves as very ecologically conscious increased slightly in all age groups. Among youth this percentage increased from 20.2 per cent to 24 per cent, but the percentage of those who selected the highest two options (characteristic or very characteristic of me) fell slightly in this group, from 67 per cent to 65.2 per cent. From this it therefore cannot be concluded that there was an increasing (or decreasing) trend among youth to identify with ecological consciousness in the period 2002-2008.

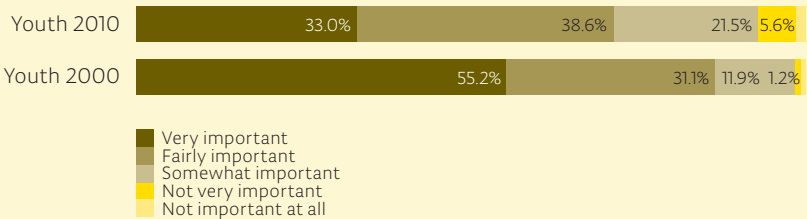
The younger generation is significantly less ecologically conscious in comparison with older generations (this was also observed for the indicator of willingness to pay an environmental tax).

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A comparison from the last two surveys of Slovenian youth should be added here:

Graph 128: Importance of protecting the environment to the lives of young people (15-29), Youth 2000 and Youth 2010

How important is it to your life: protecting the environment



We can summarise the above presented points as follows:

Slovenian youth are slightly above average in ecological consciousness in comparison with European youth. In the last twenty years ecological consciousness among Slovenian youth (as well as in comparable countries) has fallen slightly, but has always been significantly lower than that of the older generations.

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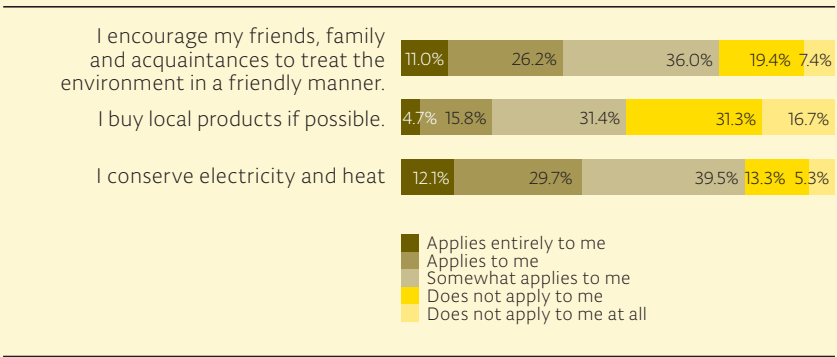
Although these trends seem slightly surprising from the perspective of general media reporting on ecological issues, it should be stated that we arrived at the same findings on the basis of three completely independent research programmes. These trends are also corroborated by detailed long-term studies of views of environmental issues in Europe and the US (cf. Wray-Lake, Flanagan and Osgood 2010; Franzen and Vogl 2010; Franzen and Meyer, R. 2010). In view of the data from the European Social Survey (ESS) we can therefore conclude that at the level of identifying with ecological consciousness perhaps even slight positive trends are indicated. However, on the other hand it is clear that preparedness to sacrifice for ecological reasons and the importance of protecting the environment in everyday life among young people in the last ten years show more signs of receding than growth.

For a more detailed insight into the factors that can influence ecologically conscious behaviour, we created an index in our database composed of agreement (1 = does not apply to me; 5 = entirely applies to me) with the following statements ($\alpha = 0.703$):

- I conserve electricity and heat.
- If possible I buy local products that are not transported over long distances.
- I encourage my family, friends and acquaintances to treat the environment in a friendly manner.

If we set as the limit of ecologically-oriented behaviour the fact that for these three statements the respondents had to achieve a value of more than three (i.e. that on average they are more inclined towards “applies entirely”), we can then establish ecological behavioural orientation in 41.6 per cent of respondents. As a specific example: 41.8 per cent of young people think that conserving electricity and heat is characteristic of them.

Graph 129: Elements of ecologically conscious behaviour among young people (15-29), Youth 2010



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Below, we were interested in the factors that have a stimulative effect on ecological behaviour.

1. Age ($r = 0.265$; $p < 0.01$) has a relatively strong positive effect, which is not surprising from the developmental psychology aspect, since social responsibility generally tends to increase with age. This finding also corresponds well with the above finding that ecological consciousness is higher among the older generations. In this connection the correlation of ecological behaviour with better employment status ($r = 0.178$; $p < 0.01$) and income ($r = 0.173$; $p < 0.01$) is also not surprising.
2. Among the psychological correlates the most significant are focus on the future ($r = 0.215$; $p < 0.01$) and authoritative socialisation ($r = 0.175$; $p < 0.01$), which together with the above finding indicates that ecological orientation is associated with the general level of maturity of the young person. This is also supported by negative

correlations with deviance ($r = 0.149$; $p < 0.01$) and narcissistic exploitation ($r = 0.154$; $p < 0.01$).

3. Correlations with personal interests indicate a similar explanation. Increased ecological orientation is demonstrated by young people who are more interested in education ($r = 0.153$; $p < 0.01$) and self-education ($r = 0.240$; $p < 0.01$), science ($r = 0.199$; $p < 0.01$), art ($r = 0.211$; $p < 0.01$) and career ($r = 0.208$; $p < 0.01$).
4. With regard to the correlations with value orientations, ecological behaviour is associated with the group of traditional values (after Ule, Kuhar 2002), and most strongly with the value of preserving the environment ($r = 0.406$; $p < 0.01$), as well as the values of preserving traditional values ($r = 0.204$; $p < 0.01$), family life ($r = 0.206$; $p < 0.01$) and order and stability in society ($r = 0.194$; $p < 0.01$).

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In short we can therefore summarise that:

Young people who are older, have more mature personalities and are socially responsible in a wider sense are more ecologically conscious.

The connection between ecological consciousness and the individual's general social standing is not surprising, but underscores the importance of a broad and comprehensive approach to encouraging sustainable behaviour among youth.

The qualitative part of the study showed that ecological consciousness could be associated with various youth profiles.

In our interviews, Helena stood out as a successful grammar school student and is an excellent example of a well-integrated youth:

“Yes, ecological awareness is extremely important. But we all believe that not much has been done regarding waste and problems with waste. In Slovenia, for example, they still give you plastic bags in shops, which we then throw away at home. Something should be done about pollution, we should use less plastic and more recyclable things. We could have electric cars.”

(Helena, 18, grammar school student)

From the qualitative interviews one can also detect a trend of inserting green viewpoints into sharp social criticism. Matjaž is 29 and currently unemployed:

Generally speaking, hyperindustrialisation is to blame for destroying the Earth... People consume much more than they actually need. It's mostly for unnecessary prestige, and nature suffers.”

(Matjaž, 29, unemployed)

Some young people also see hope for relative independence from society (especially jobs) in environmentally-friendly technologies. Nejc, who describes himself as a “job hater”, explains:

“I got into biodynamics... you can actually do this at home, on a small scale, and you can live quite sustainably.

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

12.3 **Young people's problems and visions (personal/societal) of the future**

A chronological comparison of the presence of various typical problems and fears of young people reveals the expected results.

Graph 130: Problems and fears of young people (15-29), Youth 2000 and Youth 2010

Some of the many fears of young people are listed. For each of them, rank how much they apply to you (1 = not at all; 5 = entirely applies)



Among the eight categories there was a significant shift in fear of unemployment. In view of the situation on the labour market, which we describe in the chapter on that topic, this shift is not surprising. In connection with tempo the stagnation of the fear of losing employment is slightly surprising, and probably indicates that young people have already calculated the circumstances of so-called *flexible security* into their perceptions. It is not however likely that they are not aware that losing one's job is an increasingly real possibility, and therefore the most likely explanation probably is the fact that losing their job now seems less tragic to them than it did twenty years ago.

We also find slightly increased concern about housing problems and lack of money, which can be understood as additional proof of the thesis that the material circumstances are the key factor in delaying moving away from the parents' home in Slovenia (we discuss this in greater detail in the chapter on young people's housing circumstances).

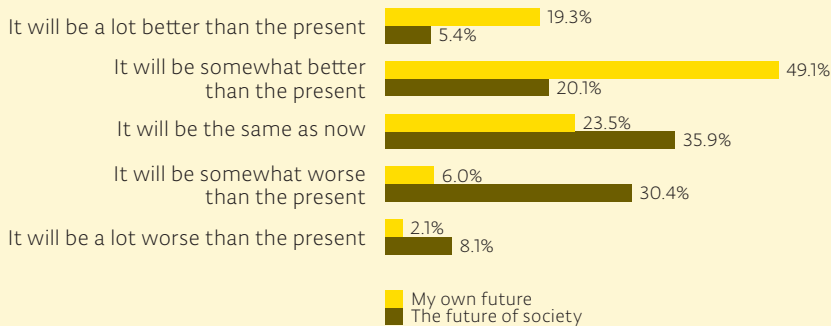
If researchers (Ule and Kuhar 2002) could therefore conclude ten years ago that fears connected to employment and material independence were not burning issues at that time in comparison with the results of previous research of Slovenian youth (1985, 1993, 1995 and 1998), today the picture is substantially different.

With regard to their future, young people are most concerned about a lack of money, housing problems and employment insecurity. In the past decade these fears have increased significantly.

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But this does not mean that young people are pessimistic about the future.

Graph 131: Young people's (15-29) visions of society's and their own future, Youth 2010



The above graph indicates an interesting paradox.

Young people are exceptionally optimistic about their own futures, while they are significantly more pessimistic about the future of our society.

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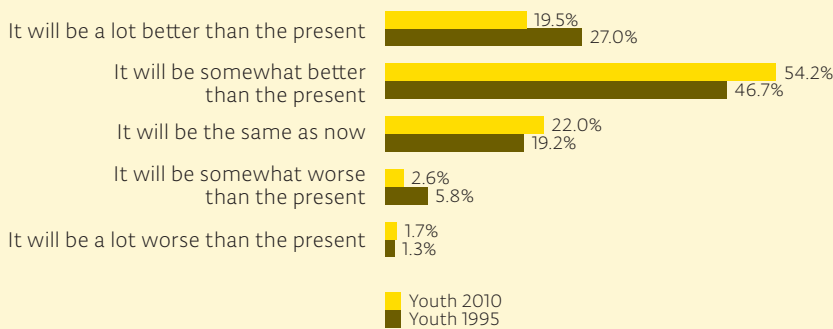
The correlation between these two visions is in fact positive and very strong ($r = 0.380$; $p < 0.01$). At the level of the individual, optimism with regard to one's own future is also associated with increased optimism with regard to the future of society.

For us it is more interesting that the great majority (68.4 per cent) of young people see their own future as better than the present, and that (only) a little more than 8 per cent are pessimistic in that regard.

The available data also allow us to make a comparison with the student population from 1995.

Graph 132: College students' visions of their personal futures, Youth 1995 and Youth 2010

My personal future will be:



Although there are some deviations at the extremes of our scale, we can state that young people today are approximately equally optimistic about

their future as they were 15 years ago. In 1995 and 2010, exactly 73.7 per cent of college students saw their future as better than the present, while the percentage of those who saw their future as worse decreased slightly in this period (from 7.1 to 4.3 per cent of respondents).

In the qualitative part of the interviews, we asked young people where they see themselves in 10 years. The responses were without exception optimistic:

“I see my future as extremely bright... I’ll finish university studies, architecture in Ljubljana, I’ll work at an architectural firm... I hope I’ll stay together with Jernej, we’ll have a house and a car, but at this point I’m not thinking about children yet.”

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(Helena, 18, grammar school student)

“Matjaž has developed into a stable person, he’s financially all right doing something he’s at least partially interested in and happy with. I play in a band, and I make extra money working... Work is just a safety net. Yes, the future is bright!”

(Matjaž, 29, currently unemployed)

“(In 10 years) I’ll be more relaxed, no longer worried about money... I can’t clearly see my professional future... if I could have it my way I’d own a café, I’d serve tables and be the boss... we’ll have our own house, no more than 85 square metres...”

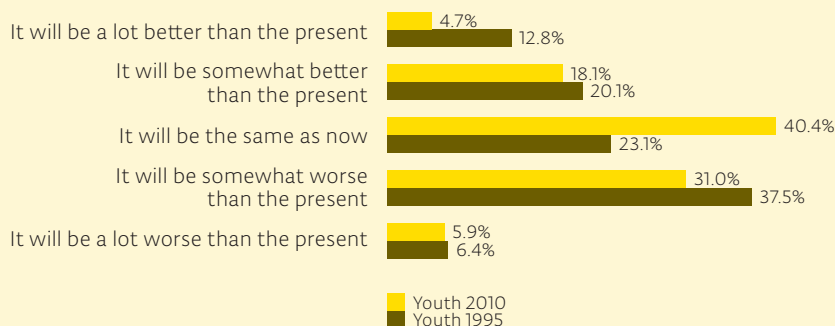
(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

“I’d like to have a nice apartment, a family, 2 kids... I am going to have a company that is just mine, and do what makes me happy.”

(Stane, 26, young entrepreneur)

Graph 133: College students' visions of society's future, Youth 1995 and Youth 2010

The future of our society will be:



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Similar conclusions can be drawn in relation to the future of society. In this case the percentage of both optimists and pessimists decreased, but the average remained approximately unchanged.

With regard to visions of the future of society it is worth pointing out the drop in the percentage of optimists from 32.9 to 22.8 per cent, which is not difficult to relate to the current economic crisis and the associated waning of trust in the effectiveness of the market system and representative democracy. On the other hand, the significantly lower percentage of pessimists indicates that it is still far from being possible to speak of any sort of apocalyptic mood among Slovenian youth.

Of course this does not mean that young people are not socially critical:

“This (the future) is alarming: first and foremost, on an entirely practical level, there will be a problem with pensions and wages. The young and able population will not be capable of providing pensions for the older people.”

(Mateja, 29, employed in the parliament)

“Well you can see why it’s going to be like that... Who’s going to have kids at 25 when they study until they’re 35. Ever new great and wonderful laws are to blame... pension reform, not enough support

for the arts and things that people enjoy, politicians don't do shit for the factories, so – nothing, who cares...”

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

Young people thus assess the existing situation in society relatively critically (we discuss this in slightly greater detail in the chapter on political participation), but at the same time the majority do not expect to see any major changes. Here it would seem crucial to remind ourselves of the data that young people for the most part see real opportunities for a successful transition to adulthood within the given social framework, and that there are slightly fewer who are unambiguously pessimistic about their future in 2010 than in 1995.

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Slovenian youth are approximately equally optimistic about their own and society's future today as they were in 1995.

Our findings in this respect contradict the hypothesis that young people are threatened by the future and therefore are not interested in it, as presented by Italian philosopher Umberto Galimberti in his book *Unnerving Guest: Nihilism and Youth* (2010). We can also state that Slovenian youth in general do not conform to the hypothesis of the “presentification” of youth as presented by Leccardi (2005).

The hypothesis of the presentification of youth in Slovenia is also contradicted by the data on focus on the future, which, as we report in the chapter on personality traits, is relatively high among Slovenian youth. Our data allow for a related comparison with youth in Germany.

Graph 134: Ways of dealing with problems among young people (15-25), Youth 2010 and Shell 2010

**When people are faced with big problems, we react in different ways.
How do you usually behave in such circumstances?**



NOTE: The values presented are the average values on a scale from 1 (Does not apply to me at all) to 4 (Applies entirely to me).

Slovenian youth differ very little from their German counterparts in their ways of dealing with difficulties. They most often confide in friends and parents and try to look at things on the bright side. Although these approaches are slightly less present among Slovenian youth, they are still prevalent in Slovenia. It is above all important that youth in Slovenia in comparison with German youth attempt to solve problems systematically even more often, which is particularly important from the point of view of successful inclusion into society and the world of adults.

12.4 Key findings

1. The trend of diminishing importance of major social themes (e.g. politics) and the simultaneous growth of personal themes (e.g. health, family, friends) are continuing among Slovenian youth. Young people's interests are focused on everyday themes which directly impact their lives. Over time, there is an increasing emphasis on individualism and competition as strategies for coping with uncertainty and the changing social conditions in which the young people live.
2. Slovenian youth are slightly above average in ecological consciousness in comparison with European youth. In the last twenty years ecological consciousness among Slovenian youth (as well as in comparable countries) has fallen slightly, but has always been significantly lower than that of the older generations.
3. Young people who are older, have more mature personalities and are socially responsible in a wider sense are more ecologically conscious.
4. With regard to their future, young people are most concerned about a lack of money, housing problems and employment insecurity. In the past decade these fears have increased significantly.
5. Young people are exceptionally optimistic about their own futures, while they are significantly more pessimistic about the future of our society.
6. Slovenian youth are approximately equally optimistic about their own and society's future today as they were in 1995.

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13 Youth personality traits and religiousness

In this chapter we will discuss various classical and new psychological and socio-psychological constructs which function as predictors of youth behaviour. We will show how prevalent they are among today's Slovenian youth and whether they are actually connected with various other areas. With regard to the selection of the predictors and in the explanation, one must take account of the fact that economic and social crisis conditions were present in Slovenia during the time that the Youth 2010 survey was carried out.

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13.1 Time perspective (present/future)

One relatively new concept in psychological and socio-psychological research is that of *time perspective* (Zimbardo and Boyd 1999; 2009). This refers to whether people in their behaviour are focused on and limited by the present, and are not motivated by the past and particularly not by the future. Or inversely: everything that someone does is focused on objectives in the future; the individual makes long-term plans and subordinates their actions to the fulfilment of these goals and plans. This focus allows the individual to educate themselves in the long term and plan their inclusion in work processes, and to orient their efforts towards the achieving of long-term goals, which is a presupposition in the meritocratic model of society.

However, one perspective does not totally exclude others; it is about which time period primarily motivates the individual or is her/his psychological starting point. In addition to the time itself it is also important how the individual perceives it; the future for instance can be viewed transcendently (which is in fact associated with devout religiousness),

and not as their future in the here and now and for their lifetime (which is characteristic of the basic form of focus on the future).

A focus on the present can be understood in various ways, but according to Zimbardo and Boyd (2009) mainly fatalistically or hedonistically. This means that individuals for whom such orientation is prevalent do not focus on the past nor – and this is particularly important – do they plan their future.

450 In their book *Time Paradox* (2009: 100), in reference to being restricted to the present, Zimbardo and Boyd say that political and economic instability also cause instability in some families, and also cause people only to trust what they can hold in their hands. The development of a focus on the future presupposes stability and consistency in the present, otherwise people cannot make rational judgements about the consequences of their actions. A crisis creates an inability to form a focus on the future, which is essential for planning and adjusting levels of satisfaction, which is very important during youth, when it is necessary to prepare for providing opportunities for life as an adult.

Zimbardo and Boyd (2009: 101) also say that less educated people are more focused on the present. It is interesting that a focus on the present is forecasted by drug use, which represents a form of attachment to the present moment. Focusing on the future operates as a presupposition for entry into the middle class and maintaining affiliation with that class. Wealthy members of the upper class can afford to have any time perspective.

In the present youth study some of these orientations could be important, since the crisis can force young people into restricting their perspectives to the present, the absence of anticipating the future and striving for the future, which is essential to forming and carrying out educational, work and responsible personal commitments.

Instrument

In the Youth 2010 survey we used part of the instrument used by Zimbardo and Boyd (1999), using the three statements about focus on the future, hedonistic focus on the present and fatalistic focus on the present

which had the highest value in the corresponding factors. The statements and factor weighting are given in the table below.

Table 19: Factor matrix of time perspective, Youth 2010

	Factor		
	Focus on future	Hedonistic focus on present	Fatalistic focus on present
By working hard I always see the tasks I set myself through to the end.	0.805		
Whenever I want to achieve something I set myself clear objectives and specific paths to achieving those objectives.	0.810		
I know how to avoid temptation when I know that work has to be completed.	0.559		
I enjoy taking major risks in order to experience something exciting.			0.555
I often get so excited in the moment that I forget everything else.			0.754
I think it is more important to enjoy the moment than to get everything done on time.		0.342	0.398
I don't see any particular point in planning for the future, since anything can happen outside of my control.		0.561	
I try to live life from day to day, without looking into the future.		0.812	
I often make spur-of-the-moment decisions and think what will be will be.		0.616	
	$\alpha = 0.76$	$\alpha = 0.62$	$\alpha = 0.71$

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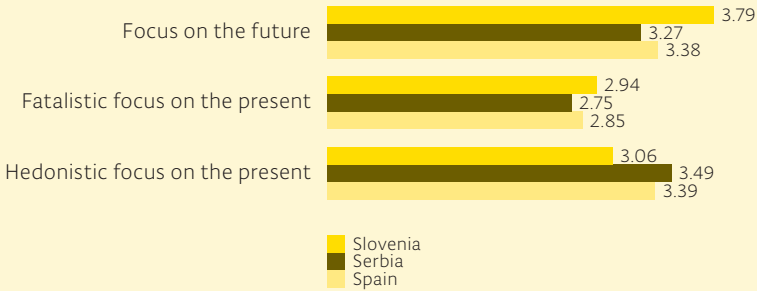
Prevalence of time perspectives and correlation with other variables in the Youth 2010 survey

A focus on the future is still the most widespread perspective among Slovenian youth, while the other two perspectives are approximately equally present. At the same time, the absence of a focus on the future (in comparison with rejecting that perspective) prevails among 32 per cent of youth, a hedonistic focus on the present among 43 per cent and a fatalistic focus on the present among 38 per cent.

In a comparative analysis of young people in Serbia, Spain and Slovenia, a focus on the future is most highly expressed among Slovenian youth, which can be explained by the fact that Slovenian youth are the least

affected by the social crisis or by long-term culturo-historical patterns in comparison with the other two environments.

Graph 135: Presence of three time perspectives, Slovenian, Serbian and Spanish samples



NOTE: The samples are not entirely comparable, as the Serbian sample includes only college students and the Spanish sample is of people between the ages of 22 and 29 (Diaz Morales 2006). The data from Serbia for 2009 were acquired from Jelena Nedeljković, University of Niš, and have not been published to date. .

There are no differences with regard to sex in terms of focus on the future, while both types of focus on the present exhibit increased expression among men. Age shows a statistically significant correlation in that a focus on the present is more highly expressed among the young (for fatalistic focus on the present $r = -0.175$; $p < 0.01$; for hedonistic focus on the present $r = -0.173$; $p < 0.01$). The reason for this could be that the crisis affects the young the most, and a focus on the future could also be associated with reaching maturity or taking on an adult role in society.

Fatalism is much more highly expressed in single people as opposed to married people, and focus on the future is highest (with respect to partner status) among those who have a partner and live separately, as opposed to singles, among whom this perspective is the lowest. School performance (success in secondary school) and level of education completed are clearly connected with time perspective, which can also be expected in respect of Zimbardo and Boyd's (2009) findings. Similarly, there is a statistically significant and strongly negative correlation between focus on the future and deviance.

For focus on the future we also find a statistically significant correlation with religiousness ($r = 0.100$; $p < 0.05$), which indicates that religiousness in the current conditions gives certainty, although this correlation is not that strong. This correlation is not entirely unilateral, as the entirely non-religious also exhibit a high level of focus on the future.

Various other correlations in which time perspective appears as an assumed independent variable are discussed in other chapters.

A focus on the future, connected with a constructive attitude towards solving one's own tasks in life, is the most widespread time perspective among youth, but at the same time is the least expressed among the youngest age group.

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13.2 Narcissism

Narcissism is a phenomenon that was introduced by Freud in order to indicate pathological delusions of grandeur as the result of contradictory processes within a personality. A narcissist stance could in favourable circumstances provide a balance between libidinous and destructive energies.

Numerous authors, of whom the best-known is probably Lasch (1991) believe that narcissism is a typical if not the prevailing personality type in modern conditions. According to Lasch (*ibid.*), in addition to excessive grandeur it also includes selfishness, coldness, shallowness of emotions, a wish for eternal youth or unchanging age, fear of aging etc.

Narcissism became a popular research subject and its meaning expanded at the same time, giving rise to variants, so that we can speak of healthy narcissism as a healthy feeling of grandeur and self-confidence, and pathological narcissism, for which there are several research constructs.

In our research we were interested in narcissism in terms of its potential negative impact on individuals' behaviour and personality patterns. Appraisals of the narcissistic Slovenian youth appear frequently in the Slovenian public sphere.

Instrument

In our research we used a limited number of statements about narcissism (five). Through factor analysis we obtained two factors that are theoretically sound and we called them narcissistic grandiosity and narcissistic exploitation.

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Table 20: Narcissism factor matrix, Youth 2010

	Factor	
	Narcissistic grandiosity	Narcissistic exploitation
I like being noticed and respected	0.860	
Making an impression on others is important to me	0.842	
I like being special and different from everyone else	0.740	
If I have the opportunity to exploit others, I do so without major feelings of guilt		0.862
I adhere to the principle of justice, but only when it is to my advantage		0.838
	$\alpha = 0.75$	$\alpha = 0.63$

Prevalence of narcissism and correlation with other variables in the Youth 2010 survey

The constructs are not equally distributed among Slovenian youth: narcissistic grandiosity is more widespread (M = 3.13; SD = 0.77) than narcissistic exploitation, which is a minority phenomenon (M = 1.98; SD = 0.77). Both phenomena are more widespread among the younger respondents and men.

Narcissistic grandiosity is not correlated with school performance, but shows a statistically significant correlation with deviance (r = 0.124; p < 0.01). Narcissistic exploitation is more discriminative: it is correlated

with performance in secondary school ($r = -0.161$; $p < 0.01$) and scholastic achievement ($r = 0.159$; $p < 0.01$), and highly positively correlated with deviance ($r = 0.283$; $p < 0.01$). Both constructs shows a statistically significant correlation with a focus on the future: the former construct positively, the latter negatively. From this we can conclude that narcissistic grandiosity as the majority phenomenon is not a pathological phenomenon. Narcissistic grandiosity can even be healthy, even though it manifests as a slightly inflated self-image, which steers the individual towards positive achievements and effort. Narcissistic exploitation in contrast to grandiosity is frequently mentioned in the literature as characteristic of narcissism in connection with swindling, cheating and exploitation, which is not always based on objective opportunities but also sometimes on apparent ones. According to Millon (2004) such narcissists are true charlatans.

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Narcissistic grandiosity is a majority but harmless phenomenon, while narcissistic exploitation is a minority and destructive one.

13.3 Authoritarianism

Authoritarianism is one of the most well-known constructs of social psychology, and can be used in particular to forecast political activity (Adorno et al. 1950). Originally it was said to be a predictor of Nazi participation and behaviour among the Germans, and more generally a predictor of right-wing and xenophobic, generally intolerant actions and viewpoints. And inversely, its absence is said to be a predictor of moderate, tolerant and democratic political orientation. A prevalence of authoritarianism would therefore express crisis conditions, the absence of legitimate authority and a preparedness to participate in movements opposed to democratic institutions and democratic treatment of political matters. Anti-democratic and totalitarian potential is said to arise in such conditions.

Authoritarianism is supposed to relate to the “deep structure” of the personality, which is formed in early childhood (Adorno et al. 1950). It is said to be a form of inappropriate socialisation. Adorno and his col-

leagues surmised that the authoritarian personality is associated with a series of undesirable personality traits such as authoritarian aggression, authoritarian submission, conventionalism, superstition and stereotypy, interest in power and toughness, destructiveness and cynicism, projectivity and exaggerated concerns over sexuality (Adorno et al. 1950: 228). The authors based their writings on prejudice, although in the background they used various methods of interpretation, including psychoanalytic (Sanford 1972). Later they stated that authoritarianism is also associated with other undesirable characteristics and behaviour, such as prejudice, intellectual narrow-mindedness, dogmatism and discrimination. On the other hand, they also indicate various “positive” aspects of authoritarianism, as it was said to be socially integrative since it “enforced social conformity” (Feldman 2003).

Authoritarianism as a concept has survived six decades and has been operationally modified several times. Principled challenges (Eysenck 1999) have not led to the abandoning of the construct, and the existence of extreme left-wing authoritarianism in addition to right-wing has also not been proved (Sanford 1972, Transue et al. 2008). It is known that authoritarianism is negatively correlated with education and other components of functioning democratic society (Christie 1991). It continues to be of interest as a predictor of political definition and various other traits and behaviours.

Instrument

Researchers of authoritarianism have never achieved the methodological ideal of homogeneity of factors; the original authors established the existence of as many as nine factors, while later three (aggression, submission and conventionality) received the greatest amount of attention. The primary emphasis was always on prejudice and intolerance of other groups, conduct on that basis and its deep explanation.

In the Youth 2010 survey we had the opportunity to use an instrument that was used with Slovenian youth 25 years ago, and thus determine whether there have been any changes, regardless of whether these changes were irreversible (as would arise from a modernised approach) or not. The statements we used and which were used in 1985 in the JUPIO survey (Radin 1986) were:

1. "Obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues children should learn."
2. "What this country needs most, more than laws and political programmes, is a few courageous, tireless, devoted leaders in whom the people can put their faith."
3. "There is hardly anything lower than a person who does not feel great love, gratitude, and respect for his parents."
4. "Homosexuals are hardly better than criminals and ought to be severely punished."

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We called this survey *JUPIO-Authoritarianism*. The respondents ranked all of the statements on a five-point scale. In the original research (1985), Cronbach's alpha was slightly higher ($\alpha = 0.54$) than in the Youth 2010 survey ($\alpha = 0.46$).

Prevalence of authoritarianism and correlation with other variables in the Youth 2010 survey

Our basic intention is to determine whether there has been any change in the level of authoritarianism in the past 25 years. The average level of agreement with JUPIO-Authoritarianism among Slovenian youth in 1985 was $M = 3.52$ ($SD = 0.72$), which was substantially higher than the normative average (3). The average level of agreement with JUPIO-Authoritarianism among Slovenian youth in 2010 was $M = 3.16$ ($SD = 0.74$), which means that it is still a prevailing phenomenon, although slightly lower than it was 25 years ago (taking account only of respondents up to age 24, comparable to 1985; otherwise the level of authoritarianism among people older than 24 is lower).

This drop can be explained from various viewpoints of the socio-political changes that have occurred in Slovenian society (abandonment of the one-party system, the development of democratisation, the introduction of permissiveness, the expansion of education and increase in the number of educated people among the population) and which are manifested in major social dissatisfaction with issues in modern times. Authoritarianism still prevails, but this does not indicate the prevalence of deep support for democratic processes of tolerance. It indicates crisis

conditions and authoritarian potential. Two years ago we might have established a lower level of authoritarianism, as it is well known that it increases in crisis conditions.

In the last 25 years, authoritarianism as an indicator of antidemocratic potential shows a modest prevalence over the opposite orientation, although it has fallen slightly.

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The absence of a statistically significant correlation with education indicates that we measured true authoritarianism, in its psychodynamic and consequently sociodynamic sense. It correlates with right-wing orientation at a level of $r = 0.151$ ($p < 0.01$), which confirms its validity.

We also studied authoritarianism using Adorno et al.'s three classical statements, which include the three main points, although the measure relating to submissiveness is slightly weaker. These are the above statements from 1 to 3, which we called *authoritarianism* ($\alpha = 0.61$).

This construct includes the classical statements, but did not turn out to be predictive with regard to authoritarianism. It does show a statistically significant correlation with the political definition of left/right ($r = 0.108$; $p < 0.01$), but shows practically no correlation with school performance and school achievements, while it does show a negative and statistically significant correlation with deviance ($r = 0.151$; $p < 0.01$). It is probably an example of the harmless variety which indicates the “integrative” aspect of authoritarianism (Feldman 2003). In general it is more weakly associated with the phenomena that are generally associated with authoritarianism.

We also noticed that authoritarianism is present in various statements that indicate intolerance, which is particularly associated with sex and sexual behaviour. This is no surprise from the viewpoint of the authors of *The Authoritarian Personality*, who emphasised this type of intolerance as excessive interest in sexual matters and finally “conventionalism” –

excessive maintaining of strict adherence to unimportant rules (Adorno et al. 1950). The statements are as follows:

“Homosexuals are hardly better than criminals and ought to be severely punished.”

“The majority of housework is by nature better suited to women.”

“Women should be virgins when they get married, because that is how it has been for centuries and because that is the guarantee that she will give all of her love to her husband.”

“Same-sex partners can raise children just as well as heterosexual partners.” (inversely coded)

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These are statements that refer to concrete, clear actions and life situations and which are also the subject of the debate about the authoritarian personality. We called this scale “social (authoritarian) intolerance” ($\alpha = 0.59$). They are statements which refer to contentious issues in public discourse. The first of these statements is taken directly from Adorno’s authoritarianism F scale (F-16). We can speak without reservation about the authoritarian content of the above scale and label it authoritarian intolerance. The second and third statements, which in the past indicated traditionalism, today indicate authoritarian aggressiveness.

This scale correlates to a right-wing orientation ($r = 0.188$; $p < 0.01$), which is the highest level among the three studied variants. Among all three this summary variable, which does not even mention politics, also shows the strongest and most statistically significant correlation with support for the principles of democracy (“... is democracy good in general?”) ($r = 0.093$; $p < 0.01$), which additionally confirms it as a genuine measure of authoritarianism.

Taking account of the fact that social intolerance was shown to be the most prevalent, we will indicate only its relative extent. It is a minority phenomenon ($M = 2.32$; $SD = 0.75$) and is slightly more present among younger respondents ($r = 0.069$; $p < 0.05$). It is also more present among men, which could be a consequence of the orientation of the statements towards men.

In addition to the aforementioned association with political definition, social intolerance shows a statistically significant correlation with

authoritarian socialisation ($r = 0.147$; $p < 0.01$), permissive socialisation ($r = 0.172$; $p < 0.01$) and deviance ($r = 0.181$; $p < 0.01$), which gives it full importance. The construct shows a characteristically negative correlation with secondary-school performance ($r = 0.122$; $p < 0.01$) and school achievements ($r = 0.172$; $p < 0.01$). Social intolerance is negatively correlated with stress ($r = 0.127$; $p < 0.01$), which can be explained by saying that while under exposure to stress it is a safety valve for negative energy.

13.4 Anomie

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Anomie is a concept that was introduced to the social sciences by Durkheim, who used it to explain the increase in suicides at the end of the 19th century, but which was not included in his otherwise functionalist starting point. He described an allegedly transitional phenomenon which supposedly arose from the imbalanced and conflicted nature of modernisation. Instead of the correct division of labour strengthening social integration, a transitional period occurs in which conflicts erupt and “anomie” therefore ensues. This is a lawless state in the legal, customary and moral senses. Above all, social mores lose their coercive force and thus also their directive and sanctioning power.

Anomie can be operationalised within a social-psychology construct as a personal perception of the absence of the coercive power of social mores and the presence of general disorientation or loss of social direction. The individual feels that he/she has no support from the social mores and more broadly in societal institutions. They do not direct him/her or indicate compulsory behavioural guidelines.

Instrument

We researched anomie using three statements from McCloskey and Schaar’s scale (1965):

“These days there are no clear rules to live by.”

“With everything so uncertain these days, it almost seems like anything could happen.”

“The problem of the modern world is that people don’t believe in anything.”

“The construct of anomie is homogenous and single-factor ($\alpha = 0.57$).”

Prevalence of anomie and correlation with other variables in the Youth 2010 survey

Anomie is a prevalent phenomenon among the respondents to the Youth 2010 survey ($M = 3.41$; $SD = 0.75$). Anomie could not be studied longitudinally on a general sample of young people, but we were able to check whether anything had changed in three years among the secondary-school students who took part in a study of factors of success in school in 2007 (Flere et al. 2009). We found that anomie had increased among this group by approximately one tenth. In 2007, anomie among grammar school students was only slightly higher than the normative average ($M = 3.06$), while today it is significantly higher ($M = 3.31$). The comparison however does not allow us to make a completely reliable generalisation, but anomie is noticeably higher among secondary-school students, which could be explained by the straitened social circumstances in a transitional period (the economic and social crisis).

Anomie is more present among women and increases with age. It does not exhibit any characteristic correlations, even with deviance.

The statements with which we measured anomie were mostly accepted. There is a clear perception that anomie among young people has increased in the last three years.

13.5 Alienation

Alienation is a well-known concept in social science, which was introduced to sociology by Marx. Marx’s introduction of the concept in *Economic and*

Philosophic Manuscripts in 1844 was markedly coloured by Romanticism. He hypothesised that there is some ideal state in which people are ends in themselves (there is no instrumental relationship to others) and in which interpersonal relations are “transparent”. In such circumstances a person can realise their essence, which is benevolent and active.

The current social psychology construct is unburdened of these assumptions, but also aims at a point where the individual owing to his relations with others either succeeds or fails to realise his essence. Above all this is a measure of a social and personal sense of belonging in the societal community.

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Studies of alienation can be understood as one of the principal measures of the subjective sense of one’s existence and belonging in the environment and rootedness, and is similar to a positive or negative affect, which we have otherwise not studied in detail.

Instrument

In the Youth 2010 survey we studied alienation using three statements, after Jessor and Jessor (1977):

“Most people don’t seem to accept me when I’m just being myself.”

“I sometimes feel uncertain about who I really am.”

“Life is empty and meaningless for me.”

The statements formed a unitary factor ($\alpha = 0.54$).

Prevalence of alienation and correlation with other variables in the Youth 2010 survey

The average assessment of alienation in the Youth 2010 survey was $M = 1.91$ ($SD = 0.69$). Therefore an absence of alienation prevailed; the observed average is far from the normative average (3).

However, agreement with the statements was not uniform. “Not accepting me when I’m just being myself» is the most widespread (social aliena-

tion; 13.2 per cent of respondents agree with the statement), while the absence of personal identity “I sometimes feel uncertain...” is significantly lower (only 8.1 per cent of respondents agree). The fewest young people (5 per cent) agree with the nihilistic third statement “Life is empty and meaningless for me”, which refutes the hypothesis of Slovenian youth as apathetic and without a meaningful life.

Sex does not indicate statistically significant differences, but alienation decreases with age, particularly above the age of 25. This indicates a correlation between growing up and the end of youthful alienation, although it remains characteristically present among the oldest youths.

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Alienation is a markedly minority phenomenon, but it is clearly associated with all of the most significant “desirable” and “undesirable” psychological and behavioural phenomena.

If we compare our respondents from secondary school with the secondary school students from our research in 2007, in which the same statements were used and a correlation was established between alienation and low school performance, we can detect a decrease in alienation among secondary school students, from $M = 2.16$ ($SD = 0.75$) in 2007 to $M = 1.96$ ($SD = 0.69$) in 2010.

Alienation correlates positively relatively strongly with “desirable” phenomena and relatively negatively with “undesirable” ones. The socialisation style of the parents is one of the important factors affecting alienation. All three in fact show a statistically significant correlation (permissive socialisation $r = -0.223$; $p < 0.01$; authoritarian socialisation $r = -0.287$; $p < 0.01$; authoritative socialisation $r = 0.156$; $p < 0.01$). Additionally, all of the time perspectives show statistically significant correlations, which is to be expected, since they are partially related constructs, even if explained differently. Deviance is strongly associated with alienation ($r = 0.283$; $p < 0.01$). The same holds for performance in secondary school ($r = 0.163$; $p < 0.01$). Alienation is also associated with frequency

of undergoing stress ($r = 0.173$; $p < 0.01$), which can be explained by the fact that they are both negative emotions. Thus alienation is shown to be highly predictive in comparison with the previously discussed anomie.

13.6 Deviance

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Deviance or deviant behaviour in society is not an unexpected or exceptional phenomenon. Durkheim already indicated that the existence of a low, constant level of deviant behaviour in society is »normal«. Social mores are set so that transgressions exist at the same time. It is known that transgressions are committed most frequently by youths and men (Kanazawa and Still 2000).

In the Youth 2010 survey we were not interested in a complete insight into deviance, but primarily an insight into the prevalence of various (most frequent) activities and their correlation with other phenomena.

Instrument

We studied deviance using questions about the frequency of certain transgressions. The selection of questions included the following:

“Have you ever damaged or destroyed property?”

“Did you ever go to school drunk or intoxicated?”

“Have you ever tried hard drugs (cocaine, heroin, speed, LSD, Ecstasy etc.)?”

“Have you ever consciously tried to avoid paying for something?”

“Have you ever stolen anything?”

“Have you ever hit anyone or threatened anyone in that way?”

Despite the relatively diverse range of deviant behaviours the analysis of the responses exhibited a single factor structure ($\alpha = 0.79$). This corresponds with the prevailing understanding that behind all of these trans-

gressions lies a lack of self-control, which is established already during childhood (Hirschi and Gottfredson 1990).

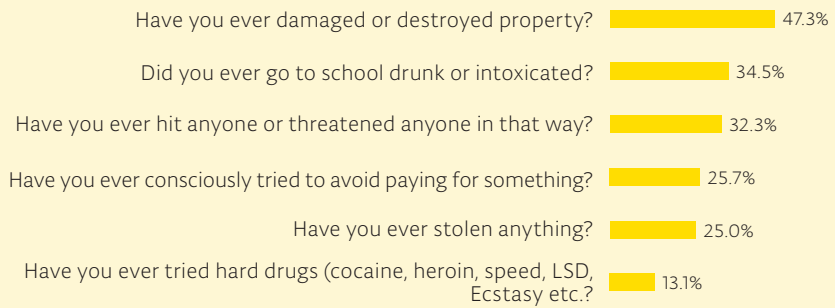
Prevalence of deviance and correlation with other variables in the Youth 2010 survey

Deviance is overall not highly prevalent. Using a four-point scale, the average is $M = 1.34$ ($SD = 0.37$). In other words, on average every third person committed one of the transgressions in question, while two thirds committed none of them. Taking into account the wide variety of behaviours, the picture is more complicated.

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Graph 136: Frequency of deviant behaviour, Youth 2010

Percentage of young people who “sometimes” or “frequently” committed deviant acts, Youth 2010



The above graph shows that destruction of property (violence against property) is the most common activity and that taking hard drugs is the least common.

The prevalence is much higher among men and slightly higher in the middle age group, which conforms to expectations since it can be seen from the literature that the high point occurs at 21 years of age.

Deviance is also strongly correlated with the family’s style of socialisation. We also find equally clear correlations for time perspectives (focus on the

future forecasts negatively, focus on the present forecasts positively). The table below presents a regression model of socialisation style and time perspective which explains the 22.7 per cent variance in deviance.

Deviance also shows a statistically significant negative correlation with school performance and school achievements, and very strongly positively with narcissistic exploitation ($r = 0.318$; $p < 0.01$).

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The most common deviant behaviour is destruction of property, and deviance is more frequent among men.

Table 21: Regression explanation of deviance with time perspective and socialisation style

	Standardised coefficient
Focus on future	-0.189**
Focus on present (hedonistic)	0.208**
Focus on present (fatalistic)	0.020
Authoritative socialisation	-0.099**
Authoritarian socialisation	0.198**
Permissive socialisation	0.122**

NOTE: ** $p < 0.01$.

13.7 Religiousness

We checked religiousness with respect to the indicators used in the Slovenian research area. We restricted ourselves to three variables: confessional identification, worship and personal religiousness. We compared the results of the Youth 2000 survey with the results of the Youth 2010 survey, where the same methodology was used in both surveys.

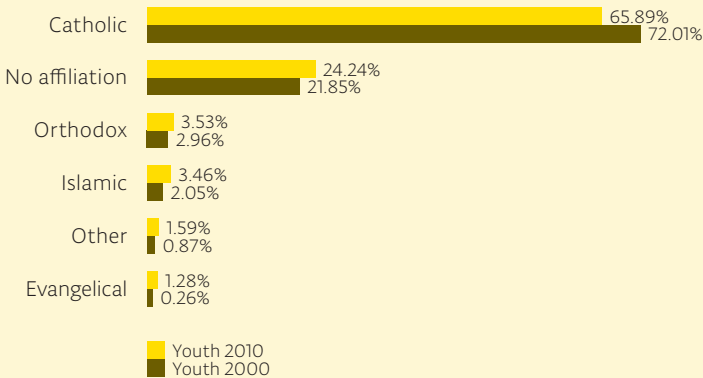
13.7.1 Religious affiliation

Traditional Catholic identification remains prevalent and an absolute majority, however it is declining (see graph below). This is not so much the consequence of demographic changes as an indication of the marketability of religion among Slovenian youth (which is manifested in increased numbers of members of “other faiths”) and even more of secularisation, which is exhibited primarily among young people who define themselves as “without affiliation”.

Among the standard predictors, education does not influence whether a respondent will list themselves as Catholic (taking only the majority identification into account), nor does age. For sex the prevalence is higher among girls and particularly with regard to the type of settlement in which they grew up (increased prevalence in smaller settlements, $r = -0.308$; $p < 0.01$).

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Graph 137: Religious affiliation, Youth 2000 and Youth 2010



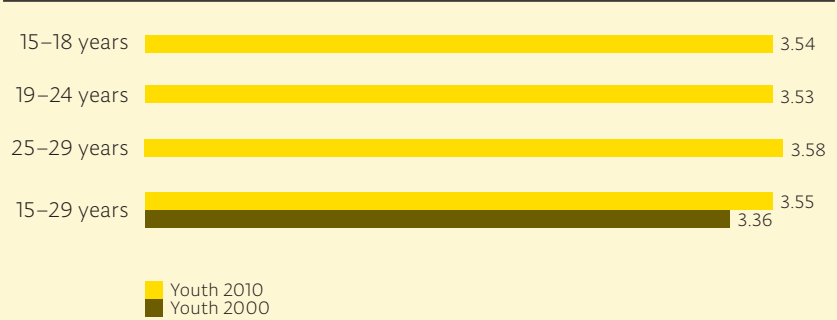
SOURCES: Youth 2010 and Youth 2000

13.7.2 Personal religiousness

Personal religiousness is an established measure in the study of religiousness. It describes identification with one’s faith, and presupposes belief in God, but not necessarily also affiliation with a church.

In the figure below we compare attitudes to religion in the Youth 2000 and Youth 2010 surveys, with the latter divided into age groups.

Graph 138: Personal attitude towards religion by age group, Youth 2010 and Youth 2000



NOTE: Minimum 1 (faithful adherent; I accept everything that my faith teaches), maximum 6 (not a believer and I am opposed to religion).

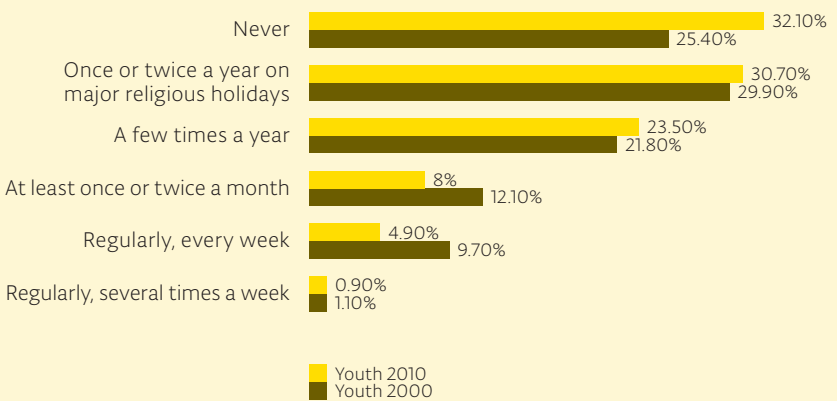
Over time we observe a shift towards a decrease in personal religiousness, while for the youth age groups these differences are slight. Also, girls exhibit statistically significantly higher religious identification in both surveys. Personal identification shows no statistically significant correlation to the respondents' education level (even if we limit ourselves to those between 25 and 29), but it does with that of each of the parents. The absence of identification strongly corresponds to the absence of educational achievement by the parents (for the father $r = -0.275$; $p < 0.01$; for the mother $r = -0.233$; $p < 0.01$). The childhood environment has a similar influence, but not the education of the respondent, which is not statistically significant. Personal religious identification also correlates negatively with authoritative socialisation ($r = -0.092$; $p < 0.01$), and positively with social (authoritarian) intolerance ($r = -0.176$; $p < 0.01$).

13.7.3 Worship

Worship is an important form of ritual in religious practice, the fulfilment of duty and public as well as private confirmation of one's religious-

ness (it is not a form of visiting churches for touristic or aesthetic reasons). In the survey we asked respondents how often they attend church or other places of worship (for religious purposes) (1 = regularly, several times a week, 6 = never).

Graph 139: Frequency of attendance of church or other place of worship, Youth 2010 and Youth 2000



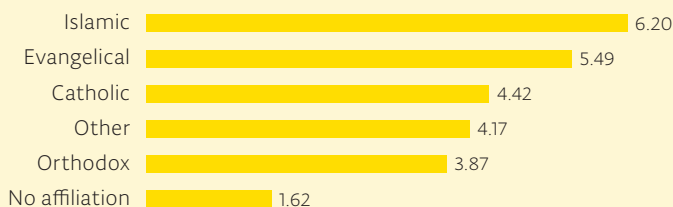
NOTE: 1 = regularly, several times a week, 6 = never.

SOURCES: Youth 2010 and Youth 2000

Between 2000 and 2010 the percentage of youth who never or rarely (once, twice or a few times a year) attend church or other places of worship increased by 9.2 per cent. The characteristic predictors of worship are the same as for personal religiousness. Here as well an absence of correlation is shown with the respondent’s education and a strong correlation is shown with the education of the parents.

Since the concept of God is central to theistic religiousness and since we are dealing almost exclusively with theistic religions, we asked the respondents how important God is in their lives (1 = not at all important, 10 = very important). With respect to religious affiliation we obtained the following graph:

Graph 140: Average self-assessment of the importance of God with respect to religious identification, Youth 2010



LEGEND: 1 = not at all important, 10 = very important

Among Catholics the importance of God is below the normative average, which indicates a prevailing importance of religious identification which is weak and specific to tradition. The only lower average was for members of the Orthodox Church. The high levels for Evangelicals probably cannot be ascribed to their small numbers. The level is highest among Muslims, although in certain other environments it reaches even higher levels.

We can conclude that religiousness is falling, that it shows a strong correlation with social origin, where the education level of the parents decreases it and living in the country fosters it. Religiousness is higher among women. The pluralisation of religiousness is moderate. More research is required in order to determine whether the influence of democratically and authoritatively cultivated parenthood is stimulative, while the correlation with authoritarian intolerance is known (Flere and Klanjšek 2009).

Long-term trends of falling religiousness and weak formation of the religious marketplace are continuing alongside substantial stability in this area. The education of the parents shows an exceptionally negative correlation with the existence of religiousness, and religiousness is higher among women.

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13.8 Key findings

The psychological portrait of Slovenian youth does not indicate a general conclusion of “spoiled”, variously deviant, apathetic and living in an “existential vacuum”. The latter is refuted by the low level of alienation of Slovenian youth. Although we did not research this entirely systematically, we could conclude with regard to the indexes used that the level of the presence of pathological narcissism among Slovenian youth is not a cause for concern.

Based on an analysis of all of the constructs we can summarise the findings in the following points:

1. A focus on the future, connected with a constructive attitude towards solving one's own tasks in life, is the most widespread time perspective among youth, but at the same time is the least expressed among the youngest age group.
2. Narcissistic grandiosity is a majority but harmless phenomenon, while narcissistic exploitation is a minority and destructive one.
3. In the past 25 years, authoritarianism as an indicator of antidemocratic potential shows a modest prevalence over the opposite orientation, although it has fallen slightly.

4. The statements with which we measured anomie were mostly accepted. There is a clear perception that anomie among young people has increased in the last three years.
5. Alienation is a markedly minority phenomenon, but it is clearly associated with all of the most significant “desirable” and “undesirable” psychological and behavioural phenomena.
6. The most common deviant behaviour is destruction of property, and deviance is more frequent among men.
- 472 7. Long-term trends of falling religiousness and weak formation of the religious marketplace are continuing alongside substantial stability in this area. The education of the parents shows an exceptionally negative correlation with the existence of religiousness, and religiousness is higher among women.

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14 Portraits of the interviewees

This chapter presents 25 young people who took part in the qualitative work as interviewees. They were invited to participate on the basis of previously compiled research profiles, which served as central guidelines in shaping individual portraits. The main purpose of the portraits is therefore to present a particular interviewee through the prism of a specific profile. The portraits were compiled primarily on the basis of data gathered through unstructured interviews in which special attention was paid to the subjective views of the interviewees, which formed the basic storyline of each portrait. This is why the portraits also include photographs and quotes, which are sometimes transcribed in incomplete linguistic form or with errors, or even in dialect, slang or other idiosyncrasies that contribute to a more plastic and expressive presentation^{118*}.

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118 * Translator's note: All these nuances are hard, if not impossible, to render in English translation, and are implied with colloquialisms, lower-register words and deliberate grammatical mistakes.



“My life motto: First of all you must enjoy life, for you only live once.”

14.1 **Špela, 25, young waitress**

Špela comes from a village in the vicinity of Ptuj. She completed secondary school in Ptuj. As she was also interested in gardening, she enrolled in the School of Agriculture in Maribor. After she finished her secondary education, she enrolled in the matriculation course, but failed to complete it. She also enrolled in one of the higher education schools, but did not finish the programme. At the moment she lives with her parents, is receiving social benefit and makes additional money with occasional jobs, mostly in catering.

"My life motto: First of all you must enjoy life, for you only live once... I simply do what I like... But we're all different. So far I'm happy, although everything is going down."

What's going down?

"Job, family, things at home, you know... health and finances. Father was diagnosed with cancer, plus Granddad fell ill... Mum's all right... Well, she has problems with her legs, but it's better now once she's tried out like a thousand ointments..."

"The finances are in a state. Now that Dad's gonna be home, he'll need treatment, and there'll be less money. But we're three children and each of us is trying hard... My sister works through the student employment service; my brother is also trying hard... Given that we have these problems in the family it's gonna be tough... Plus it's hard to get a job nowadays."

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Špela singles out her financial situation as the most troubling aspect of her life:

"Financially I just do my best from day to day. I grab every opportunity that presents itself – promoting home-produced milk or grape picking, I take anything. Just to be able to help at home and have enough for a drink with my friends. But if things go on like this, I don't know how we'll manage... There's less and less turnover in catering and everything will go bust..."

"At the moment I'm moonlighting, I'm officially unemployed. I'm not even listed with the Employment Service. It doesn't make sense, they'd only give me a hard time, make me write applications and stuff... they tell me things I already know, I write applications on my own, but it's no good. Not that I don't want help, but others need it more than I do. Some people have no place to live, I have a roof over my head... some people are just taking advantage of the Service, they've been there 5 years, and nothing for it... Well, I think the Service might help me, I just haven't made up my mind yet..."

She sees her employment future as uncertain, but not necessarily negative:

"I might stay in catering... if nothing else turns up... I like working with people, I like to have the contact and conversation, I like meeting different types of people... It's not hard, especially if the atmosphere is all right and the staff... but you have to be the right person for it. At the beginning I had doubts, but it's no big deal..."

According to Špela, most young people in Slovenia are faced with similar employment problems. The main responsibility for employment rests with the state, which does not do enough to actively include the young in employment programmes:

478 *"On the one hand all of us (young people) are responsible, and on the other, the state, and then the EU... it's hard to say, it's the same all over the world, but why, nobody knows."*

In Špela's opinion, the main role of the state should be encouraging demand for labour and creating new jobs, which would pull young people out of unemployment:

"In my case in nurseries, with flowers... people should also have more money to spend on plants."

However, for Špela unemployment does not mean she is idle or that she has a lot of spare time. Her schedule is filled to the last minute, entirely divided between caring for her family and part-time jobs, which demand a great deal of availability and flexibility. She has hardly any time left for a partnership or leisure activities. Nevertheless, she manages to find some time for herself:

"Flowers, flowers, yeah... I've always had a thing for flowers... And amateur acting. I used to go to these workshops organised by the public fund. They take place at some famous actor's, at the seaside, and last for a week. A girlfriend of mine got me involved in it, by chance... I somehow didn't like it at first, but then I totally got into it... I went through it and became more confident. Being on the stage, it gives you a rush... you're on the stage, 200 hundred people are watching and you act out a role, although that isn't you... I like it a lot. There's a lot of people in the group and we're all about the same age... I like it that you can just switch off at rehearsals and become somebody else, and everybody takes you seriously..."

For Špela, the role and importance of her family is crucial. In her perception, the members of her basic family are her mother, father, brother, sister and her boyfriend. She believes that family is of the utmost importance for any individual, and ensures survival even in the most troubled times. She claims she feels very good in her family:

“Yeah, it’s great... It seems to me we’re more together as a family. Now that us kids are all over 20, we stick together more... We can tell each other everything, you don’t need to hold anything back... well, now’s a bit hard ‘cause dad’s ill, but better than in primary or secondary school... Dad and Mum used to give us a hard time, but I understand them now, they worried... Now I know I can turn to them... And to my brother and sister, too, we always stick together.”

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Of her future Špela has a rather vague, but nevertheless optimistic notion:

“Christ, everybody’s asking me this lately... well, those insurance agents, hah hah... So, I’ll dream a little... steady job, a small flat and family... Steady job? Anything, shop assistant... Since I trained as a gardener, I’d prefer to be a gardener, but I’m willing to learn anything...”



“My family means everything to me.”

14.2 Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother

Andreja lives in the vicinity of Maribor with her young family. She is married to her long-time partner, and they have a 2-year-old daughter. At the moment she is unemployed, and she has also lost her student status since she discontinued her studies:

“I’ll probably never finish my studies, for the practical part of the course made me realise this wasn’t for me. It’s sad when after four years of studying you figure out you’ve made a wrong decision. If they showed us in the first year what it was like to be a teacher, you could switch to something else, but at the end it’s impossible. Well, I had a good time in the practical work, the kids liked me, but I couldn’t imagine that at 60 I’d still be writing on the blackboard. I’d like to do

something dynamic, something that keeps changing... In my opinion the teaching profession is not like that."

Andreja was born in Maribor, where she spent most of her childhood. She grew up in the centre of the town:

"I can still remember how my mum would tell me to breathe through my nose since the air was totally dirty... In those days people used coal for heating everywhere... we also used coal, although we lived in a flat in the centre. We lived in a rented flat, and then moved to Miklavž. The owner kept raising the rent, and my parents decided to buy something of their own. I was 13 years old and moving was a big shock for me. All my friends were in town. The worst thing was when I saw we were moving into some old house. In town we lived in a fairly derelict block of flats, but the house was even worse. I was also afraid what my friends would think when they saw what sort of place I lived in."

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Despite moving to the outskirts, Andreja attended seventh and eighth grade in Maribor. Eventually she grew used to the village and new neighbourhood. Her family renovated the house and its surroundings, and Andreja grew fond of the place. However, the majority of her social network remained connected to Maribor:

"All my friends were in Maribor. That's why I didn't go to school in Miklavž. I couldn't find any friends in the neighbourhood, all our neighbours were older, there was nobody my age."

After the primary school Andreja wanted to enrol in the First Grammar School in Maribor, but did not collect enough points for entry, so she enrolled in the Secondary School of Economics. This further affected contacts with her friends, most of whom went to the First Grammar School.

"In the first year I met my husband. Funny situation. In those days we used to hang out in some café or other at the bus station. Me and a girlfriend lied to our parents that we had a two-day school trip, we even forged a note from school, and spent two days wandering around the town. That was on 26th April 2000. We walked past a café and my husband-to-be was sitting there, quite drunk... I didn't even see him. He cried after us: What's up girls, wanna drink? And we joined

him. I was sitting next to him and after half an hour I knew that was it. He probably didn't know. We drank a few rounds and decided to go to the Yucatan club. Oto was so drunk that he couldn't get into a cab and just fell asleep. My girlfriend went on, and I stayed with him till morning. In the morning he woke up. I waited to see if he'd ask for my phone number, and after a while he did. He phoned the next day, and that was it. I still know it was Wednesday when we met, on Thursday he called me and on Friday we went out. We've been together for ten years, married for a bit more than a year, and have a year and a half old daughter."

482 At the beginning Andreja's parents did not approve of their relationship, as she was only 15 years old. But they soon realised they would not be able to prevent their meetings, and Andreja reached an agreement with them to let her stay at Oto's over the weekends if she did well at school.

"At that time Oto didn't have a driving licence or a car. He was looking for a job and found one after a year. When he got a job, he passed the driving test and bought a car. So we could spend more time together."

"This went on for a few years. We moved in together when I enrolled in the faculty. He came to live with me. We realised we'd been together for quite a while and should start building something together. We started thinking of kids when I was in the second year of studies... we went to Podčetrtek on holiday and watched families with babies. Oto said he liked babies and that it was time, given we'd been together so long... I had my doubts since I didn't have a job. How would we live? But it turned out we're alright, even if I don't have a job. We lead an average life... We don't receive any support; we pay our bills and take care of everything ourselves."

When Andreja got pregnant, the greatest problem was increasing social isolation, for she and Oto were used to going out a lot with their friends:

"We started staying at home, and lots of friends stopped seeing us. I dunno why. But I think if the baby is wanted, nothing is a problem... having a baby can't affect you. So you lose your friends. For me, my kid is the most important thing... Occasionally we still go out, leave the kid with one of the grandmothers and go out..."

The birth of little Ines changed many things in Andreja's life:

"I get up at 6.30 in the morning and take the little one to kindergarten. At home I cook, clean, and pick up Ines at around two o'clock. We come home, play, then Oto comes and we have a fun time, I make him something to eat. We're together for a while and in the evening I put Ines to bed. Then I have time for myself. I read the news, spend some time on the web, watch some TV. I try not to think so much about other things, the bills and money. Money really bugs me. It bugs me that I don't contribute. I used to work through the Student Employment Service and sometimes contributed up to 600 euros a month. We were spending money on unnecessary things, three holidays a year, we went to the seaside for the May holiday and such... Now I'd use the money differently. It doesn't bother me I didn't finish my studies, but it would if I didn't have Ines. It would worry me much more. Now other things are important."

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Andreja describes her family's financial situation as stable, but her personal material situation as poor:

"My husband's supporting me. He never complains about it and I'm not short of anything. Even if I want to buy something for myself, I say, I saw this T-shirt and really like it. I'd love to have it. Oto gives me his bank card and I can use it freely. He trusts me not to buy things I don't need."

"I personally miss having a job. Not so much for the money, just to be able to contribute to the family budget. Another thing happened – since we've had Ines, I'm no longer afraid of any work. I'd take anything, even pressing cabbage. I have greater respect for the money now that we have a child."

Despite being unemployed Andreja believes she's a happy person:

"Yeah, I'm happy, on a scale from 1 to 10, I score 12... I'm kidding, 8.5. I'm a kind of person who, even when things run smoothly, believes that things could be even better... and I don't mean just material things, more like in general."

Andreja sees her future in an optimistic light:

“(In 10 years’ time) I’m more relaxed, no longer worried about the money... I can’t see my professional future clearly... if I could have it my way I’d own a café, I’d serve tables and be the boss... that wouldn’t be a problem at all. When Ines is 12 years old, she has a little brother and a sister, we have our own house, which is no bigger than 85 square metres, doesn’t have a white fence and a dog, but a hunting room is a must... because Oto is a fanatical hunter.”



“I’m well off, really can’t complain.”

14.3 **Enver, 20, young Roma**

Enver was born in Maribor, where he attended kindergarten and primary school. After second grade he was expelled due to frequent absence. A few years later he enrolled in one of the primary schools with a special curriculum, but never finished it, this time primarily for disciplinary reasons, most frequently fighting. When he was 17, he enrolled in the primary school programme for adults at the Institute for Adult Education in Maribor, completed sixth grade, and gave up schooling completely in the seventh grade. He says he felt uncomfortable as there were older

Roma women in the same class, and in their presence he couldn't talk to his friends.

"Then I did zilch for two years. Sat home, watched TV, played games... one year I spent with my buddies at Kolosej (entertainment centre in Maribor), but we get thrown out 'cos we give them hard time..."

At the moment he has six completed grades of primary school. He is unemployed and lives with his wife and two children in a subsidised flat for socially vulnerable families.

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Enver and his two older brothers are members of the first generation in their family born in Slovenia. His grandfather, grandmother and father come from Kosovo, his mother from Zagreb:

"Grandpa been in Maribor for 40 years already. In Kosovo there was no work, no life... so he came here for better life. He got a flat and a job with Snaga, married Grandma... Father was born in Kosovo for that where Grandpa's from..."

When his grandfather judged that Enver was old enough to marry, he asked his friend to find a bride for his grandson. Enver's uncle found her in Kosovo:

"... first I, Grandpa, Grandma and Ma went to Kosovo. My aunt's husband found a girl in a family he knew, they waited to see if we liked each other and arranged a marriage. They were talking and the girl and I went to town for a drink, we talked a bit and went back home. Grandpa asked me if I like her, and I say I like her. Then we went back home and they arranged everything else alone."

For a while he and his wife lived at his grandfather's. They had their first baby when Enver was 17, and the second when he was 19. Although both of them are unemployed and the family is classified as a socially at-risk household, Enver claims he's happy and quite well off:

"We live on welfare, Grandpa helps a bit, Father too, sometimes I work a little... All I need is more money, hah hah... I'm OK, I have a TV, computer, play-station, telephone, everything... but I like to have a bigger car."

Enver and his family are largely dependent on welfare relief. He says they can make ends meet; in addition to direct financial aid they receive child benefits, they live in a subsidised flat and are occasionally granted other forms of one-off social assistance. Every now and then he helps his grandfather collect and re-sell scrap iron, and thus contributes to the family budget:

“... when they gather bulky waste, we go through town in our van and take what we find. Grandpa has some regular clients, they call him when they have enough scrap iron to fill the van...”

“Yeah, it pays best to collect scrap copper and aluminium, that’s more cash... iron’s bad. And you shouldn’t sell it here, it don’t pay. Better collect here and sell across the border (in Austria), they pay better... and they know us already anyway.”

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Welfare relief is an important financial source for Enver’s entire family, and together with alternative survival strategies, for instance scrap-iron collection and strong mutual solidarity in the extended family, the situation, according to Enver’s claims, is quite good. Regular employment is out of the question for him:

“... no, no way... then it’s problems and we don’t manage (financially). Look, if I go to work, I get less money than I have now when I don’t work. Plus I lose the social flat, child benefits go down and I no longer get other support for social families (socially at-risk families).”

“The social (service) is making me work in construction, but I don’t wanna... You crazy, me working there like idiot... and in 30 years I can’t stand on me feet... They also offered me to a van-driving job, but I lost me licence...”

“The future? Don’t know professionally, but sometime I must find a job... can’t be on the dole forever.”



“You start growing up when you do a lot of things yourself.”

14.4 **Helena, 18, excellent grammar school student**

Helena lives with her parents, three younger sisters and a brother on a farm in a village near Slovenska Bistrica. She spent her childhood and attended primary school in her home village:

“I’ve lived in Leskovec since I was little, spent my entire life in the village. But in the holidays I visited my grandmother in Maribor. There I watched various TV shows and cartoons, since we didn’t have Cartoon Network at home. I remember my childhood as being very carefree. Every evening I played in the courtyards with my sister

Ana, and the days passed. We usually played in the sand box or with one of the dogs..."

Helena described her primary-school years as a very pleasant period. She attended primary school in the neighbouring village, and as she was an excellent pupil all the time, she had a lot of spare time for other activities:

"It was like this, but it was all right. After school I usually came home, had lunch and sometimes went riding and sometimes I played the piano. I didn't learn much."

She started playing the piano in the second grade of primary school. Later she finished elementary music school, and continued her musical education at one of the private music schools in Maribor. She says she lost motivation a few times, but always turned back to music. During the first year of secondary school she became enthusiastic about the bass guitar:

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"I wanted to play the electric guitar, but when I tried, it sounded totally weird. Then I saw a bass guitar at a friend's, and after playing three notes I liked it so much I gave Mum a hard time. So eventually she had to buy me a bass."

"I like secondary school much better than primary school, mostly because most people are more mature and serious. But there are some guys here who're even less mature than primary-school pupils. For instance, there are some who talk during classes, rock on their chairs or squeak just to disturb the others..."

At the moment, Helena is attending the fourth grade of the 2nd Grammar School in Maribor, and she is in the European class:

"It's mostly, like, you tell somebody which school you go to, and they all go 'Wow'. They all see this school as prestigious, and our class is considered particularly prestigious. But in fact it's no big deal, you only had to study harder to get into this school. Our class curriculum foresees more travelling and exchanges, and we have four additional subjects. We have exchanges. The first exchange was with a Slovenian grammar school, the second with an Italian one, in the third we spent a week in Brussels. The additional subjects that we have are Slovenia in the world, Social role of Slovenian, European studies, Culture and

civilisation, Slovenian literature and translation. Most of them are in English.”

Helena describes her typical day as full, but diverse, enjoyable and nice:

“In the morning I get up at around six, then I take a train to school. I finish at around three and go home. I usually have something to eat and then I study if there are things to be learned. I spend time with my iguanas, I play the piano or the bass. In the evening I study, watch a film and go to bed. I read a lot, not as much as in primary school, but still quite a lot. I enjoy reading crime novels, historical novels or I read things prescribed by the school.”

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“I think that other students, mainly in vocational schools, study less. We definitely have more subjects and this means we must learn more. I also think they have more free time. But on the other hand I see that other schools, the medical school, for example, have classes in the afternoon. Our headmaster doesn’t allow it, and even when the school building was being renovated, we had classes only in the morning, which is great.”

Despite her tight schedule Helena manages to find some time and energy for leisure activities. In addition to playing music she draws, paints with acrylic paints, and is particularly fond of photography:

“My grandfather was always taking photos. He died, but I have his camera. He was also the one who bought me my first digital camera. My sister and I were frantically shooting everything from landscapes to animals. And then I saw a new, better camera. Grandma and I agreed she’d buy it for me by instalments, and I’d give her the money every month. So I give her the money even before she gets the bill. Later I also bought a telephoto lens and I’ve been taking a lot of photos since.”

In her words, her main motivation is a great interest in photographic expression and a desire to participate in the Prešeren Competition organised by her school. She will take part in the competition in the category of photography as well as in the artistic part – she plans to submit her watercolours and drawings.

Music, too, remains her great love. She hasn't seriously touched the piano for several years, but has developed a special love for the bass guitar, and together with her sister Ana, who plays the drums, they set out to form a music group.

An important part of Helena's life is her relationship with her boyfriend Jernej; both of them are members of the specific subculture of the young – they are Goths:

“In the second grade our school building was being renovated and we were relocated to the premises of the Ivan Cankar primary school. The catering school also had classes there. One of my schoolmates met Jernej through the Internet, and a few times we all went for icecreams together. At first we didn't talk, but when I was appearing at MC (one of the youth clubs in Maribor) with students from my music school, I asked him to come. And then I also talked him into coming to Twilight.”

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What's Twilight? (A. N.)

“It's a party for people like me. It's not a concert... sometimes some group or other performs, but not necessarily. It's a kind of mixture of metal and electronics, like at metal techno parties. There's also a dress code, you have to wear black or dark clothes, also leather, latex, fetish, lace... I really, really enjoy it. In the last three years I've been to all the parties. I like the style, music, I dance there, I love the rhythm... They even make remixes of popular music remade as Goth Lolita. I really love it... I have three pairs of shoes in this style. I wouldn't label myself as a Goth Lolita, just a Goth. And only when I go to the parties, never to school. I discovered this style on the Internet, in the first grade. In primary school you sort of don't dare, especially if you go to a small village school like ours. I knew it wasn't time yet. But in the first grade I slowly started dressing like this. At home they took it well enough, Mum even enthused over my shoes. Dad has a lot of comments, but mostly he's joking.”

In Helena's words, her family consists of her mother, father, brother and sisters, mother's mother (grandmother), Jernej and his family, with whom she spends a great deal of time. Helena sees life in a large family as extremely pleasant and amusing:

"It's a bit crazy, but also fun, there're so many people there's always something going on, but you can also withdraw. In my opinion it must be awful to be an only child; you're always in the centre of attention and can't be on your own. In our family, everybody has their privacy, although we live in a house which is not very big. I usually just go out, and after a while nobody notices I'm missing. They even forget anything happened. I also think you learn to be independent."

Helena describes the material situation of her family as "not that great", but she also stresses that she lacks nothing. She has based her financial system on her scholarship, occasional jobs and donations from her relatives. She says that in principle she can afford everything, but has to plan, save and eventually buy what she wants.

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"Father works, but Mum stays at home, she's a housewife. This, of course, affects our life. As Mum's at home, as she doesn't go to work, she's in charge of assigning chores. Father's home very little, he mostly does field work. Mum delegates chores to us children, she asks who has time to do the dishes, stack logs and such. For us children Mum's the head of the family, for she spends most time with us. Dad's formally the boss, but he's home very little; when he is, he has it his way, but I believe Mum holds everything together. Mum can handle anything. Dad comes home and gets angry at us, but Mum takes our side. And she knows how to overrule him, she shouts at him to leave us alone. For instance, Dad threatens us with punishment, but nobody's ever been punished. I personally am more upset if Mum says something to me or is angry with me or sad. But when Dad's angry, it doesn't hurt me much."

Helena sees the key to her personal success in assuming responsibility and gradually growing up, in which parents and family have an important role.

"In my opinion you start growing up when you do a lot of things yourself, you take care of some important stuff, you have your own medical insurance, for instance, pay the bill for your mobile phone yourself and all that. Also, when parents let you make your own decisions about certain things, you're more grown up. And when you take responsibility for your actions. Like, you do something wrong at school and you don't need your parents to defend you or to complain... You take responsibility for what you did and apologise for

the mistake. When you're 40, they can no longer protect you. I myself feel young, but I'm already responsible for certain things I do. I'm totally responsible for everything that goes on at school, and I'll bear the consequences if I play truant, my parents can't just write me an excuse note because I don't feel like attending my Slovenian class. I'm also responsible for my money. I have a scholarship, but I have to use it wisely. In principle I can spend it on anything I want, but I need to have enough money for the fare to school, for clothes and shoes, for my pets and everything else I think I need."

Helena's attitude towards adulthood is ambivalent; on the one hand she wants to grow up, and on the other she does not. She says she likes it that she does not have to take care of everything herself. But she will have to grow used to having more and more responsibility. It does not bother her that she is slowly growing up, but she wants to remain happy and content, and by no means bitter or feeling she does not have time for anything else but work.

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In her words, parents should teach a young child what is right and what is wrong. She says their mother taught them not to waste food. She had a picture of hungry African children, they all had to pile on their plate as much food as they planned to eat, and then stay at the table until they finished it. This taught the children to take only as much food as they could eat. Helena also says their mother taught them not to use curse words. If she caught somebody using foul language, she consistently punished them. And she taught them to assume responsibility for their belongings. If things were not in order, she threatened to throw them in the bin.

"I liked Barbie dolls, and as I didn't put them away properly, she once really took them and threw them away. Only when I apologised and promised I'd keep my room tidy, did she give them back to me. She also taught us to take care of animals. For cleaning, we had a checklist with black dots and stars. If you had a lot of black dots, you were punished, and for a lot of stars you were rewarded. It was a good system, the checklist was hanging there for all to see, and when you saw it, you remembered you had chores to do."

In Helena's opinion parents must also teach their children how to communicate with and respect others. They should let their children assume responsibilities, for this is the only way to get used to the life awaiting them in adulthood.

“Mothers shouldn’t make their children breakfast, get their bag ready and make their beds until they’re 18.”

“I see my future as extremely bright... I’ll finish university studies, architecture in Ljubljana; I’ll work in an architectural bureau... I hope I’ll stay together with Jernej, we’ll have a house and a car, but at this point I’m not thinking about children yet.”



"I'm happy, everybody's happy if they make their life happy."

14.5 **Afroditë, 21, young disabled person**

Afroditë was born in Kosovo, and moved to Slovenia with her family when she was still a baby. Her father got a job at TAM in Maribor, but her mother was unemployed. In addition to Afroditë, her parents have two daughters and a son. Afroditë was born with a spine deformity and needed to undergo surgery very early on:

"Doctors in Kosovo even told my father I wouldn't live long, but he didn't believe them. After the operation my health improved. I was

in therapy to be able to move easier. After a while I could walk with the help of support or crutches, but I could walk."

The doctors corrected the spine deformity with surgery quite early, but Afrodita never fully recovered. She was in physiotherapy to enable her to walk. Now she is using a wheelchair, but can also walk with crutches or other aids.

Afrodita attended special primary school at the Training Institute for Disabled Youth in Kamnik. After a successful, but relatively long stay in Kamnik, she decided to go back to Maribor. She believed that despite her disability she could attend regular secondary school, and enrolled in the Secondary School of Economics. But her disability was not well received:

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"I can't believe that nowadays people still have prejudices regarding disability. I can tell from my own experience, for the first week in first grade everybody was asking me how I was and why I was in a wheelchair, but after a week they totally forgot about me. There were many scenes in secondary school... You need extra learning help with maths, for instance, but my classmates didn't like it because they couldn't get a positive grade in the whole year, so they complained why I had less problems to solve than them. I don't like this."

Nevertheless she successfully completed secondary school and enrolled in the faculty where she studies economics.

For Afrodita her disability imposes certain limitations, but she can take care of herself alone. The main problems are architectural features in towns and other infrastructure that are not friendly to people in wheelchairs.

"In making contacts with people it's not a great obstacle, unless people have obstacles in their heads. In free-time activities I don't see it as a limitation... I'm fond of adrenaline, I'd like to go bungee jumping one day... but don't know whether it's possible, that's the problem."

She doesn't feel any particular discrimination against disabled people. She believes she has many friends and claims these are the people who accept her as she is:

"They accept it that I'm disabled, that I need some forms of help, but they don't treat me as a poor invalid, they treat me as a normal person."

"I'm happy, everybody's happy if they make their life happy. You can sit in the corner and feel sorry for yourself, and that's what your life will be like. I personally don't think much about my disability. I understand it's a limitation, diabetics as well have limitations and have to watch their diet, and yet they live with it, at the end of the day they don't even think about it. I've been disabled since birth, it's normal for me. I see my future in a positive light. In terms of personality I'll be what I am, and professionally I want to own a manicure salon, I'm dreaming about having two children, a boy and a girl, and that's all."



“Pekarna has a special place... if I'm not at school or at home, I go there.”

14.6 **Jona, 25, regular visitor to Pekarna, a youth gathering place**

“I was born in Maribor, I spent me childhood as a town kid... nothing special, same as you when you were a kid. After school we played catch in the street, like... I still have some pals from that time, but we don't hang out together much... We were all from the same street, that's it... Until I was six I was as average as they get, and then we started being tough guys. We started making trouble, being rude to

the teacher, no respect for authority whatsoever, we got drunk on school field trips, one had to have his stomach pumped...”

After primary school Jona enrolled in a grammar school. He had no particular problems at school, the problems were the people he was meeting at school:

“I was accepted into their gang right away, repeated a class once, a second time, and then I said enough, I split... Nothing bothered me... But I knew if I wanted to do something I won't do it here. It wasn't school, it was rock'n'roll... You probably know what I mean, don't you?”

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From the grammar school he switched to the Secondary School of Economics. The school seemed extremely easy, and he completed even the most difficult tasks without any problems. His primary social network was limited to the school, but he also started hanging out at Pekarna, where he met some new people:

“I met them at Pekarna, when we were messing around with some band and then sooner or later you end up there, it's the music, the style and the scene... You can't play rock and go to Samsara...”

After secondary school he started studying logistics, but the programme didn't suit him at all, so he enrolled in the Faculty of Arts in Maribor to study sociology. He liked the course, and as he passed the exams more or less regularly, he had a lot of spare time which he increasingly started to dedicate to music. He was particularly fond of percussion instruments, he also completed primary music school, and played drums in the band. For Jona it was therefore logical to seek connections with other young musicians and spend more and more time with them. One of the music scene centres in Maribor is Pekarna, and the place is more than just a club where young people hang out:

“Pekarna has a special place... if I'm not at school or at home, I go there... There nobody thinks you're weird if you've got army pants and a strange haircut... After a while it becomes your place, you know everybody, the music's cool, the scene's OK... I don't spend as much time there 'cause of the course, three times a week, but it used to be much more... After the logistics I even worked there and stayed there non-stop... I went home only to shower and eat... I slept on

sofas in Gustaf... Say, I came in in the afternoon, had a beer or two, played pool at MC (one of the clubs in the Pekarna complex), then I went to work in Gustaf (one of the clubs in the Pekarna complex), got ready for work... I worked till six or seven and then, when everybody went home, we had a mini party for the staff, which often lasted till evening, and then I saw it was eight in the evening, ran home to shower and back to work. So it went for two years or so... Then I enrolled in sociology... I felt I wasn't so young any more and couldn't just party all my life... This doesn't mean I don't have contacts... I still go to Pekarna and hang out there, but now I also study..."

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Jona comes from a family of divorced parents, and has a younger brother and an older sister. The sister has moved out already, and Jona stayed at home with his mother and younger brother. He describes his financial situation as not particularly good, but also not particularly bad:

"I can't say I have a hard time... I can go for a beer and I have enough for fags... I live and eat with my parents, for luxuries I make my own money... I make money with odd jobs..."

"Otherwise... I don't think much of family, though... dunno why... No family connection... Some people think the world of their mums, for me, my mum's just a mum, a person I live with. It's been like this ever since I can remember. To my old man I'm not attached at all, he's just a pal... We live separately. We sometimes meet for coffee, and for financial help. My brother and I see each other only when we're drunk and meet somewhere out. At home we live together, but have no real connection. My sister lives elsewhere and I never hear from her... This doesn't mean we're on bad terms or anything, we just don't see each other."

In Jona's words, young people are perceived in a biased, mostly wrong way nowadays. He believes that adults see no real potential in the young, which further undermines the motivation of the young to cooperate with older adults. The greatest damage is caused by the stereotyped perception of the young based on their image, which often has no real connection with the actual background. In Jona's opinion, the young are often quite capable of acting in an adult way, and it's all a matter of responsibility:

"(You're grown up) when you act like an adult. This means you're functionally grown up. Say, you have a job and you're responsible,

you accept the consequences of your decisions... You're an adult when you feel psychologically grown up.

How do you feel? Like a grown up?

Yes. 'Cause I'm totally responsible for myself and towards myself. Yeah, but I don't have a family... I'd find a regular job, which means I wanna play it safe... In fact that's me; I totally wanna play it safe. You finish your studies, job, car, flat, and you're on your own."

Parents should actively participate in this process, which in Jona's opinion means that they should let the young become independent.

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"They should leave them alone... the more parents try to help, the more they stand in the way... They want to protect them, all right, but they don't help... The young must stand on their own feet."

Jona has a rather vague notion of his future, but sees it in a positive light:

"Hard to say, I see myself abroad... I'd most like to do something with psychopaths, this kind of scene, with murderers... psychoanalysis abroad, here we don't have such radical psychopaths... About family, I don't know... I wouldn't have a family. It's better to be alone... You don't need to consider others, you have your own plan, and that's it... But it does sound egotistic."



“First year after school I was a free-lance artist.”

14.7 **Uroš, 22, young farmer**

Uroš comes from a village in the vicinity of Slovenj Gradec. He lives with his father, mother, two sisters and grandmother on a farm, which is also the main source of survival and income for the family.

“I went to kindergarten in Selo... and the first five years of primary school, then I enrolled in the Secondary School of Wood Technology in Slovenj Gradec. First year after school I was a free-lance artist... But then dad got sick, his kidneys failed and he needed surgery.”

As his father's deteriorating health made him incapable of working the land, Uroš mostly took over the farm.

"It was my decision; I was always saying I'd stay at home... When mum and dad went to work, I was always with granddad... It gets into your blood. I myself couldn't have a job, have someone tell me what to do... here I'm me own boss."

Despite the heavy schedule and difficult jobs, Uroš likes working on the farm:

"I get up at 6.30, go to the stable, finish there by 9.00, feed the animals, milk the cows, and then the rest... When it's hay harvest I cut the grass, when it's corn, and then favours for others, all that... I do the baling for other farmers, bring in the wood from the forest, mostly for those without the machinery. I learned things mostly from my granddad."

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In addition to the knowledge about farming that Uroš acquired in the family, he took part in various training courses for farmers, particularly about sowing and the insemination and hygiene of animals. He receives notices about training programmes by mail, and then decides whether to participate or not.

Uroš and his farm are relatively well integrated into the village environment. He is a member of the Machinery Club of Koroška, which enables farmers to provide machinery services in an organised way. Every year the Machinery Club issues a catalogue of members, and farmers needing a particular service, for instance hay baling, can contact the machine owner offering the service. This not only improves the productivity of farmers and the income of the farm offering a service, but also strengthens solidarity and social cohesion of the village environment. In his spare time Uroš, together with his girlfriend, is also active in the Rural Youth Society. The Society is intended for young people from the countryside, they organise trips, various competitions, for instance in grass cutting, and similar activities, which in this environment are important in terms of tradition or the interests of the members.

In Uroš's opinion running a farm is project work, in which being a hard and dedicated worker is not enough. A great deal of knowledge in various

fields is needed, in his words particularly bureaucratic skills, in order for a farm to seize opportunities for development:

"I have to follow public tenders... and then I have to apply if I want to get some money to buy a machine. Me and my father reach decisions about buying new machines together... So we bought a new baling machine, we saved some money, Father follows the tenders and tries to apply..."

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"What is bad is that people with connections have priority, and the deadlines are too short... Last year I applied, received an invitation on Friday, and on Saturday the tender was already closed. And in this short time I was supposed to get a certificate from the municipal and tax services that I paid for everything... Impossible!"

Uroš describes his financial situation as relatively good, but adds that milk, which is the primary source of the farm's income, should have a higher buying-in price. He considers farming not only as an emergency exit, but as a great opportunity for young people unable to get a job. The state should intervene, particularly by creating opportunities for instilling an interest in farming in young people and by enabling the development of modern and profitable farms, for instance tourist or bio-farms.

"Where I see my future? In retirement, hah hah ... no, not really, I'm just kidding. I'm going to do what I'm doing now. I'll develop the farm, so I won't have to work so hard."

Develop, how? (A. N.)

"I mean robotisation, of milking in the first place. Robots are expensive, but it pays to have them."

What about family? (A. N.)

"Family – Maja (girlfriend) and three children."



“If you have a job, society considers you ‘normal’.”

14.8 **Matjaž, 29, young unemployed**

Matjaž is from Malečnik in the vicinity of Maribor, where he was born, attended primary school and spent his childhood. His family has owned a restaurant for many generations, and is one of the most established families in the suburban village. Matjaž describes his childhood as happy and carefree:

“... childhood was OK, never any shortages. In those days I spent a lot of time with my brother, mostly at football or basketball... In primary school I did well at first, then it became a drag... my brother influ-

enced me, you know – c'mon, let's go to football instead... I started slacking and my grades went down, especially in higher classes. At home they never gave me a hard time or nagged about school."

In the second half of primary school Matjaž experienced something he describes as a life scrape:

"... in the fifth grade my father died. It was totally bad, although he'd been ill before. Then, in the seventh grade, my friend drowned when we were playing basketball and we tried to save a runaway ball from the Drava River. I tried to help him, but he almost dragged me underwater too. A bit later all my hair fell out... a total shock. It was logical I started feeling depressed."

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Despite the rather difficult situation he managed to finish primary school, but didn't know which secondary school to go to. As the family owned a restaurant, he decided to enrol in the Secondary School of Catering in Maribor.

"I totally wasn't interested in school, I had problems with that already... and I had additional problems because of the cap, the teacher didn't let me wear it in cooking classes. Right in the first year I failed some subjects, and never managed to pass the resits. Then I transferred to the construction school and finished it."

After secondary school he decided to enrol in university. To improve his possibilities of entry he successfully passed the matriculation course:

"I first enrolled in Slovenian, then textile and then something else, but finished nothing. In the meantime I worked, odd jobs through the Student Employment Service. But I had a lot of free time... music, various bands, football, basketball and of course partying, tarot, drinking ..."

"School is helpful, but it's a necessary evil, 'cause education is a must in our world. If you want to have money, you must finish school, life standing is based on education, but in my opinion young people often don't want the knowledge provided by the school."

Matjaž says that in those days when he was in the scrape, particularly from the second half of secondary school onwards, he switched off from

family life and turned to friends. His mother and he became totally alienated, which he compensated for with friends, books and music, in which he had already shown an interest in early childhood. He also enrolled in one of the private music school teaching percussion.

“At the moment I’m unemployed, but I make progress every day... I’m trying to stabilise my existence, materially and mentally. I’m looking for a job, maybe part time, but on the other hand I’m involved in music, through concerts, learning and organising events.”

“The main motive young people have for finding a job is security... When you’re unemployed, you’re depressed, and also isolated as you spend most of the time alone at home. If you have a job, society considers you ‘normal’.”

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He describes his financial situation as stable, but at the same time points out there are many things he can’t afford. He receives basic welfare relief and improves his personal budget with undeclared part-time jobs, occasional concerts and organisation of music events. Although his personal financial situation is somewhat stable, the situation in his family is different:

“At the moment the problems (in the family) are felt strongly, for instance huge debts and the poor economic situation... I feel it as a burden... I’m trying to distance myself from it, although I can see that Mum’s in a bad state... she’s depressed, but I refuse to feel bad about it myself too. Otherwise it’s quite OK; I get along with my mother and sister, but not with my stepfather. I’m somewhat immune to his presence, he can’t hurt me anymore, although we have a history of conflicts. And with my brother Gordan a have a fair relationship, you know, brotherly.”

The main problem in his family is lack of connection and structure. After his father’s death his mother remarried, but she failed to create open relationships in the family. Matjaž perceives this as disintegrative:

“... no true authority and leadership in the family... no hierarchy, everybody does everything only for themselves, nobody’s leading the family... in our case it’s bad ‘cause things don’t run smoothly... Theoretically we could fix this, but practically it’s hard to change people.”

Consequently, Matjaž started socialising primarily with his friends:

“... (My friends:) They’re mostly musicians and some friends from childhood. Although I don’t see them every day any more, we still get along well. For me it’s important that I have common interests with my friends, mostly music, but positive traits are also important, that a person is interesting and well read, that you can talk to him... that he’s honest and ready to help. Above all my friends must have a positive attitude and wish others well... and not be envious, which is so typically Slovenian.”

508 Nevertheless his situation does not seem tragic to him, and he sees his future as bright:

“I’m totally content, I know that I’m somewhere where I have many opportunities for progress, personal and musical ... and I want to become financially stabilised... I’m also much more open in my relations with others; I used to be totally closed up... I’m no longer afraid to step into the battlefield like I was in the old days...”



“I’ll most probably be a music school teacher.”

14.9 **Dominik, 16, young musician**

Dominik comes from the rural area of Prekmurje. He’s attending the Maribor Music and Ballet Secondary School, and has chosen the clarinet as his main instrument. He started displaying a love of music quite early on:

“For a long time I didn’t go to kindergarten since Grandma was watching me... and at school I wasn’t very sociable either. Till fifth grade I didn’t get along with the others at all... I couldn’t find common topics with my classmates, there were only girls in my class and I felt excluded. Then a boy joined us and I became more sociable. I

spent my free time with Lego blocks, and from third grade on with the play station... I had few friends, and eventually I broke up with them, too, because they started doing things I didn't like... drinking and mooching around. I was spending most of my time at home... Ever since I was little I've been interested in music, and I wanted a violin... I enrolled in music school, and as I was too old for the violin, they offered either the saxophone or the clarinet. I decided on the clarinet..."

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At the moment Dominik lives in one of the residence halls for secondary-school students in Maribor, and goes home to Prekmurje for the weekends. He has totally subordinated his life to music, which can be rather hard in the residence hall. Until not so long ago he had a problematic roommate, who constantly invaded his privacy, and Dominik expended a great deal of energy on being able to concentrate. Recently he has got new roommates, who are much better.

"The day starts at 5.30; I have breakfast and go to school. Before classes I practice up to an hour and a half, but at least half an hour. Then I go to classes, music theory, orchestra and harmony. I return to the residence hall for lunch break between 3.00 and 3.30 pm, and eat lunch at 4.00 pm. If I have other obligations (orchestra or music classes), I go back to school, if not, I practice in the hall – from an hour and a half to three hours every day."

What little free time he has left, he spends it with his friends drinking coffee and frequently playing music.

"We have a quartet. The Four Clarinets Quartet, we met at school... It was my idea to play, especially modern music, slightly reminiscent of Latino and jazz."

Dominik believes that the young nowadays are indeed getting worse than they ever were before, and that adults do not see it:

"Adults think too highly of the young, because they don't see everything that the young do... drinking and all-night partying. This is bad for young people, it isn't productive. No good comes of it... The young should think of their future and the future of society."

In his words, the young are also disrespectful of adults at home as well as at school and in society in general. Of himself he believes he is responsible and future-oriented, and he invests a great deal of time and energy in his future. He is fluent in English, German and Italian, and takes part in various training courses and activities, believing they will come in handy in the future. He constantly strives for perfection. He does not see himself as totally grown up yet. In his words, above all he lacks maturity.

"I don't think my personality will change much in the future. I'll stay what I'm like now, an optimist. This is my best quality. In terms of profession I'll most probably be a music school teacher. Family... I don't know yet... no special wishes... I'll let myself be surprised."



“When I get out, I’ll work, start a family...”

14.10 **Tasim, 22, young prisoner**

“I was born in ’87 in Maribor. First we lived in Melje, then moved to Borštnikova Street, then to Studenci. My parents are from Kosovo. They came here since it’s better here. I’ve got two brothers and two sisters. Dad and mum work for Snaga, brothers and sisters don’t work. All together they have 15 children.”

Tasim has lived in the part of Maribor called Studenci since he turned 15. In his words it is one of the worst town quarters. He finished six years of primary school, and then he was expelled, he says, because he was

chasing girls and fighting. In order to finish primary school he enrolled in the adult education programme at the Institute for Adult Education in Maribor, and completed it successfully.

"Then I got me driving licence, bought an Uno (Fiat Uno) and for a long time went looking for girls at Lizika Jančar House (one of the secondary student residence halls in Maribor) and at Holmes (one of the clubs in Maribor)."

For a long time Tasim was listed as an unemployed person, he was reselling mobile telephones, selling rockets, firecrackers and Christmas lights, and occasionally collected and sold scrap metal. In his free time he was mostly going to clubs and discotheques with his friends. At the moment he is in the Maribor prison for his part in a copper robbery from a Maribor company. He was sentenced to 6 months in prison; the others got longer sentences, primarily because of previous offences.

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Tasim described his life in prison as something that totally changed his life:

"At three in the afternoon I got to the gate to start doing my time... My brother came with me... Two pals were already in. I reported myself not to go to the closed section, I got everthing ready... they searched me and asked why I had come alone. I told them better to come alone than the police bring me... In the room (reception area) I met some people and they told me some things... Then I went for a walk, from 4 to 6. ...I stayed in the reception for 10 days, then I got lucky and they gave me a room where my pal was, the guy I was stealing with... Inside it's bad, drugs everywhere... First month was hard. Then I applied for work in Galvanika... I had a medical to see if I was fit for work, everthing OK. I worked there three months now and I'm underboss... some guys go home, we stay, and 'cause we know the work we're bosses... I'm zincing ... iron, copper..."

Why did you decide to work in the workshop? (A. N.)

"Because... So that time pass more quickly and I get out sooner. No life in the joint, I'm still young... I wanna have a wife, family, house, that's what I miss... Job."

In his words, a day in prison can be quite tiresome:

"I get up at 6.30, put on me overalls, go down to work... we're seven working there, four regularly, three sometimes... 51 cents an hour... 8-hour shift... If you don't tidy your room before, you get a UZ, and when you have three UZ you go to the closed section."

What's a UZ? (A. N.)

"UZ is when you do something wrong."

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"Between zincing cycles we chat, smoke, drink coffee and fool around, but when it's time for work we work. We have lunch break at 10.30, we usually get hamburgers, spaghetti or frankfurters. We work for the Kozjak Company, not for the prison... work till three, though we often finish by two. Then we go up to our rooms, I get me clothes, change and go to dinner at 15.10... Food's usually good, but sometimes it stinks. After dinner there's a walk in the courtyard from 4 to 6. At six we go up, 6.30 supper, at 8.00 it's report. When it rings you must go to your room and the warden checks if everybody's in his place, I mean here, that you didn't run away... If you ask the warden you can keep your light on till 10. We have TV, DVD and satellite... then we switch everthing off. Till 6 we're locked in, and in the morning everthing's the same. I can go home for the weekend, I behave myself in the prison, don't cause no trouble and don't do drugs."

Tasim works and behaves well in order to have his sentence reduced or at least to get himself better treatment in the prison. Before going to prison he met a girl from Serbia who he says is his future fiancée. He sees his future as bright, in his words the main problem is the part of town where he lives:

"Studenci's a disaster, not fit for life... I mostly hung out with my lot (Roma people) and also with your lot (Slovenians). I'm not happy... since I live in Studenci... Before I didn't know what a cigarette is, but here I learn all sorts of shit, to smoke, to mooch about... And now I learn what is prison. I never go back in... When I get out I'll work, start a family... I'm the youngest, I'll live with me mum and dad while they're alive, I'll have a wife and kids... I'll work for Snaga or McDonald's or in Austria."



“For the Olympics we totally subordinated our lives to training for two years.”

14.11 **Gašper, 23, young athlete**

“I’m an average student, an athlete; I have a lot of friends, like to party in my spare time... But I’m away a lot because of sports. I’ve had a girlfriend, Pia, for two years, I spend most of my free time with her, we go on trips together, to the seaside and the like.”

Gašper comes from near Maribor. He started rowing in the second grade of primary school; in his words, everything started as a game:

"I come from a very athletic family, my mum was an athlete, my dad's a director and he often makes films about sports, particularly in the mountains... We've always led a very active life. In spare time as well we played football when we were kids. But we never messed around with alcohol and cigarettes."

Gašper believes that he became a top athlete thanks to the company of his friends.

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"I was hanging out with people who didn't have this (drinking and smoking) as their main thing. If I'd been going out with people from Bresternica (his birth place) or lived in town, I'd probably have been tempted by other things. Rowing itself doesn't allow for any major transgressions, you can't afford to drink, smoke or other things that hinder training. Our coaches also urged us to have good grades at school. For instance, my coach wanted to see a copy of the gradebook, and until all the grades were in order, you weren't allowed to row. I myself never had any major problems at school. If I set myself a goal, I usually attain it. Everyone has their dreams, and I'm trying to make mine come true."

When he was about 13 years old, his club started to systematise training sessions and they became more target-oriented. At 14, Gašper participated for the first time in the world championship and achieved 14th place. This was the first turning point, rowing for the Slovenian team for the first time.

A year later he seriously injured his back:

"... overtraining – physically I wasn't completely developed... and at that time I was in the boat twice a day. Consequences: injury of the lumbar spine, I couldn't straighten up, the pain was unbearable. So the following season I trained less. Nada Kozjek provided a great deal of support, she suggested I go to physiotherapy for three months and train less."

In 2004, Gašper and his quad scull team won the title of youth world champions. They didn't expect it, although they knew they were good and had made considerable progress in the previous year. During the intensive training period Gašper was fulfilling all his school obligations, but subordinated his private life to rowing.

Three years of bitter experiences followed in rowing. In 2005, he switched from quad scull to double scull:

"The entire season the two of us were winning quite easily, with considerable advantage. We were therefore aiming for gold, but things went wrong in the finals. We were in the lead in the middle of the track, but then my partner made a mistake, he lifted his oar from the water in the wrong way, dropped it, we had to stop and ended up in the last place. 2006 was the first year when we competed as members, and that's a great turning point. Also we weren't able to put together a proper team to compete in the world rankings. In 2007 we set a deadline for the transition period in order to take part in the Olympics. Then my path was set at a 100%, in that year I subordinated everything to this goal. But once more it happened that the beginning of the season was promising, we even came 6th in the world cup. But when we were coming home, our van skidded off the road and we all ended up in hospital."

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After the traffic accident Gašper was forced to rest for a month. The dream of the Olympics was shattered, but the club didn't give up. In 2008 the same team gathered up and started training even harder; they met the standard for the Olympics in Beijing:

"We kind of expected it, the results of the season were very promising. Then we started training with the rest of the national squad, with Čop and Špik, we trained for a month and then went to the Olympics. The only problem was that we had to time our energy for the qualifications, and there wasn't enough energy left for the Games."

In August 2008 Gašper and his team competed in the Olympic Games in Beijing:

"We went there 8 days before the start. What can I say, a match like any other... I personally don't have stage fright at such things. But the feeling was different. We stayed at the Olympic Village... 40 blocks, saunas, kitchens, swimming pools, hairdressers... and everything for free. Your accreditation was a kind of entry ticket, a visa... you could see everything. In that period you're free and can do what you want. The coach makes a training schedule and you follow it."

In the morning you eat, then train, go back to the hotel and rest, and continue in the afternoon. We stayed for a week after the Games finished, and then we allowed ourselves to have more fun.”

“The competition more or less went to plan, but then we were burnt out. You’re tired, that’s normal, but we simply couldn’t get rested. We came 13th. At first we were disappointed, but later, when you add things up, you realise it’s really a good result. We did our best, and in the end I can’t say I was disappointed at the Olympics. But I did change my thinking later, that typical Slovenian attitude – for instance when I watch football from my armchair I can no longer say, look at him, what’s he doing ... sometimes you simply can’t exceed your capabilities.”

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Gašper described the year after the Olympic Games as his best year ever. When Iztok Čop joined him in the boat, everything changed, there was a bonus and they entered the finals in the world cup, came 3rd twice. In the world cup match they positioned their boat wrongly, were surprised by the wind and couldn’t keep up with the best. But they did win the small finals and ended in 7th place.

“In the 2010 season there were great variations and a lot of bad results, not just for me, for the entire national team. I was aiming at a medal, but it somehow didn’t work out. Too little support and backing for good rowers in Slovenia. It’s really hard to put together a good rowing team in Slovenia.”

Gašper has completely subordinated his private life to sport:

“This comes from my history, it’s always been like this for me. You grow with it, and meet friends. My friends know what I do, and our contacts revolve around it. School never suffered, although I was absent a great deal.”

“In the morning I get up at 6.20, breakfast... I eat various things, in principle everything... then training, at least two hours – I row 20 kilometres – at 11.00 hydration and supplements, massage, lunch at 12.00, rest until 3.00 pm, training until 7.00 pm, shower, supper, TV and bed.”

He has very little free time. He says spare time is above all the time he doesn't engage in sport. He mostly spends it with his girlfriend Pia; in his words, Pia totally supports his training schedule. He sees their joint future as bright:

"Of course I want a family... with children. I'd like to have three children... but I won't make babies if I can't support them. But I never really think that far ahead. It's my plan to row at the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro... I'll be in the best rowing years then."



“My original goal was to provide a good life for my parents.”

14.12 **Stane, 26, young entrepreneur**

Stane was born in Novo Mesto, where he spent most of his childhood; he also attended primary school there. He described his childhood as extremely happy, carefree and interesting; he mostly hung out with his friends, they played football together, and he also trained for basketball. His parents moved to Slovenia from Serbia in the seventies, and the family they started in Slovenia was relatively well off. His father worked as a

professional truck driver, his mother worked in a clinic, and Stane and his brother felt no shortages.

"This had a profound influence on me, because my parents started from scratch, and I've always known you have to fight for everything... my father, for instance, first worked for a private company, but when it closed down, he became a private entrepreneur."

Towards the end of primary school Stane became really wayward, he made trouble at school, played truant, mooched around with his friends and drank. His family quite unexpectedly moved to a different place, his father lost his private business because he was framed for fraud, and all of this together had quite traumatic consequences. Despite bad luck Stane finished the secondary school for stylists and soon afterwards sailed into entrepreneurial waters. As his main motivation he pointed out the bad luck, which hung over his family like some bad karma:

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"My original goal was to provide a good life for my parents. This meant I wanted to build them their own house, send them on a holiday to the seaside, where they hadn't been for years because they were spending money on me and my brother, on our schooling. I felt this impulse when I was around 22 years old... Before I had no idea what was going on. I decided I had to do something."

"Ever since I was 18 I've kept saying I'd be rich and successful. At first everybody laughed at me, nobody believed me, for they knew what kind of family I came from. But now they see that a man can achieve things if he works hard. Many people, especially older and successful ones, now see potential in me... It means a lot to me."

At the moment Stane is employed in his own company involved in the wholesale of chocolate and coffee. He also owns a company dealing in secondary production and sales of perfumes. He has a female employee, who performs day-to-day tasks, but the company strategy is based on network marketing.

"Personally I'm a positive, cheerful, energetic man.... But I can also be difficult, that's what my girlfriend says. We've been together for 6 years, and have lived together for a year. We get along well... these six years passed quickly. We plan to start a family, but I want to get financially stable first."

In addition to managing the two businesses Stane is diligently looking for opportunities for development. He says it is an endeavour related not only to his professional life, because it demands that he reorganise his private life as well:

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“For instance, I’d like to start playing golf, since you meet a lot of entrepreneurs playing golf... I tried to play, but you need heaps of money for it. The clubs, for instance, cost EUR 1000 apiece, and the rest from EUR 3000 to 4000. Yearly membership fees alone amount to EUR 300... It’s a closed group, you can’t join in just like that... They don’t take you seriously; somebody has to bring you and introduce you... I was tested for a few days in Serbia, where a friend of mine introduced me to the entrepreneurs. In the business world everybody watches what kind of car you drive, what clothes you wear, what watch... Why? In my opinion... if you go to negotiate a EUR 100,000 deal, you can’t come in a Twingo... why, ‘cause if you don’t have a proper car, that means you’re not ready or you can’t invest, and in both cases you’re not suitable for serious business.”

Stane does in fact own a Twingo at the moment, but is planning to buy an Audi A6; he believes it is a worthwhile investment, which will considerably improve his chances:

“... people say, I see, you drive this and this car, so what do you do, or ‘This guy’s successful, let’s do some serious business with him’.”

“I’ll never be content with a normal job, you can’t survive on that. If you work for Revoz and live in a rented flat, nothing’s left of your salary. For me, normal life means you eat normal food all month, you provide a normal life for your kids, you don’t have to ask the Red Cross for help... I’m aiming quite high in life.”

Although his parents’ financial situation is rather strained, Stane describes his material standing as good. He even believes that his happiness is dependent mostly on the money:

“I have a good life... I’ve noticed that people who have money are much happier than those who don’t. This doesn’t mean you have no problems when you have money... You must be careful not to soar too high, because the drop is deeper.”

He sees his future as extremely positive, above all professionally successful and financially stable:

"I keep saying I'll be retired by 35... Hah hah hah, hope not... I'd like to have a nice flat, a family, 2 children... I'd really like to live in Barcelona... a beautiful city, the sea and lots of people with great potential. In terms of personality I'll stay the same, perhaps I'll be a bit more serious. I'll have my own company and do what I like, and I'll co-own at least 10 companies from which I'll charge commission."



“In Slovenia you must be politically active.”

14.13 **Davor, 22, young politician**

“I live in Šentjernej, I went to grammar school in Novo Mesto, and I’m currently studying business economics in Ljubljana. Both parents are teachers, Father’s a physics professor, Mother teaches lower primary-school classes, my sister studies law in Ljubljana. I decided to study economics as I’ve always been interested in the economy... as a child I was acquainted with work in our family company producing wooden packaging, pallets, battens and the like... Father introduced me to paper technology and somehow we lived with the company.”

Davor claims that economics, and particularly the role of the state in the economy, was already a passion in grammar school, which later influenced his decision to go into politics. He also quite actively followed political events in grammar school, and in 2009 he decided to actively participate in politics:

“The party (Liberal Democracy of Slovenia) lost its position in 2004... At that moment I realised I was interested in politics... I went into politics in 2009, the spirit of liberalism was losing ground, people were leaving the party, there were no progeny and it was time I did something... I’m an ardent liberal.”

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What do you mean? What does liberalism mean to you? (A. N.)

“I understand human rights and a competitive economy as the core of liberalism.”

How did you enter politics? (A. N.)

“I entered when the former president of MLD (LDS’s progeny) threatened a media lynching and when internal conflicts threatened to split the party. I was appalled, so I called a person high in the party hierarchy, and then they invited me to participate. We designed a new vision of MLD and I was asked to be part of the leadership. And then... Then there was the congress and I became National Secretary General of MLD.”

As National Secretary General Davor is in charge of the local infrastructure, particularly for membership in MLD, he oversees the progeny budget, takes care of applications and tenders, convenes sessions, writes articles, organises round-table discussions and the like: “But you do everything; if I only did what the statute foresees, we’d never get anywhere.”

“I was never interested in top politics, people go into politics either for personal gain or because they want to change something in the world. In Slovenia you must be politically active. It’s easiest to just sit at home and complain... The entire youth structure is very – I won’t say sponsored – but the attitude of the state is stepmotherly. We young people must fight for our place and I think the easiest way is through active involvement in politics.”

In Davor's words, young people nowadays are perceived:

"With reservation... this means that doors are closed to young people, you have to first assert yourself, you have to wait, if you want to achieve something you must bang on the door, people keep saying that the world rests on the young, but nobody does anything. Pension reform, for instance – nobody thinks of the young, and it seems we'll have to work until we're 80. Plus youth unemployment, for instance, 7,000 graduates are listed with the Employment Agency... In Slovenia there's a systemic error in this field."

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"When they finish college, people are unemployable, because the faculty system pumps them full of knowledge which in the real economy accounts for 10 percent of useful knowledge. 90 percent is up to the individual, he or she either acquired it during study years or not. Employment first of all depends on the individual and his or her flexibility and self-initiative. At job interviews nobody asks you what your average grade was, they want to know where you've worked and what experience you've got. Promising workers get jobs earlier than unpromising ones. The state should therefore design a system in which young people could gain more experience and get access to their first employment. There used to be the Bureau for Young Graduates, for instance, offering subsidies for employing young graduates. The state helps a graduate get a job in a company."

In his words, young people do not have enough influence on social changes, particularly because of the fragmented population, and the young organised in the framework of progeny are usually already 'contaminated' with the ideology of the dominant party:

"Throwing stones at the Parliament was a severe violation of the institution of demonstrations, it was abused by the student organisations. Young people could strengthen their influence... We, the young, must step together – for instance, in connection with the law on mini jobs we should all get together and reach an agreement, and the main motive should be optimisation of action. Young people are most frequently used for (someone else's) promotion. The state should listen more patiently, and young people should get better organised..."

How? Can you give me an example? (A. N.)

“Ehmm... for instance, 80 youth organisation representatives as a negotiating group.”

Davor says he has extremely little free time, as he spends most of his time and energy studying and working in the political progeny. If there is any time left, he mostly plays tennis, but he stresses that he also follows politics in his spare time. He says he has few friends, but “heaps of acquaintances”:

“Friends are those people who’ve proved they care about you and encourage you, but acquaintances don’t pay you much attention, you have coffee with them, but don’t start any profound debate.”

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Davor sees his professional future in an international company, where he would like to handle company management, finance, particularly those aspects related to state measures and the market situation:

“Personally I hope to have... not really a wife, but an open relationship with a partner. I’ll start a family if I have time for children, and if there’s no time, I won’t have a family.”



“My greatest fear is that people might forget their values, not just the Hungarian minority, but everybody.”

14.14 **Vali, 23, young representative of the Hungarian minority**

“I’m a fourth child in the family, but I was unexpected. My sister was expected, but it turned out there were two of us. This left a kind of mark in my thoughts... I accepted I’m here because I was ‘sent’ here. Mum didn’t have an ultrasound; the machine broke down just then... Doctors were telling her she was a healthy pregnant woman carrying an above average child, and then she went into labour and gave birth to my sister... Mum said she couldn’t sit up, that she was

having another baby, and I was born... there were some problems, but here I am."

Vali spent her childhood in Dobrovnik.

"I remember little. I come from a bilingual family, my father is Hungarian, mother Slovenian. Neither language was a problem, we spoke both. I went to kindergarten in Dobrovnik. At home there were a lot of us... children, I mean. We had a good time, never any problems. I have an older brother and two sisters. We have a small family business where both parents worked. At eight they went to work, in the evening they came back, well, their job was in the same courtyard, but we didn't see them, Grandpa and Grandma looked after us and raised us. This was great, because on the one hand our parents couldn't handle everything, and on the other it was pleasant with my grandparents, we talked a lot, they told us countless stories from their childhood, and we also talked about faith..."

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After finishing the bilingual primary school in Dobrovnik, Vali enrolled in a monolingual secondary school in Murska Sobota:

"At home we use both languages actively... but at school I had a strange feeling, I couldn't remember certain words... When I was writing essays I had to think hard how to express things... Otherwise, some people accepted us as being Hungarian, others didn't. My sister and I always talked Hungarian and we often heard somebody say, 'Hey, speak Slovenian, you're in Slovenia', which bothered me at the beginning. But to most people this was interesting, and when we said something in Hungarian, they totally laughed..."

"I happened to be in a class in which nobody was from Murska Sobota, we all came from other places, it was good and we got along well. Many students came from Prlekija, and when they spoke, we laughed, when we spoke, they laughed... but we were always tolerant of each other."

After secondary school Vali enrolled in a faculty in Maribor. As a turning point in her life she singled out a traffic accident in which she was seriously injured. She believes that the accident in a major way contributed to her decision to return to Dobrovnik:

“... Everything happens for a reason, and the accident affected my life, but I don’t see it as some kind of disaster. A few things changed, but it was positive. Like, I always wanted to be a lawyer, but when that happened I totally changed direction. I took it as a sign, that it was better to devote myself to our family business. That faculty wouldn’t have been good for me.”

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In addition to being a full-time employee in the family business, Vali is very active in the Dobrovnik community, particularly in the activities of the Hungarian minority. At first she was involved in public work in the ethnographical museum in Dobrovnik, where she took part in the handicraft workshop, gingerbread baking, making straw products and crocheting. She also attended numerous ethnographic camps, where participants took part in renovating the building that houses the museum.

“During the project we were collecting artefacts that are now on display in the museum. At the same time we were also collecting the related stories. Older people told us everything so we could reconstruct the articles and events, and then put them on display in the museum. Exhibitions in the museum vary, at Easter, for instance, we have Easter eggs... I like being there and we, the people who participated in the project, say that the building is in fact ours...”

As there was a great deal of work in the family business at the time, Vali had to limit her activities in the museum and dedicate herself to work at home. In the family business she does administrative tasks and also takes care of HRM issues. This job is also where she sees herself in the future.

Social inclusion in the home environment is also reflected in her extensive primary social network:

“My boyfriend tells me off for always jumping up when somebody calls. I have many friends, but few true friends. True friends are those I can talk to about serious things, about life, private life, they’re mostly from the Hungarian minority, 90 percent of them.

“If I talk to a Slovenian, I can’t discuss such personal matters. I often hear, What do you want, you Hungarians, you live in Slovenia! I feel angry. If I think that Prekmurje used to be part of Hungary, it’s not our fault we were annexed to Slovenia... I don’t feel my home country is anywhere else but here. Neither do I feel any real border. There’s

only this bilingual area, and I belong in part to one language, and in part to the other. I'm not saying I'd like to live in Hungary."

What does it mean to be a minority? (A. N.)

"This often sounds like something bad, pejorative... like, there are those big Slovenians and us, a tiny group. But I'm very proud of living in Slovenia and being a Hungarian. I'm proud of both. If they ask me what I am, I say I'm Hungarian by nationality, and I feel very good. I consider it a major advantage, and I never felt inferior or superior, like, see, I know Hungarian. I feel a kind of contentment."

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Why this hostile attitude towards the minority? (A. N.)

"I think Slovenians are envious of us... They envy us our rich history and the fact that we Hungarians are a bigger nation than the Slovenians. Slovenians are in fact made up of parts of other nations... Plus, whatever is foreign is alien. But there aren't that many such people. I think they have a problem with the fact that we're proud and that we clearly show our pride. We're more aware of our national identity; we also display it more clearly and strive for it."

In her words, faith is one of the basic keys to her happiness:

"I'm a true believer. I'm a Christian, we were taught that at home... for me, not only the material aspects of life are important, my spiritual life is also very important. My soul is important, and what I feel. I believe that we live for a certain purpose, that we were sent here and no one is here just like that. When we accomplish our task, we die and enter some other body. I believe that souls transmigrate. We go to a higher level, particularly in order to correct the errors from previous lives and to perfect ourselves. This belief enables me a better life. If I look at other people who don't believe and concentrate only on this real world, I see they're not happy. When I talk to them I can feel how good it is that I think differently. People must believe in something bigger than themselves, we must have hope."

In Vali's words, the attitude towards the young in Slovenia is specific; on the one hand young people are considered the future of society, and on the other they are not allowed to fully develop their potential:

"In general I think older people drive us too hard. When they talk, for instance, they single us out, they speak of us with pride, like, 'we have our young people', but in fact they don't make it possible for us, they don't give us what we young people really need. At school, for instance, they fill our head with nonsense instead of preparing us for life. And they don't give us the feeling that we could survive in life. On the one hand they let us live with our parents... and on the other they don't let us have our own life. And yet on the other hand, they force older people to work until they're 65, although they can't do it either physically or psychologically, and at the same time there are no jobs for the young. And then they wonder why young people are unemployed, why they don't become independent and why they don't have their own families and children. Who of us young people can afford to have a family nowadays?"

Is it any different within the Hungarian minority? (A. N.)

"The Hungarian minority takes better care of their young. For instance, this can be seen in the upbringing and tradition and history they're passing on to us. We stick together more, and because we're few, we look after each other more. We young people within the minority listen to our elders and take on more from them. There are also more cooperation programmes and projects than among the Slovenians. More things are oriented towards preserving our national identity, and we're growing up in this culture."

In Vali's words, the future of the young is not bright, but she hopes things will change soon. The main culprit for this situation is the relationship between the young and the wider society, and above all with adults. What is missing in this relationship is mutual respect, and until this is corrected, she sees no way out of the crisis:

"My greatest fear is that people might forget their values, not just the Hungarian minority, but everybody."



“In the seventh grade I had my first contact with drugs.”

14.15 **Grega, 25, young dropout**

“Grega is a creative person, full of ideas, an idealist, unique... good-hearted, obedient, ready to help, a bit unsure of himself, sometimes stubborn. Sometimes perhaps a little indecisive...”

Grega describes himself as somebody growing up in unfavourable circumstances.

“It was difficult, my mum was a single mother and very stressed out... she treated me and my elder sister badly, beat us and did other terrible things to us. Say she didn’t like something, she immediately took it out on me and my sister. I think this was mainly lack of money, but she’s a highly strung person by nature.”

His mother's violent behaviour was also the main reason for the family breakup. Grega's mother was also violent towards his father, and after two years of torture he left her, took all his belongings and moved back to his mother.

When Grega was 10, his mother met her new partner, with whom Grega immediately found a common language:

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"... I experienced a double upbringing. Mother didn't let me do anything, and stepfather allowed a great deal, Mum was never home, she worked 12 hours, and stepfather was home a lot and always available. So I spent a lot of time with my stepfather, who allowed a great deal of freedom and this is why we got along well."

The divorce affected the family atmosphere quite favourably, but other problems emerged:

"Because of the double upbringing I allowed myself a lot. Earlier on, before my stepfather came, I was a totally good pupil, but then in the third or fourth grade there was a turning point... I simply joined a totally different crowd – a lot of alcohol and cigarettes, shoplifting, I started going to matches with fans, which had an additional negative influence. In the seventh grade I had my first contact with drugs. At first I was totally against it and I didn't like the stuff. And then, from the seventh grade on... that is from my 12th to 24th year, just weed and nothing else. I somehow still managed to finish primary school. Then I enrolled in the catering school, I've always liked cooking. But there I met an even worse crowd and everything went from bad to worse. I finished the first two years, and in the third year I split."

The third year of secondary school was an important turning point for Grega:

"... drugs every day. I smoked at least 5 grams every day, minimum for EUR 20 daily, woke up in the middle of the night... As I wasn't going to school, I worked as a housepainter for my stepfather, and then it was total blackout. I went to work with my stepfather, and the whole day I didn't speak a word with him or anybody else. I totally closed up. I totally lost it, contacts with my friends, I was failing psychologically... I don't know why, I think it was the consequence

of baking weed, I'm more reserved by nature, and on drugs it was even worse. I was totally closed up and was just chewing over things within. And my mother also influenced me, with that film of hers... I lost the good relationship with my stepfather, I had no feelings, totally closed up, just weed and (computer) games."

What was your day like in those times? (A. N.)

"In the morning I went to work with my stepdad, for instance. At work, too, we couldn't stand each other, but as I'm a workaholic and like working, this was a problem for me. We didn't get along, and as I sometimes had a joint before work, it was even worse. And at home – a joint right away, shower and to my catacomb (room). I limited and switched myself off. This went on for a few years. I wasn't listed at the employment (employment service) or at the health (Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia), I was a true illegal in Slovenia, I didn't exist anywhere any more. This went on until this year (2010), and then Sabina (a friend) introduced me to spirituality and to a circle of new friends, which saved me."

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Grega sees that most of his life problems are the result of his broken family. And in his words, his mother was most to blame:

"Mum was twofaced towards everybody, even towards my half-sister (Grega's stepfather's daughter). For instance, I was going to school, but she didn't help me in any way, either with money or support. My half-sister too couldn't accept her. There was no relationship, like we were strangers. She quarrelled with everybody, with my stepdad, too, after seven years of marriage. They were total strangers, separate bedrooms, no sex or any relations at all... She even started blackmailing him for money, since when they met, we sold our flat and went to live with him. They spent the money and invested some in Zdenex and totally lost everything. Stepdad then paid her out and she moved away, but I stayed with him because I still thought we had an OK relationship. Although he's quite arrogant and a bit aloof. Otherwise he's much better than my mother, and I also get along with my half-sister. Mother moved out, 'cause none of us could stand her. Then there was peace in the house, no shouting. We started functioning like a real family."

When Grega's family problems were at least partially solved, he slowly started putting his life in order:

"When I got acquainted with spirituality, I immediately quit smoking weed, after nine years... I opened up, started feeling my emotions, opened up to people and the world. I became sensitive. Once more I established good relations with everybody, including my stepdad... When I got rid of the drug, I realised the problem wasn't him, but me. Now we function very well. Even with my half-sister, who me and my younger sister cared for 'cause mum was absent..."

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"When I got involved in spirituality, I felt progress. I felt total energy and a strong need to do something with my life. I sorted out social insurance and applied for relief. They also told me about PUM (Programme for Young Dropouts at the Institute of Adult Education), and I liked it immediately. I'm not ready to get a job right away, I must find my rhythm. I have great ambitions... for example, I'd like to finish school and continue my education. And then higher catering school. But I'm also interested in other things. For instance, I like painting, music, anything to do with art, with nature, with animals..."

Grega believes he is on the right path and sees his future as extremely bright:

"I see myself... my dream is to have an Asian fast-food restaurant. I like children and I'd like to have at least two children. I'm a family person, family's a great value for me. I can see myself living... in a house with big rooms, in a gallery, I don't own a car, but I have a bike and other ecological alternatives, with a beautiful and honest wifey. I'm not into casual relationships; I'm looking for the real thing. My future is bright, full of love, what I always lacked, it's creative, my life's healthy, and I also want to help people."



“My mum always told me, study, so you won’t end up a cleaner. Now I see it might be better if I was a cleaner.”

14.16 **Maja, 30, unemployed graduate**

Maja was born in Jesenice; her mother and father moved back home to Prekmurje, erected a house and settled down. Maja spent her childhood and primary-school years in Gaberje near Lendava, and then enrolled in a bilingual secondary school in Lendava. After secondary school she decided to study at a higher education school in Murska Sobota:

“I graduated in 2005, and couldn’t find a job for a year. Then I enrolled in ecological textile and graduated this year (2010)... with a big problem, since I did research at the faculty for a whole year for free, and the whole thing dragged on. When I got to the faculty, they

were telling us we had the possibility of employment and promotion, but it all went down the drain. They also let me know that although the whole thing went down the drain, I should be grateful to have been able to work for free. You're lucky that they let you graduate."

Maja went to the Employment Agency:

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"They sent me to various education programmes, supposedly so I would have better chances of employment. Even before graduating I was sending out lots of applications, 14 applications a month, I was full of hope. But nothing happened. From all the applications I received only one invitation to an interview, in Ljubljana, on 1st April. I went to the interview, but they didn't tell me what my chances for employment were. It was all like the Farm reality show – first round, second round, third round... And then they made the selection. After the interview the woman said to me, good luck with graduation, and I immediately knew they wouldn't take me on. And then I thought what it would be like if they told me only after the third round... I paid for all the travel expenses. Many people didn't go to the Employment Agency, they say they give them a hard time and make them write applications. For me personally, that's not a problem. Hey, in 2003 I went to Germany to do practical work for 6 months, and if I hadn't needed a permit, I'd have stayed there."

Altogether Maja has sent out more than 500 applications. She applied for various jobs, from a sales woman to textile technologist, also for a job on a ship and in a sex shop, for she believed she had better chances there. She also has a younger sister facing similar problems.

"My sister, she's 26 years old, she's graduated and is getting ready to go work in Portugal. She said, Fuck off Slovenia, and is going. She worked as a volunteer in Portugal and got a work permit. She went to the embassy and they told her that a Slovenian was needed someplace; she never thought of not going. I totally envy her... and am totally happy for her."

She described her financial situation as rather bad, especially because of the situation at home. Her parents worked for a long time, but then her father lost his job because the company went bankrupt, and he also had a number of accidents at work. Her mother's sight is impaired; she worked for several companies and then took early retirement because of

her disability. At the moment her father receives welfare, and her mother lives on a disability pension.

“Now life is what it is. You have to accept whatever comes your way. The employment agency is sending me job offers. They need a lot of cleaners, cooks and other menial workers. My mum always told me, study, so you won’t end up a cleaner. Now I see it might be better if I was a cleaner. You do your job and then go home. You don’t take work home like an engineer, and in my opinion there’s no big difference in the salary.”

Maja is still sending out applications. Not having a job seriously affects her attitude towards her family. She can’t even think of having children, for she has no possibility of starting a family. In her opinion, society will soon be divided into two social strata: the rich with many children, and the poor without children, while the middle class will die out. She says she can hardly keep her head above water. She lives on benefit:

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“I drive an old Renault 5, which I can hardly maintain with the benefit money. My parents help me a great deal. I’m tied to the Employment Agency, and I’m not allowed to moonlight.”

She perceives the social services as very controversial. On the one hand they grant her financial aid, on which she cannot survive, and on the other the system does not allow her to work or she will lose the little money she receives. She occasionally does small household chores for friends and acquaintances, for which they give her “voluntary contributions”. She says she knows a lot of good people who help her:

“... some with contributions, others with letting me stay the night. These are mostly people who were once in a similar situation... or still are. Some manager’s daughter would never say that to me. I have to be resourceful. Everything’s at a minimum. You can spend the benefit in five days, just on basic costs. I’d never make it without my parents. Plus, Prekmurje’s not a good environment for looking for a job.”

Maja sees her situation as extremely serious and stressful, but by no means tragic. She is aware that she’s hardworking, adaptable and capable of learning anything:

"At 14 I started working as a maid, as a cleaning lady... I experienced my position as degrading, for I'm the daughter of a working man. I saved my money. I worked hard and wanted to prove, at school, for instance, that I can do better. I felt class discrimination particularly strongly... although I studied hard I was getting bad grades... I had to strive even harder for higher grades."

"I know I'll never get a job in Lendava, you need to know the right people. My situation is connected with my family, and as my family situation is what it is, nobody will hire me there."

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"If I had a job, I'd have more money, I could go places, to fitness or aerobics – it's not just a hobby, it's socialising. I'd do all sorts of things, I'd like to know how to crochet, handiwork, I'd like to know everything and do everything. But I simply can't, everything's so far away – geographically, and above all mentally."

In Maja's opinion the situation regarding youth employment in Slovenia is extremely bad. According to her, the greatest problem is an unbalanced demand for workers in the labour market:

"The young in Slovenia don't have a chance. In Austria, for instance, you can't afford to exploit people, politics won't allow it. But here many companies survive by taking advantage of the small people."

What could be done to improve the employment of the young in Slovenia? (A. N.)

"Here, nothing. Everyone should go abroad and let the capitalists in Slovenia be ruined."

Maja believes that the most important thing employment brings for the young is security. In her words, the future brings no relief:

"I think it'll get worse. I don't know how we'll make a living. It might become like in the old days, when everybody was growing their own food in the garden."

Would that be good or bad? What are you really afraid of? (A. N.)

“Well... in fact not that bad. I personally am afraid of debts, of getting stuck in debt, unable to climb out. And if not, I’d like to go into eco-gardening. In general I’d like to deal with environmental stuff, care for the environment, work in municipal services, environment agency.”



“... It’s permanent employment, regular salary, we get the holiday bonus, Christmas bonus...”

14.17 **Oto, 28, employed in a garage, young father**

Oto was born near Maribor. He attended kindergarten and primary school in Kamnica near Maribor; then after primary school he enrolled in a secondary vocational school and trained as a car mechanic. After secondary school he did practical training in a relative’s garage. After the

practical work he did 6 months of military service, and was unemployed for slightly over a year:

“In those days I was idle... I moonlighted in garages, repaired cars at home and such... and then I got a job at Carglass and now I'm here. Then I got a child, got married...”

He described his work day as very straining. Most of the week he does field work, and the job itself is stressful and involves a great deal of responsibility. He must find the glass ordered in the warehouse, load it on a van, drive to the customer and replace it there. Nevertheless he says he's happy with the job.

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“Look, it's permanent employment, regular salary, we get the holiday bonus, Christmas bonus... I'm not complaining, a good firm. They do serious business while Slovenian firms are fooling around (Oto works for a Belgian company).”

For Oto, a regular job above all means security and a basis for starting a family. He believes that young people in Slovenia are hardworking and diligent, but are not given an opportunity for employment and therefore have problems starting a family. Oto claims that to a large extent it is up to an individual whether or not he or she is willing to make an effort in looking for a job, but the state should provide enough jobs accessible to young people.

Oto spends most of the day at work, but he nevertheless manages to find some time after work to be with his family, his wife Andreja and daughter Ines. In addition to his family, he is passionate about hunting:

“I owe my love of hunting to my dad; he's always been a hunter. He would take me along on hunting trips when I was a little boy... you simply grow up with this. Now we go together... well, I sometimes go alone, but sometimes we go together. Sometimes we buy some hunting equipment together, binoculars for night hunting or something. But it's not just the hunt. As a hunter you take care of the game, feed animals in winter, cull weak animals that couldn't survive in the wild...”

He says he doesn't think much of his future, and is not too worried about survival. But something he knows for sure – Ines will not remain an only child.



“... I’m not a shirker, I just hate having a job...”

14.18 **Nejc, 26, reluctant employee**

Nejc comes from the vicinity of Maribor, where his family moved from the centre of the town. He attended kindergarten and primary school in Malečnik near Maribor:

“Then I went to grammar school. At that time my parents got a divorce, but it didn't affect me much. I went to grammar school for 5 years, I repeated the second year... because of Latin. If details are important, Latin was not to blame; when they replaced the teacher everything was OK.”

Since the divorce Nejc has lived with his mother, his father moved away, and his elder brother started his own family. He does not see his and his

mother's financial situation as tragic, although it is not exactly great, but family finances have had an important influence on the course of his life:

"Because of the money I enrolled in the University of Maribor. I wanted philosophy, but wasn't accepted, and because of my modest grades I ended up at biology... it didn't work out, so I quit and now I'm on welfare. A year later I enrolled in history, almost finished the second year... and then went back on welfare... In fact I was on welfare for four years, I don't know exactly how... in the meantime I started moonlighting at a tobacconist's. Then I got a regular job. At the moment I'm extending my contract... for three months at a time, I can't afford to stay longer than I want to because of the signed contract... even three months is too much sometimes. By the way, I have a very understanding woman for a boss..."

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He spends most of his money on "non-refundable business" – music, for which he developed a special love back in grammar school. In addition to working at a tobacconist's he plays the guitar in a relatively successful band, and is also developing a solo project with "psychedelic synthesizers" and trying to start an independent life with his girlfriend.

He's not worried about his future personal financial situation:

"I dunno... how much one expects... it depends on what you expect, and that defines your mood... I can be modest and I don't worry, but sometimes, when I really want to buy something, my girlfriend raises the money... In principle I've never had real financial problems, there was somehow always enough for luxuries ..."

How do you understand luxury? (A. N.)

"I dunno... a MOOG (prestigious, quite expensive keyboard) is a luxury, a car's a luxury, travelling..."

You own a car? (A. N.)

"No, and I don't want one, it's just another money sucker... And my hobby's ducking loans."

Why do you duck loans?

"Because this is my short-term life plan, and as long as I don't owe anybody anything, I can still say fuck it all and become a bum. This is my back-up plan. I have nothing to do with rents and such shit... I live with my mum and half the house is mine... I pay the expenses... In fact, life doesn't cost me much. I noticed I need the money only for an occasional smoke... and alcohol, I quit smoking cigarettes, I ride a bike, I only spend money on concerts... I make EUR 450 a month, a bit more or a bit less. But it's enough."

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Otherwise Nejc believes the situation regarding youth employment in Slovenia is extremely bad. In his opinion the main problem is the inadequate meeting of labour needs, inadequate education and Slovenian culture, which has a specific attitude towards work:

"It's not rosy, there are too many workers of certain profiles, everybody is pushing the young to go to faculties and get diplomas, but there's no emphasis on practical professions. Every Pahor needs a tinsmith when he has a car crash. Some people like these jobs, though they're seen as inferior in society... Maybe some top-grade student would like to work with wood, but they don't let him and push him into a grammar school... I'd almost have preferred to go to vocational school, become a cook... but my parents pushed me into grammar school – our kid won't be a menial worker..."

"Society should manage these resources fairly... if they can collect taxes, they should ensure that people are properly employed and occupied."

How could the employment system be improved? (A. N.)

"By allotting part of the state budget to somebody to deal with this problem instead of spending a fortune on Patria dust covers."

"I have a special attitude towards this (the job)... I don't like going to work, any work for that matter. If my job was to put guitar strings on for Jimmy Hendrix, I wouldn't be happy with it. I go to work because of the pressure of society, parents, surroundings... If I don't go to work I'll get EUR 200 welfare relief... I don't want to fight with everybody who says, look, that's the guy who doesn't work anywhere. So I can at least buy some things, although I try to avoid materialism, but if I do go to work, I'll surround myself with things that give me pleasure."

In short, I'm not a shirker, I just hate having a job... I'd like to work if I didn't have to have a job. A job takes away more than it gives. I'd like to work in a garden... well, that's probably where I see myself in ten years..."

The very attitude towards young people in Slovenia seems problematic to him. He believes that the young and the old are all in the same boat:

"It's been like this all the time, for hundreds of years. There are always changes which old people don't grasp fast enough... computers, for example. About the attitude, I think the old and the young alike don't think enough... they just buy everything they see or hear about. Nobody knows any more that they're alive, that by being alive they have a chance to experience anything they want... at least in Western society. People are turning themselves into slaves, although they fight against it and then bitch and moan if you tell them they're slaves. They're all the same, the old and the young... they ram various slogans down your throat – like, work strengthens the spirit and the body, and any work is honourable... This is only true if you do what you like doing. And few can do that... Otherwise it's bollocks."

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Although he misses having more spare time, he judges his life as fulfilling and himself as a happy person or as somebody "on positive zero". He sees his future accordingly:

"Wishes are one thing, but I don't want to project... Personally I'd say: I'd like to have a go at music, at least for pocket money, and otherwise... I get by... I dunno, I have no particular vision, I'll be wasting time in some job or other, no matter where and how much they pay me. Unless they pay me for unscrewing strange sounds out of a synth. Where I see myself? I'd like to move in with my girlfriend and have enough for everyday life."



“... I’m at the back door
and have to solve a problem
no matter what it is.”

14.19 **Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament**

“I come from Trzin, a small settlement, some 4500 people... I have a brother, three years older. At primary school I ran the school radio, I was very active in various competitions, the Vega (mathematics), Pregl (chemistry), I was a state champion in the Merry School competition, in the mountaineering competition Mountains and the Young, I competed in the Slovenian language and so on. I graduated from the Bežigrad Grammar School, where I also took part in various societies and courses. I enrolled partly because the school provided a Japanese course, which I attended for two years. And then there was no more interest and the course was terminated. So I went to an Italian course. At the time it was the best grammar school in Ljubljana.”

After grammar school Mateja vacillated between psychology and journalism, but eventually decided to study journalism because the profession itself seemed more dynamic to her:

“I was interested in journalism anyway, in Trzin I was contributing to the local paper. Otherwise, as a journalist you’re a universal ignoramus, you know a little about everything.”

During her student years she had a Zois scholarship. She says she was a good student, who didn't push herself into the foreground. She fulfilled all her obligations more or less regularly. As a graduation candidate she responded to a tender for associates in an applied educational project, and the project coordinator invited her to participate:

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“We prepared 3 manuals for the education of pupils and students within the project. When the project was completed, I searched for new opportunities. At that time I also graduated. Then I found a new tender at the Student Club Association of Slovenia, for a PR job; I applied and was selected. There I met quite a few people and considerably extended my social network. Then I became a trainee in the Office of the Prime Minister. I stayed there until 2008, right during the period of the Slovenian EU Presidency, and worked in the PR field – for instance, I helped prepare the news and other material for the website. When the National Assembly was formed in 2008, I was invited to work as a PR representative in the parliamentary group, and this is how I got into the Parliament. Now I’m in charge of media communication for the parliamentary group, I convene press conferences and organise their implementation, I design news for the website, prepare press releases, organise interviews in the local media... in short, I do everything related to the parliamentary group communication with the public.”

She describes her work as very dynamic and quite tiring but nevertheless interesting and fulfilling:

“In the morning I come to work between 8 and 8.30, I first review the daily media reports, and then I do various jobs during the day. My work day is dictated by journalists and their requests for statements, talks, interviews, but also by MPs, for whom I prepare various materials or coordinate their appearances in the media. My work contract is connected to their term of office, and after four years it is terminated. But I believe this kind of work is a good starting point

for my further career. Nevertheless I believe that in Slovenia you can be handicapped if you worked in politics, especially if the future employer has a different political profile and considers your work resume a handicap and doesn't employ you. On the other hand, I think that abroad it's an advantage if you worked in the Parliament."

"I'm not a typical person among those working in the Parliament. I have a feeling that some people work very hard there, but there are some who are only pretending they're working. I feel that some just send things around from door to door, but I'm the person at the back door and have to solve a problem no matter what it is."

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Mateja claims that "being a PR person is a way of life", and her private life is organised accordingly. Her job demands that she is available to journalists, MPs and others with whom she comes into contact as part of her work practically all the time. This, however, does not mean she cannot find any time for herself. Despite the tight schedule she manages to find enough time to attend a Spanish course, occasionally she swims and is thinking of enrolling in an Irish dancing school. Furthermore, she is learning jyotish astrology, which helps an individual understand karmic laws and organise his or her life. Her private-life schedule is also partly dictated by her partnership; she and her partner jointly plan the time they can spend together – mostly weekends.

Mateja believes that the anxiety of young people nowadays is mostly related to employment. In her opinion the employment situation for the young is unfavourable, but due to the complexity of the problem it would be hard to name the main culprit or find a solution:

"The entrepreneurial environment is well set up. You can register a company in five minutes, and this involves fewer costs than before. Young people have wider possibilities than in the old days. They just have to seize opportunities, but this is up to each individual. Admittedly, the state could do more, focus on measures aimed at young people, set up a fund for vocations in excess demand, but individuals have an important role as well. I personally don't like it when people moan and blame the state for their failure. I understand they're disappointed, but you can't blame others all the time."

In her opinion, the education system is partly to blame for the current situation; in Slovenia it is based on the accumulation of factographic

knowledge, but there is little emphasis on developing intelligence. She believes greater attention should be paid to one-to-one work with individuals in order for them to develop their potential. Informal education has a special role in this:

“A great deal depends on the primary social network of young people, their peers and friends. Every group provides socialisation and certain kinds of knowledge. Informal knowledge should be related to the formal, in order to get closer to the young. Informal knowledge should be given a chance to be cashed in.”

Any ideas how? (A. N.)

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“Ahmmm... a certificate testifying to a specific informal skill as part of the resume when looking for a job.”

Young people could have an important and active role in this process. What is missing is an organised collective stance formed by a kind of critical mass, which – in contrast to current youth associations – would really represent the interests of young people in politics.

Although in Mateja’s opinion young people are too strongly oriented towards material goods and “five minutes of glory”, she sees the future as relatively bright and positive:

“Vocationally trained young people will have better prospects, as there are actual needs for those professions in the society.”

Mateja also adds:

“I’d like to work abroad, in a managerial position. On the other hand I also wish I had my own centre for helping people. It would be nice to have children, too. But at this moment my career is more important to me than children. In certain ways I’m happy, and in others I’m not. For instance, I’d like to live in my own house, but I don’t have this possibility. I do have a whole floor in my parents’ house, and that’s that. To sum up, I must admit I haven’t achieved certain things I should have by my age – by society’s standards. For example, I don’t have a family, which I should have by 29, by social norms. These norms burden me a little. But personally I’m quite content and happy.”



“There simply comes a time when everybody turns to God.”

14.20 **Natalija, 25, young religious believer**

“Natalija is a person who... often doesn’t know what the goal of her life is, and then it seems as if she were drifting from one thing to another. Then she finds herself, like, and she’s happy, and then again she falls, and it’s boring... and yet it’s worth living a life that’s fascinating and surprising. Am I making any sense?”

Natalija sees herself as a dreamy person interested in spirituality, she appreciates science, likes to read anything related to personal growth and psychology as well as novels. She says she is extremely curious and there is hardly anything she cannot develop an interest in. She also likes music, theatre, choir, solo singing and other forms of artistic expression.

Natalija comes from the village of Dekmance in the vicinity of Bistrica ob Sotli. She has a younger brother who studies at the faculty, her mother is a tailor and her father a professional driver. Her mother has been out of work for quite a while. She left her job in order to dedicate herself to the children, and has since taken care of the home and family. Her father is a private entrepreneur; he is a professional lorry driver, mostly works in the field and returns home for the weekends. Natalija's family lives on a farm, they have a few cows, pigs and hens; the farm work is mostly done by Natalija's mother and brother. She describes the financial position in her family as good, but adds that the money situation used to be better:

"... Dad keeps moaning how he used to make money more easily and how times used to be better. But on the other hand I see he's buying unnecessary stuff. The other day he bought ten cartons of fruit juice. Why? Mum, too, she's the same. She's buying heaps of food, which we then don't eat."

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Natalija never went to kindergarten. For two years she lived with her grandparents as her parents were at work, and this had an extremely good influence on her:

"I often remember the calm and wisdom of my grandfather... he was a very spiritual and wise person. I felt it when we were sitting in front of the house and he was telling me about things from his life, about the war... his house was always full, he had many relatives. They often came to help, husk the corn, for instance... It was such an innocent and simple peasant life... Nice times."

It was very hard for her at primary school; as she had spent her entire childhood at home, going to school was a major shift. Eventually she grew used to it, although her feelings related to primary school remain a bit mixed. After finishing primary school she enrolled in the Secondary School of Economics in Celje:

"... drinking years, a lot of socialising and little school. Terrible, I was living totally against myself, if I look back now. I was very much under the influence of my friends. But I think one has to live through this and then see it's not right for you. As if I'd lost part of my value then... for example, when my maths teacher caught me with a bottle of wine in hand... That was really the time I was trying to find out who I was. Hard times. But my parents were also very liberal in my

upbringing... they never told me when to be home. I was also very rebellious, which affected my parents. It often happened that our gang were drinking in Celje and took the last train home, but we still hadn't had enough. We had to go on with the binge in Bistrica... but I did meet a lot of people, hitchhiked a lot..."

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"After secondary school I took the matriculation course and met a girl who said she was going to study theology. I asked her what that was; I myself had no idea what to study. She told me it was the study of God and showed me the syllabus. I was totally surprised, there was a great deal of sociology and psychology, I've always been interested in spirituality and God, although we weren't religious at home. I was also fascinated by our parish priest and his view of the world... I was diligent in Sunday school, of course, I always did the homework and this left a mark on me. Religious education was important to me, but I somehow forgot about it and we never went to church... Not that I felt badly about the church, I simply felt no need. And then everything came back to me and I decided on theology. I was very interested in the Scripture anyway."

And so Natalija enrolled in the theology course. She wanted to enter the university programme, but failed the German language exam, so she took the higher education course. But she was furious:

"Then I stayed at home for a year. I had a year to myself, I studied German, although I failed again. I went and registered at the Employment Agency, I took a computer course and once more started doing various things, I learned runes, divination from cards... that year was hard, I was at home all the time and missed school... I didn't know what was going on, I was totally excluded from any action. Terrible."

After enrolling in the faculty she moved to Maribor. When she was looking for a place in a student residence hall, she discovered she could live in Catholic lodgings, and was particularly attracted by the Anton Martin Slomšek residence hall:

"Wow, this exists, too, earlier on I didn't know there were such religious groups. I applied and got a place with the Ursuline Sisters. It was very interesting, I had to obtain a note from the priest that I was going to church and was trustworthy. The parish priest gave me

the note and even said he hoped we'd meet more often at holy mass. My brother took me to the hall a few days before the academic year started. The hall representative told me about the life there and the regime, and I thought she was kidding me. She said I had to be in by 10.00 pm, that no boys were allowed inside; this sounded the most ridiculous... and terrible. And everything was so... peaceful. If you went down the stairs, everyone could hear you... the first week I was there the hall representative herself told me to find another place to live, with school sisters, for the walls were thicker there and I was too loud for them. I immediately started to wonder what was wrong with me, I was walking normally... I could have taken it as an attack, I'd done nothing wrong. The girls who were there were very serious, very quiet, and I noticed I wasn't like that. I'm energetic, I like to go for a beer, have a smoke, and I realised I really was different. I didn't change, and one evening my roommate came to me and suggested we talk. She told me I really was too loud and was disturbing their life rhythm. So they transferred me from the student part to among the sisters. There I had no problems."

Life in the Ursuline Sisters hall does not force students to engage in the activities in the hall, but if they want to, they can. Natalija took this opportunity. In the second semester of her freshman year she started truly participating in the hall life, and was particularly active in the Sinai Catholic Centre:

"We read the Bible there, I took part in the drama group, the choir and met many people. The Ursuline Sisters grew fond of me, we were really attached."

"I spent 4 years there, and then I felt I needed a step forward. I wanted to meet more people. I was thinking about what it was like at secondary school. I felt isolated and limited to the Catholic Centre. I learned many things, but I missed people. Now I live in a student residence hall and don't go to the Catholic Centre much. I can't say I miss the crowd there, I have a feeling I experienced what I needed to, it was just a stop in my life."

Despite moving away from organised religion, faith remained extremely important in Natalija's life. She herself says she's an intimate believer, and that this is the path every human being must walk alone:

"You must constantly nourish your relationship with God. For example, when I feel I'm out of balance with myself, I find peace in nature, and nature for me is an act of God. Every person defines this in their own way, and one of the sisters in the residence hall told me this was the problem, that every person defined God in their own way. For me personally God is love and their (Church) definition seems only partly right to me. I'm very suspicious... everything they told me there was OK, but I don't agree with everything they said."

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While staying with the Ursuline Sisters, Natalija had personal spiritual guidance. Together with her personal guide she tried out various practices from reading the Bible to various prayers:

"... I was doing it for a while, and then I realised that the rosary worked best for me. This is not a prayer for the stupid. It's true that it's repetitive, but that's exactly why it has a positive effect. When you're doing it for a while, it starts working. You're truly at peace; it's a kind of meditation."

All the time Natalija was feeling something she described as her "personal problem" – suspiciousness and doubt. She therefore suggested to her spiritual guide to change their mutual relationship so that Natalija would prepare questions, and the guide formulate answers. The majority of questions were related to the accumulation of material goods, which Natalija noticed in the Church and could not in any way relate to the Church doctrine. She also noticed some other problems within the Church system:

"I think theology students are not mature enough for their vocation. They don't know where to turn, they're too young... Even Jesus started in his middle age. This vocation differs from others; it's different from being a mechanic or a teacher, for instance. The boys aren't mature enough to be true spiritual shepherds. They have knowledge and study hard, but what's happening in the Church nowadays is the consequence of them entering the Church ranks too young."

In her opinion, the importance of faith among the young varies:

"To some it's important, to others it isn't. Those visiting the Catholic Centre consider faith important. Others, outside the Centre, don't. Young people at the Centre come from Catholic families, for them

faith has meaning, they say they'll have many children, they'll marry, and they have specific notions regarding having a good time. No alcohol, no debauchery, they have fun in different ways. Crisps, snacks, juice, they sing religious and spiritual songs – for a long time this seemed strange to me, no beer, no curse words, everything so polished... and after a while I became like this, too, so it suited me. Others again take it more as a joke. Faith is a personal matter.”

“There simply comes a time when everybody turns to God. It most often happens when there's a crisis, and also when you're doing very well in life... Look, I'm doing so well, why is this happening to me? For me this is the basic source of feeling good.”



“I got total will to live
and thank God something like
this happened.”

14.21 **Sabina, 22, former addict**

Sabina says she was born in a socially burdened environment; her parents are retired now, but used to work in the failed Maribor Textile Factory. She has an elder brother, who is on methadone therapy in order to get rid of a long-lasting heroin addiction. Her brother lives with his girlfriend, and they support themselves mostly with welfare benefit.

Sabina has lived in Maribor all her life. As a child she spent most of her time with friends, and her family situation was rather good. Admittedly, her parents quarrelled a lot, but financially and materially they were quite well off. Her brother was old enough to spend most of his time in the street, but Sabina stayed at home and listened to the fights. When

she turned 14, she started spending more and more time in the street, and her parents did not seem too upset. In that period they got a divorce because of the escalating fights:

“There was no love; they didn’t get along at all. This had a devastating effect on me. They were totally splitting me up. They both wanted me to feel sorry for them, and they both wanted me to live with them. I was confused, so much more because they said bad things about each other to me... I became self-destructive. The situation was killing me psychologically, and I started to torture myself physically. I felt guilty for what had happened.”

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The divorce took a long time. Her father moved out, and Sabina stayed with her mother. Her father was drinking and her mother insisted Sabina should live with her:

“She wanted me to live with her, although I’ve always had a better relationship with my father. Living with Mum had a bad influence on me. She couldn’t handle me at all, and I took it she was indecisive and I could allow myself anything. She set some limits, but then failed to observe them. To discipline me she took away the things I liked, but it didn’t help. Simply because she wasn’t determined, she didn’t follow up... She changed direction with the wind.”

“She also passed on to me her complexes, subconsciously, but nevertheless. She wanted to turn me into her.”

Sabina thus started spending more and more time in the street. She soon got into drugs. It all started with the occasional smoking of grass at weekends, but when she went to rave parties, she tried other drugs, most often ecstasy, but also cocaine and heroin.

She finished primary school quite successfully. Problems started at secondary school, in the very first year:

“I totally lacked willpower or discipline to study. I also had learning problems, I think because of the drugs. All this was adding to my self-destructiveness and I lacked willpower to live. I was running away from life, and I think I even considered suicide. I had no self-confidence, I wasn’t successful at anything... the thought was running through my subconscious that in the end I could always kill myself.

I even tried suicide a few times, I swallowed pills and doped myself with horse, but I failed. In the third year I was totally into drugs and parties, especially in Pekarna and in Ljubljana."

She maintained her addiction with her grant; sometimes she also stole from her parents:

"In my gang somebody always had money, and if I didn't have any, others paid. At the economics school I met an addict and totally bullied her, since I had no contacts to get heroin. When I was sniffing with a friend for the first time, he arranged the stuff. But I wanted to shoot up (inject heroin), and that girl got it for me. Shooting up totally fucked me up, I was throwing up and felt weak."

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The family situation remained unchanged, and for a long time none of the parents noticed something strange was going on with Sabina:

"Mum was working all the time, I could always sneak away so she wouldn't see me. It went on like this for a while, say until the fourth year. Then I started sniffing in the toilets with a classmate and taking pills and it all went wild. I was totally out there, if I had the stuff, I slept during classes, if I didn't, I was totally upset."

Sabina repeated the third and the fourth year. In the fourth year she went on methadone therapy and stayed for a year:

"The teachers weren't taking me seriously, and then I quit the therapy and went back on heroin. At home, too, things were getting worse. Mum was yelling, she didn't know what to do. She threatened to throw me out, and this only strengthened my desire for heroin. So I didn't finish school, and I was still thinking of suicide."

"Once I lost my memory because of an overdose. The worst thing was when I went into a coma. Once I couldn't find horse anywhere. I dug out some old junkie (heroin addict) and he got it for me. I think he just mixed something up, it all happened at his place. I was in a coma from Friday to Sunday – in his flat. I woke up on Sunday completely paralysed, and the guy never even called an ambulance. My mum was calling me at that time, but nobody answered the phone. I went into total panic, I couldn't speak (due to vocal chord paresis) or move. I somehow spoke out and told him to call an ambulance."

The ambulance came and took me to hospital. I stayed there for a month, mostly feeling like a vegetable. Eventually I started walking and talking again."

For a while her mother had suspected that something was going on with Sabina:

"Mum noticed I was on horse; at home I was dozing all the time, and all my things had cigarette burns, I'd light a cigarette and then just fade."

"Mum had this experience with my brother, and she immediately knew what was going on. My brother was always talking me out of drugs. You crazy, he was saying, don't you see what kind of life this is? When I was cleaning up, he was totally there for me, explained everything, what I can eat and what not, what to drink, what not... On the net I found a lot of stuff about my condition, I knew a lot of things already, even before the professional services sent me the materials."

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After recovery Sabina went back to school. Her vocal chords were ruined and her health was weak, so she gave up again, started playing truant and was soon back on heroin and then on methadone:

"It's a vicious circle... When I was robbed on New Year's eve, while stoned, I was sitting at home on a chair, Mum threw me out and said I had to join a commune. I said I wouldn't go, but it was clear to me I was in a dead end. I was cleaning up alone for two weeks, without therapy and without reducing the dose. I had a total crisis, but succeeded nevertheless. That was 10 months ago, and I haven't taken anything since. I got total will to live and thank God something like this happened... that I was robbed."

Sabina perceived her experience with drugs as an important thing in her life, particularly in terms of maturing, and sees her future as extremely bright:

"I'm still full of energy, I'd like to be on my own as soon as possible and become independent of my mother. I'd like to move away, I have to finish school and find a job. At the moment I'm attending PUM (Project Learning for Young Adults, a programme at the Institute of Adult Education), I have learning help there, and they also teach us

social skills. We haven't actually started with the programme yet, there are some problems at the Ministry, allegedly they want to terminate the programme. So I just go to one-to-one lessons and interesting workshops. I think PUM is totally cool."

"I'm single at the moment, no boyfriend, I decided to leave that aside for the time being, until I get my life in order... I've had too many casual boyfriends. I don't need a pretend relationship."



“In general, it’s not particularly hard for young Slovenians in Italy.”

14.22 **Barbara, 29, representative of the Slovenian minority in Italy**

“Ahm... who I am? Well, Barbara is... Barbara is very open, although she lives in an environment where she has to hold things up, I’m a Slovenian living abroad, in Italy, we’re a minority. There are certain parts of Trieste where you can’t speak Slovenian in the streets just like that. But I do it anyway. Because I’m a true Slovenian, very attached to my personal history and to my roots. This is passed on from generation to generation, and I’m passing it on to my chil-

dren. And to younger children from the village. For 10 years I taught them Slovenian fairy-tales, organised St. Nicholas' Eve celebrations, Christmas celebrations, I led two choirs and all the village festivities. I'm an active member of the Slovenian cultural societies Krasno Polje, Gročana, Pesek and Draga."

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Barbara has lived all her life in Gročana, a small Slovenian village on the Italian side of the border. She lives in her parents' house and claims she has been happily married for 11 years to a boy she met on a school bus. They have two daughters, aged 11 and 8. Barbara is a housewife, which means she stays at home, taking care of the household and her family; her husband Diego, who works in a warehouse, gets a small bonus in addition to his salary:

"In the morning I get up, walk my kids to the school bus, return home, clear up, iron, make lunch, my husband comes home at one, at three he goes back to work, then the girls come and it's chaos again... we do the homework together and learn... I can say I'm not only a housewife, but a bit of everything – electrician, teacher – given that I have to respond to the situation at home."

Barbara's daughters attend Slovenian school. Barbara says that all the children in the village go to the Slovenian school, and it is interesting that the two non-Slovenian families in the village enrolled their children in the Slovenian primary school. Everybody was of course given the option of sending their children to an Italian school. As a thing of interest Barbara stresses that all of them, herself, her children and her husband, have Slovenian citizenship.

She describes life on the Italian side of the border as quite usual, although a bit harder and tenser:

"Given that we live in a Slovenian village, I believe our life is the same as for Slovenians in Slovenia. When we meet Slovenians from Slovenia, I notice we are closer to them than to Italians in Italy."

"In general, it's not particularly hard for young Slovenians in Italy. Perhaps it's harder for some older Slovenians in Italy, for they still remember what they had to undergo and suffer under Fascism in Italy. Young people don't feel that. They don't, because they didn't

have to feel it themselves, so they don't think about it... But Italians mostly don't accept them, for them we're still sciavi."

Who are sciavi? What does it mean? (A. N.)

"Sciavi? Well... slaves. This is why they still often desecrate the signposts for Slovenia. Mostly young Italian Fascists... And maybe also just for fun, but we (Slovenians) once again become a target."

*"Last year there was a situation when we again become the target of Italian slander and insults. A theatre group from Trieste staged a play entitled *I sempi qualche volta indovina* (Even the simple ones sometimes get it right). The story is about Gročana. On the fliers they were giving out instead of an invitation there was a picture of the signpost with a welcome greeting to our village. The story was about stupid peasants, because a maledizione... a curse was on them, and so they were thick-headed. There were also counts from Gročana... they described our peasant life very well, and in the end the thing was resolved by a peasant marrying a smarter lady, which lifted the curse. On the fliers it said that the curse had been afflicting Gročana for 200 years, and everybody was still stupid there. We were offended at the story and the director, a woman from Trieste... well, it was more than clear that she'd done her homework and researched our life. She visited Gročana and from the background observed how our people behaved. We kept quiet, but sent letters to the public and to our Slovenian paper *Primorski dnevnik* and to the Italian daily *Il Piccolo*. Whoever read it was asking us why we took notice of such trivial things, they said we didn't understand a little fun. But if the lady targeted their village instead of Gročana and showed their life in such a way, I bet they'd be angry too. But the thing didn't end at that. We took them to court, because I think... we're still wondering why it was Gročana that became the target of Italian insults."*

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And why was that?

"I don't know... but when we have a celebration in Gročana, Italians from Trieste come and buy our produce, potatoes, eggs and the like."

Barbara says she in fact prefers to be constructive rather than combative, and this is why she invests her energy in preserving Slovenian culture in Italy. In addition to public appearances – Barbara directs two choirs and

sings Slovenian songs herself – she also mentioned her poetry. Not long ago she wrote the piano accompaniment for an old Slovenian poem from Gročana written by the late Valentin Racman. The poem speaks about Veliko Gradišče, a hill above Gročana. Barbara says that this is the way to relate the past to the present, and try to prevent cultural fragments from sinking into oblivion. She also adds that the song is a great success in the village, and that all the children from Gročana are singing it.

What does it mean for you to be a Slovenian? (A. N.)

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"Everything... I'm very proud of it, and this is why I strive for everything so much. It's hard, but if you persist and have clear notions about things, you can do it. But the problem is that not all Slovenians in Italy feel like this. They don't see the whole picture. Young people here across the border mostly don't care, they don't have this awareness. To be a Slovenian abroad means maintaining, respecting and nurturing culture and tradition... this is important for everybody, not just the young."

Barbara and her husband Diego also founded a Slovenian folk ensemble:

"... we play at village festivals. I sing, Diego plays the clarinet, and we also have a drummer, a guitarist, a bass player, a trumpeter and of course an accordion player. It wasn't really meant like... It was meant for fun and relaxation. It was called Sonce (Sun). Unfortunately our common path ended in 2007 when the guitarist left us; he was from Slovenia and died in a car accident. At the beginning I took it very badly, the boy was only 22 years old, and it felt wrong to me to continue singing. But when I understood and accepted that this was life and that one had to accept such things, I stopped singing and took over the choir... for about a year in Bazovica, and then there was a chance for a new ensemble, and I took it. I'm still with them today. My husband joined us for Števerjan (folk music festival), but is not a member. It turned into a serious thing, we'll make a CD and it brings great personal satisfaction."



“Yes, I’m happy... also because it seems to me I’m more and more aware of what I want, I have more control over my life...”

14.23 **Mojca, 23, successful psychology student**

Mojca comes from the Maribor area. Her family counts 7 members: father, mother, three half-brothers and a half-sister. Her parents had two children each from previous marriages, and Mojca says she gets

along fairly well with all of them, although they've somewhat lost touch in recent years.

"We were together a lot when we were kids, but then we grew apart, though I don't know exactly why. When I was at secondary school, they visited less and we stopped seeing each other. In fact I don't really understand what happened. It would be easier for me if I knew the whole story, although I wasn't particularly attached to them emotionally, and in fact don't miss them much. But I'd like to know about the family background."

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Her childhood was limited to a village in the suburbs of Maribor. After primary school Mojca enrolled in the 2nd Grammar School in Maribor, primarily because it has a reputation of being a good grammar school with many after-school activities, and all her friends also went there. Already at secondary school Mojca was extremely interested in psychology, she was interested in the notions of individuals and society, and her interests were strengthened during her secondary-school years. After she finished secondary school with flying colours she never considered any other study course but psychology:

"The curriculum totally meets my expectations. I wanted to study something I love, for a vocation I see myself in. I obtained the information about the programme in advance. So I was prepared for certain problems, and it helped me. For example, at the beginning there was a lot of statistics and biology, and I just took that as a necessity, but then the programme branched out and became more practical, which I like. I've also been working all the time and taking part in the activities outside the faculty. For instance, during my freshman year I volunteered at the psychiatric clinic... I had a mentor and a patient with a specific problem, and I spent time with them."

She passed her exams regularly, and invested the remaining time and energy in extracurricular activities. Ever since she started studying she has been contributing to Panika (Panic), the psychology student magazine; she writes articles and for a while also worked as a co-editor. She also participated in organising professional round-table discussions.

"For a year now I've been working at the Student Counselling Office as a psychological and social adviser. I chair workshops and conduct interviews with students, I help write applications for tenders... The

Institute deals with legal, social and psychological counselling, and is primarily intended for student families and those wanting to study abroad; we counsel via e-mail, forums, personally and by telephone. Most people turn to us with questions related to courses, status, student rights, they want to learn about higher-education legislation, sometimes they have questions regarding the finances.”

She described her day as extremely full and quite tiring:

“I get up at seven, have a coffee, listen to the news and do my room, get dressed, prepare things for work. I work from nine to two or three. Then I have lunch with my colleagues, sometimes I get together with my girlfriends or go to a café alone and study for the coming exam. Sometimes I attend thematic workshops, for instance about stress management. I come home around eight, sometimes I go out for some sport, and if there’s any energy left I paint or just go to bed.”

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She has had a boyfriend for two years; they live apart and see each other at weekends:

“We were classmates at secondary school but as I had another boyfriend then, nothing happened. In Ljubljana we started hanging out together and became a couple... today we’re going shopping for a car, we might even buy one.”

Mojca’s main income is her scholarship, but she is improving her financial situation by working through the Student Employment Agency. She describes her material situation as extremely good. She is particularly happy that she feels independent of her parents, although they give her money for rent and living expenses in Ljubljana. For Mojca, independence is one of the basic conditions of adulthood as it enables her to set and meet certain goals in life like buying a car, for example. She says she is extremely happy and content with her life:

“Yes, I’m happy, in fact getting happier all the time. Also because it seems to me I’m more and more aware of what I want, I have more control over my life and I think I’ve grown personally...”

She sees her future as bright and fulfilled:

“Married, my boyfriend wants to have three children, I want to have one or two, but if this turns out well, we’ll see. We live in a larger flat or in a smaller house in the suburbs with easy access to the centre of town, with a lot of greenery, sports facilities in the vicinity, enough room for a dog... And I work as a psychotherapist.”



“Pension, wot pension?
Ya think ya’ll get one?”

14.24 **Dani, 24, successfully in unregulated employment**

Dani comes from a village in the vicinity of Pivka. He has an elder sister, his mother works as a shop assistant, and his father worked for the railway for a long time and then found a job with a private entrepreneur from the Ilirska Bistrica area dealing with construction works. After primary school Dani decided to enrol in the vocational construction school and completed it successfully. After finishing school he could not find a job, so he helped his father with occasional tasks, primarily finishing apartments and business offices; he liked the work and stopped looking for regular employment:

"I applied for social security and got it. I went to some training course, wrote applications... but it was more for the social service, not to really get a job."

He makes his living exclusively by moonlighting and claims there is more of this kind of work than he can handle. Customers usually find him through friends and acquaintances, so he does not really need any advertising:

572 *"I do it all, I lay tiles, build, roughcast, make floor screeds, jambs, lay paving bricks, stone... almost anything for the house, painting too. Loads of work. I often 'ave to say to somebody to wait for a month or turn 'em down, I just ain't got the time. I go help me dad most often, but I 'ave more and more me own customers."*

Dani adapts his working schedule to customers' needs, but he says that his job demands flexibility:

"It happens there's no work for two, three weeks. I hang out with me friends, in Pivka or Bistrica (Ilirska Bistrica), we drink a bit, smoke... And then I got so much work I ain't got time to fart."

"If I got work, I work till I finish. If I ain't got work, I sleep till ten or eleven, go for coffee, home to lunch, coffee with Ma after lunch, a fag and out with me friends. In the evening I take me girlfriend out."

Dani lives with his parents on a small farm, mostly managed by his mother. His father is away a lot, as his employer often carries out projects abroad, mostly in Italy. Dani says they get along well at home, and that his parents or he are not bothered he has not moved out yet.

"We get along well at home... dunno why I'd move out. I ain't got possibilities for it either. House, what house, can't even afford a flat, even if I had a regular job. It'd be even worse, I'd surely have less money and more costs."

In connection with the question regarding regular employment Dani is a bit more pessimistic:

“Ya see, a job’s just a job... if ya get one, you do somethin’, get some money, and that’s all. People in Slovenia work a lot, but do they have a lot of money? No they don’t!

You don’t worry about your pension? (A. N.)

“Pension, wot pension? Ya think ya’ll get one?”

In Dani’s opinion the situation regarding employment of the young in Slovenia is extremely bad. Young adults are deprived of jobs and proper pay, and also of decent working conditions. Dani is aware he will have to find a regular job sooner or later, for this is one of the crucial steps in starting a family. Nevertheless he thinks the time is not right yet, and that the Slovenian system allows him a great deal of manoeuvring space:

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“I’m not saying it’s bad. But it could be better. If it don’t get better, I’ll go work in Italy.”

Dani sees his future in quite a positive light. He does not yet have a house of his own, he says he will build it together with his father, he will marry Valerija, his girlfriend, and they will have two children. For him the ideal job would be working for a large construction firm as a site manager, or his own construction company specialised in luxury houses.



“Most of my friends are in the virtual world, and some of them outside it.”

14.25 **Aleš, 20, virtualised young adult**

Aleš comes from a village by the Drava River. He was born in Maribor, where he spent most of his early years. When he was 9, his parents divorced after turbulent fights, and Aleš's mother moved in with her new partner. Aleš has lived with her since, and has a half-sister:

“The divorce was what it was... I had no major role in it. I simply took it as something that happened to me. There were no particular problems. It was a bit weird when I got a half-sister, and I still feel this way today. Somehow I didn't get it that I would no longer be the only child. And I kept asking my mum why a sister, and not a brother.”

After primary school Aleš attended secondary school in Slovenska Bistrica:

“Slovenska Bistrica Secondary School... I could choose between grammar school and economics. At that time I wanted to become a private entrepreneur, so I enrolled in the entrepreneurial programme, but towards the end I figured I could be something else and decided to study sociology instead of economics.”

Spare time has always been an important issue for Aleš. As a child he mostly spent it with his friends playing board games or football:

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“When I was nine, my friend from the neighbourhood got a computer. Before we used to play football, then we started playing computer games. I don’t remember exactly whether I had to nag to get a computer or my parents simply bought it for me because everybody had one... nobody else in the family was into computers. This was before the internet... so four of us friends got together and played. In those days Nintendo consoles were very popular, so we played that, and later switched to the computer.”

Computers were becoming more and more important for Aleš, and they started taking up more and more of his spare time. That period saw the advent of the internet and piracy, so games and other things became more widely accessible:

“... so my friends and I totally got into that. We downloaded everything, particularly games, mostly shooting games. We played them together or alone.”

“Eventually we totally shifted the games (from computers) to consoles. At the moment I have my own 4 X-box. Consoles are mostly intended for playing games, but you can also use them for internet access... I pay from 40 to 70 Euro per game, the alternative is piracy, which of course is cheaper, but more complicated. First you have to take your console to the person doing alterations. He takes a hundred Euro or so, replaces a few chips and then you can play games downloaded from the internet. The downside is that you can no longer access the internet from the console; they’re constantly monitored and immediately taken off the net if they see you pirated it.”

Aleš spends most of his spare time in the virtual world. On the Internet he is mainly interested in topics related to game playing, but he also reads topical news. Naturally, he “downloads and surfs” a great deal. Most members of his social network come from the same environment:

“A gang of 6 or 8 of us playing different shooting games, three to four times a week, in the evenings, sometimes from 8 pm to 1 am, or from 5 till 3, depending on how much time anyone has, more during holidays and at weekends. You sleep all day and play all night. Playing games and voice chat... My mum doesn’t say anything, it doesn’t affect school.”

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“Most of my friends are in the virtual world, and some of them outside it. Those ones I know from secondary school. We used to play football and go for walks. But I can’t be bothered any more, it’s easier to just play games and talk, but I’ve had a few moments when I thought I could be doing something else. Most of my virtual friends are scattered around Slovenia. Sometimes we arrange to meet at somebody’s place, everyone brings their console and monitor, we get together and play games over the weekend. The other day we gathered at a friend’s in Tržič, bought food for a few days and played shooting games from Friday to Tuesday.”

He met his virtual friends on the Consoles Slovenia website forum. On this forum everyone looking for information can find other people with similar interests. Aleš says he does not give much thought to his future, but believes that many things are possible on the basis of a virtual social network:

“I know people who’ve done great business on the Web. They founded their own companies and are doing well. In fact it’s possible if you have a good idea. Unfortunately, I don’t have any such ideas yet.”

15 A synthesis of qualitative research findings

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This chapter aims to outline certain fundamental areas in the lives of the young people included in the qualitative research. The synthesis is made on the basis of interview transcripts analysis. The transcripts also served as the starting point for classification and categorisation of the data, in which the guiding principle was the areas singled out by the commissioner of the quantitative analysis. Here it needs to be stressed that the qualitative data categorised by areas and partly qualified relate only to the 25 interviewees, and are therefore representative exclusively of this population. All the conclusions related to “young people” are therefore directly related to the researched population of 25 included in the qualitative research.

The chapter is subdivided into sections entitled Demographics and intergenerational cooperation, Education and training, Health and wellbeing, Employment, entrepreneurship, Mobility and globalisation, Political participation and volunteering, Free time, culture, virtualisation, Housing conditions and economic situation, Sustainable activities, and Values and expectations about personal and social future.

15.1 Demographics and intergenerational cooperation

In this section we were primarily interested in how young people perceived youth and adulthood. The answers reveal that young people understand adulthood primarily as assuming responsibility, as a final goal or level in life that should be achieved:

When are you grown up, in your opinion? (A. N.)

"When you take responsibility for violating the law and have things in order in your mind, so that you can function as a normal person."

(Davor, 22, young politician)

"When you act like an adult. This means you're functionally grown up. Say, you have a job and you're responsible, you accept the consequences of your decisions... you're an adult when you feel psychologically grown up."

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to *Pekarna*, a youth gathering place)

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"When you're mature spiritually, emotionally and in your personality. You take care of yourself and are responsible for your actions."

(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

"You're grown up when you stop thinking, OK, it's Friday, let's go get drunk."

(Maja, 30, unemployed graduate)

"I think that when you're financially independent, take your own decisions, set your own limits and have control over your life."

(Mojca, 23, successful psychology student)

In growing up young people single out two crucial factors: financial independence and starting their own family:

"In my opinion when you have your own family and income, when you're financially on your own and independent of your parents."

(Uroš, 22, young farmer)

"When you get your own children, this changes you entirely, you become responsible, and when you stand on your own two feet..."

(Stane, 26, young entrepreneur)

To the question whether it was necessary to live away from parents in order to grow up the majority of the respondents replied that it was definitely crucial at some point in the future, but not urgent at the beginning. Most young people believe they have a good enough relationship

with their parents and do not sponge off them, so they see no problem in several generations living under the same roof:

"I have nothing to do with rents and such shit... I live with my mum and half the house is mine... I pay the expenses, I buy things if necessary... I contribute! In fact, life doesn't cost me much."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

"Why I became an entrepreneur?"

My original goal was to provide a good life for my parents. This meant I wanted to build them their own house, send them on a holiday to the seaside, where they hadn't been for years because they were spending money on me and my brother, on our schooling."

(Stane, 26, young entrepreneur)

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At the same time they stressed that the popular view of leaving home late, called the "Hotel Mum" syndrome, was not characteristic of them, for they actively participated in household chores and contributed to the family budget. This is also one of the main reasons why young people perceive themselves as partly grown up:

"How do you feel? Like an adult or a young person? (A. N.)

"Both: young, because I'm young by age and I haven't yet experienced everything that adulthood involves (family, job...). Adult, because I have my own view of myself and the world."

(Davor, 22, young politician)

"Yes. 'Cause I'm totally responsible for myself and towards myself."

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to Pekarna, a youth gathering place)

"I should be grown up by now... well, I still have so much energy I want to use up... I have a partner, but I still feel kind of wild... I want to have something... children, family, flat... Well, first the flat, then children... I'm 25 already... It seems to me everything has moved forwards by some 10 years... At my age my parents had two kids, but today it's different... Maybe it's just me, or maybe I hang out with the wrong people. If I had a regular job, I'd probably think differently..."

perhaps I'd already have kids and a place of my own. My peers all have children... They finished school, but are unemployed... their boyfriends take care of them and the kids. In a way I'm grown up, but in other ways I'm not... I have certain responsibilities, I have a driving licence, for instance, and a car... I help take care of my parents and so on... So I'm kind of grown up. I feel responsible and my grandma knows I'll help her if necessary. I'm also good at my work and they trust me... So I feel like an adult."

(Špela, 25, young waitress)

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Young people believe that parents have an extremely important role in helping them grow up:

"You can do nothing without parents... It's good to have your own family, but it's not enough. My grandpa always helps me... emotional support, social support, financial support."

(Enver, 20, young Roma)

"In early childhood parents should teach a young child what's right and what's wrong.

For instance, mother taught us not to waste food. She had a picture of hungry African children. You had to pile on your plate as much food as you planned to eat, and stay at the table until you finished it. This taught us children to take only as much food as we could eat. She also taught us not to use curse words, and if she caught somebody using foul language, she consistently punished us. And she taught us to assume responsibility for our belongings. If things were not in order, she threatened she'd throw them in the bin. I liked Barbie dolls, and as I didn't put them away properly, she once really took them and threw them away. Only when I apologised and promised I'd keep my room tidy, did she give them back to me. She also taught us to take care of animals. For cleaning, we had a checklist with black dots and stars. If you had a lot of black dots, you were punished, and for a lot of stars you were rewarded. It was a good system, the checklist was hanging there for all to see, and when you saw it, you remembered you had chores to do. We also had pocket money, which you could earn doing house chores. Parents must also teach their children how to communicate with and respect others. They should let their children assume responsibilities, for this is the only way to get used to the life awaiting them in adulthood. Mothers shouldn't

make their children breakfast, get their bag ready and make their beds until they're 18."

(Helena, 18, excellent grammar school student)

"They should leave them alone... the more parents try to help, the more they stand in the way... They want to protect them, all right, but they don't help... The young must stand on their own feet."

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to Pekarna, a youth gathering place)

"Parents should steer their kids and at the same time let them find their own way. It's hard to be a parent; you're responsible for your child. And you must know when to guide the child, and when to let him or her do it alone."

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(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

"This is the most important thing, for in the early days they give you what you need most. We young people take after our parents in many ways. Parents must support their kids to some extent, but they must also provide guidelines. In the end kids should take their own decisions, parents should only guide them."

(Gašper, 23, young athlete)

"Parents have an important role. They should prepare their kids for life. They should teach them to respect their parents and their elders. But this role is diminishing, parents are absent because they work, and they don't spend enough time with their children."

(Vali, 23, young representative of the Hungarian minority)

Nevertheless, young people, although they feel partly adult, do not want to grow up completely:

"No, because every life stage has its advantages and disadvantages:

The advantages of not being grown up: You can see the world through a child's eyes and perceive them differently. Disadvantage: You don't see things, although you could."

(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

"I don't want to grow up all the way. I want things to stay as they are now. I'm totally enjoying these years of my life. All right, I'd like to be on my own, but that changes things. If I grow up, I'll lose the connection with my mum, for example. Now we talk a lot, and this might change. I'll have to assume responsibility for everything. I can see it in other young people, they still act like total children. Compared to them I'm very grown up and responsible and I'd never react like they do."

(Gašper, 23, young athlete)

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"On the one hand yes, on the other, no. I like it that I don't have to take care of everything myself. But I'll have to grow used to having more and more responsibility. It doesn't bother me that I'm slowly growing up, but I want to remain happy and content. I don't want to become bitter and have a feeling I don't have time for anything else but work."

(Helena, 18, excellent grammar school student)

Although young adults consider intergenerational cooperation crucial, their opinions about the perception of young people in Slovenia vary – most of them believe that the attitude of older people towards the young is (overly) negative:

"That's a broad subject. In general I think older people drive us too hard. When they talk, for instance, they single us out, they speak of us with pride, like, 'We have our young people', but in fact they don't make it possible for us, they don't give us what we young people really need. At school, for instance, they fill our head with nonsense instead of preparing us for life. And they don't give us the feeling that we could survive in life. On the one hand they let us live with our parents... and on the other they don't let us have our own life. And yet on the other hand, they force older people to work until they're 65, although they can't do it either physically or psychologically, and at the same time there are no jobs for the young. And then they wonder why young people are unemployed, why they don't become independent and why they don't have their own families and children. Who of us young people can afford to have a family nowadays"

"The Hungarian minority takes better care of their young. For instance, this can be seen in the upbringing and tradition and his-

tory they're passing on to us. We stick together more, and because we're few, we look after each other more. We young people within the minority listen to our elders and take on more from them. There are also more cooperation programmes and projects than among the Slovenians. More things are oriented towards preserving our national identity, and we're growing up in this culture."

(Vali, 23, young representative of the Hungarian minority)

"It varies. On the one hand parents think that youngsters are lazy, but I think there are very many ambitious and diligent, innovative young people, and they do an injustice to them. Young people shouldn't be considered as a generalised crowd, and believed to be the driver of progress and lazy at the same time."

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(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

"Young people are judged too harshly. Negative characteristics are overly generalised. Problems, problems, what young people do, what they shouldn't do and the like. But little emphasis on what they've achieved, where young athletes represented Slovenia and so on. With this we could show young people that a great deal can be achieved in youth."

(Gašper, 23, young athlete)

"Older people see the young as spoiled, they accuse them of spending too much time at the computer in the virtual world, that they're antisocial, that they have no respect for their elders..."

(Matjaž, 29, young unemployed)

"Badly. Adults don't see enough potential in the young. They fit them into some stereotype categories which are worse than they really are. Young people are also judged by their appearance, this one's a loser, that one's a junkie, but in fact they're not bad at all."

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to Pekarna, a youth gathering place)

"Older people think young people are lazy and ill-mannered... But some young adults are diligent and hard-working, they do part-time jobs and go to school."

(Uroš, 22, young farmer)

The two members of the Roma minority have slightly different views:

“Too little respect (of the young towards the elders)... we (the Roma people) respect our elders... Ours (Roma), too, don’t all respect their elders. I know one guy who don’t speak to his father for 5 month, they had a fight... For me he’s not a human being, he don’t respect his parents.”

(Enver, 20, young Roma)

“Young people are terrible, they all smoke, take drugs... Before this wasn’t so, but today everyone knows about drugs.”

(Tasim, 22, young prisoner)

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15.2 Education and training

The young described school as an extremely positive experience:

“Grammar school was an excellent experience. I had a teacher who taught me how to learn. Faculty was another matter. Too much theoretical bullshit and too little interesting practice.”

(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

“School no longer has to do with education and upbringing, only with education. Whether this is good or bad, I don’t know. If you have upbringing at home, it’s cool, if you don’t it’s a problem. I always enjoyed myself at school. At grammar school I obtained basic knowledge in many things, and there was also this critical stance they instilled in us...”

(Davor, 22, young politician)

“It was great, I’d choose the same path again. Mostly because of my classmates. Those were the people I grew up with, and we got along very well. Same interests and view of the world. We still see each other.”

(Gašper, 23, young athlete)

"I don't know... primary school was a brainwash, though I had a good time... in secondary school I was old enough to think with my own head, well, I got some education and so I know everything's fucked up, and I don't wanna do anything to make it better... Otherwise, a pretty good experience... And the faculty... when I was 15 I proved I could learn anything, and if there's someone there who fucks you in the head, let'em have a good time... they could just give you a diploma for free if they were wise, and save themselves the expenses... given the staff and the knowledge in primary school I could teach them after the third year of grammar school."

(Nějc, 26, reluctant employee)

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"At school I was... Well, I don't know, I was reserved... Then after a while it got easier, I had some friends... But it was interesting... I liked going to school for I knew my classmates would be there and I'd be hanging out with friends... If I had a chance I'd go to secondary school again... Everything, the subjects, the teachers, everything... It was cool, they really made an effort for us... Especially if you were interested in what you enrolled in."

"In the end I had to resit one subject, but I told myself I must finish school, I had friends and classmates who were good, so I had to pass the resit... the drama school also helped, I learned to speak in public there without stage-fright and trembling."

(Špela, 25, young waitress)

The qualitative data gathered imply that for young people a positive school atmosphere is primarily based on a cohesive social network of classmates, the provision of meaningful and applicable knowledge, clear education goals and principles, and above all:

"... I don't know where this idea came from that school's supposed to be fun. At school you're supposed to learn, and then, if there's any time and energy left, you can have fun."

(Helena, 18, excellent grammar school student)

The majority of the respondents believe that greater emphasis should be put on practical aspects of the curricula and goal orientation on the basis of which young people could more easily compete for jobs. In addition,

special attention should be paid to teacher training. In the opinion of the young, teachers should be trained to guide young people, have firm professional knowledge, be flexible, have clear moral views, which they should be willing to advocate with determination, and be able to set clear limits:

"I never really had any special attitude towards school. It never meant anything in particular to me... but it was always important who was teaching what... In fact, a teacher is a lighthouse."

(Matjaž, 29, young unemployed)

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Those currently included in the Bologna education system are particularly dissatisfied: They believe the system is too loose, overburdened with unimportant content, outwardly "attractive, but in fact empty and dull." Most respondents nevertheless believe that, generally speaking, schooling gives young people quite a lot:

"School gives you a lot, and that's good."

(Stane, 26, young entrepreneur)

"School gives young people a lot, but it could do more. A great deal depends on individual engagement. School provides the young with a certain framework and direction, fundamental knowledge and discipline. But it could offer more choice and more additional activities, it could also include young people in the educational process. Young people should be more strongly encouraged to discover their own interests."

(Mojca, 23, successful psychology student)

The qualitative data gathered imply that for young people school achievements in primary school are relatively unimportant, but later, especially towards the end of primary school and in secondary school, they gain in importance. It seems that young people are extremely goal-oriented, as their perception of school results importance is related primarily to the projection of their academic future; school grades become particularly important when passing from one level of the education system to the next:

"Yes, (school results are important), because of the final goal and in terms of personal growth."

(Mojca, 23, successful psychology student)

"Yes, they are, in secondary school they're very important. But then less and less. At secondary school I was lucky; I always got grades corresponding to my level of knowledge. But at the faculty they were asking me things I thought were unimportant and stupid... I felt this was unjust and so I lost motivation."

(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

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"I used to feel contempt for those things, but now, if I look back, I think they're important and I should have tried harder. Success motivates you and is important."

(Matjaž, 29, young unemployed)

In the eyes of the young education is extremely important, especially in terms of personal growth and professional qualification. It is also important for achieving a higher standard of living and life goals, although in itself it is neither necessary nor sufficient:

"School is helpful, but it's a necessary evil, 'cause education is a must in our world. If you want to have money, you must finish school, standard of living is based on education, but in my opinion young people often don't want the knowledge provided by the school."

(Matjaž, 29, young unemployed)

"School itself doesn't provide a better standard of living, it provides theory, there's too little practical work that could really help you with your job or employment. And many people during their school years have no idea what they really want."

(Gašper, 23, young athlete)

"School helps young people achieve their life goals."

(Mojca, 23, successful psychology student)

"Both goals and standard of living... both are important nowadays."

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to *Pekarna*, a youth gathering place)

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However, the knowledge young adults possess is not limited to formal education providers. Young people who took part in the qualitative part of the research demonstrated a wide array of skills acquired through informal channels, mostly foreign language command – above all English, German and Spanish. They claimed they learned the language through electronic media, most frequently computers and the internet, and by watching television, notably foreign series. They also possess various practical skills and competences, the acquisition of which is spontaneous during spare-time activities. Most of their skills are related to relatively specialised computer tools, theoretical and practical musical knowledge, handiwork, technical-mechanical knowledge and skills, household chores and so on. What, in their opinion, the state should do regarding informal education is above all enable easier access to these forms of education, and even more importantly, learning results should be properly evaluated in order to make informal education channels more attractive to the young:

"A great deal depends on the primary social network of young people. Informal knowledge should be related to the formal, in order to get closer to the young. They could design a certificate testifying to a specific informal skill as part of the resume when looking for a job."

(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

A great majority of the young respondents do not have a specific education plan. In their future they see many possibilities of continuing their education. In the short term most of them want to finish their education and find a job, for this is what will grant them financial independence and therefore enable them to grow up. This, however, does not mean they are not making plans for further education:

"For the time being I quit everything, but I might continue my education some day... something to do with music."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

"Finish my studies, and then I don't know yet. Rowing is in first place."

(Gašper, 23, young athlete)

"Postgraduate studies, this Bologna system gives you nothing, basically... I have to go on."

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to *Pekarna*, a youth gathering place)

15.3 Health and wellbeing

Health and wellbeing are important to young people, but they do not seem to pay particular attention to either. The young do not seem to be worried about their health, at least not in a sense of health-related anxiety:

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"I'm healthy, I feel very well. I'm not anxious, but I am aware that psyche can have an influence on health."

(Vali, 23, young representative of the Hungarian minority)

"If you just listen to yourself, there's nothing to fear. Of course I'd like to be healthy, but I'm not afraid of illness. Hey, I'll give you an example: I haven't taken my temperature for ten years, and I haven't had a temperature for ten years."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

The majority do not actively practice any sport, many drink alcohol, there are a few smokers and some who take drugs. Nevertheless most of them seem to believe they know how to take care of their health:

"I make an effort to eat small meals, I drink a lot of water and exercise... Recreational stuff... But going to fitness centres is not my cup of tea..."

(Špela, 25, young waitress)

"I rest and watch TV."

(Enver, 20, young Roma)

"Yes, sports, I take enough spare time, I avoid stress, I listen to myself..."

(Mojca, 23, successful psychology student)

"I bought some hemp oil and take a spoonful every day. I heard somewhere it was very good for you. Given that a tiny bottle costs EUR 20, it better be!"

(Matjaž, 29, young unemployed)

"Well... I don't get all stressed up about health... all right, I do, but only when I'm drunk... I eat various things, and like our grandmothers said – a little five times a day."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

590 Young people pay slightly more attention to their wellbeing, which is not necessary related to good health:

How do you ensure your wellbeing? (A. N.)

"Sport, usually, sometimes I have a beer or two."

(Matjaž, 29, young unemployed)

"Every day I go for a cup of coffee with a person I like, and we talk... Every day, it's a must!"

(Davor, 22, young politician)

"I bake (weed)!"

(Dani, 24, successfully in unregulated employment)

"I do things I enjoy, of course."

(Vali, 23, young representative of the Hungarian minority)

"With chocolate."

(Helena, 18, excellent grammar school student)

"I rest."

(Enver, 20, young Roma)

In general, respondents judged their health as good, and wellbeing even as excellent. They also believe most young people in Slovenia feel the same way.

“... young people could exercise more. Wouldn’t hurt anybody.”

(Sabina, 22, former addict)

15.4 **Employment, entrepreneurship, mobility and globalisation**

15.4.1 **Employment**

The main characteristics of employment, as perceived by the young, are flexibility and security. Young people consider employment to be extremely important; most of them perceive it as a major step towards gaining independence and therefore adulthood. In addition to starting one’s own family this is considered the second most important factor in growing up. Young people relate employment primarily to financial independence and assuming responsibility, which in their opinion is an important step towards adulthood:

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When are you grown up? (A. N.)

“I think that when you’re financially independent, take your own decisions, set your own limits and have control over your life.”

(Mojca, 23, successful psychology student)

“When you act like an adult. This means you’re functionally grown up. Say, you have a job and you’re responsible, you accept the consequences of your decisions... you’re an adult when you feel psychologically grown up.”

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to *Pekarna*, a youth gathering place)

For young people, employment provides the basis for their security as well as for starting a family, which is the second important stage on the path to adulthood:

“Money’s definitely not the most important thing. Security, rather, having a job that gives me the feeling of security... and that I can have a family.”

(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

"I myself don't want to work, but I can't be on the dole forever... I have to get a job to be safe... Social services can dump you, and where will you be then? Nowhere!"

(Enver, 20, young Roma)

The interviewees included in the qualitative work perceive the employment situation as extremely bad:

"A very bad situation, disproportionate demand for workers available. Young people don't stand a chance."

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(Maja, 30, unemployed graduate)

"It's going down... No positive thinking, the state doesn't do anything."

(Špela, 25, young waitress)

"It's not rosy, there are too many workers of certain profiles, everybody is pushing the young to go to faculties and get diplomas, but there's no emphasis on practical professions. Every Pahor needs a tinsmith when he has a car crash. Some people like these jobs, though they're seen as inferior in society... Maybe some top-grade student would like to work with wood, but they don't let him and push him into grammar school... I'd almost have preferred to go to vocational school, become a cook... but my parents pushed me into grammar school – our kid won't be a menial worker..."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

"Employment for young people is a problem, there are too few jobs, we'll have to fight harder for jobs than our parents used to. There's great uncertainty regarding education as you don't know where you'll work. There's also no job security, and you'll need more flexibility, additional training and aggressiveness. There will be more project work."

(Mojca, 23, successful psychology student)

Young people believe that responsibility for this situation is shared, and that both the initiative of the young and more active role of the state are needed in order to remedy the situation:

"On the one hand all of us are responsible, and on the other the state, and then the EU... it's hard to say, it's the same all over the world, but why, nobody knows."

(Špela, 25, young waitress)

"In a way, everyone's responsible. We young people must make an effort to find a job, even if it's not exactly a perfect match for your basic profession. You can't just sit at home and wait for somebody to offer you a job. Then there are the counsellors at the social services, they should really help you find something suitable. And the state should abolish the employment agencies, for instance ADECCO, since they help find you a job, but then they take commission off your wages."

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(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

"Both - individuals are responsible for their resumes and qualifications and initiative, and society should take care of the legislation and issues. It seems normal to me that there are fewer jobs, our parents were spending excessively. Resources ran out and a period of deprivation followed, but this too will end one day and young people will see better days."

(Mojca, 23, successful psychology student)

"Society should manage these resources fairly... if they can collect taxes, they should ensure that people are properly employed and occupied."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

"Society as a whole is responsible. The state should provide jobs for those who completed their education."

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to Pekarna, a youth gathering place)

In their opinion, the chances of finding employment could thus be improved through the greater self-initiative of individuals and state intervention in the labour market. Those young adults who are already employed see the situation slightly differently:

"Taxes are the problem... Reduce taxes, this will stimulate everything else."

(Stane, 26, young entrepreneur)

"Higher wages... there's enough work, but too little money."

(Oto, 28, employed in a garage, young father)

594 The qualitative data also show that in principle young people do not associate a higher education level with better chances of employment. In their view, the social network has a greater role in applying for a job than the level of education attained. Regarding their own employment their projections are rather vague; young people do not give much thought to the content of possible future employment, for they know they will have to take whatever they can get. At the same time they do not seem to be overly worried; they believe they will find some source of income.

15.4.2 Entrepreneurship

The interviews reveal that young people see entrepreneurship as a positive, yet somewhat remote concept. In their eyes entrepreneurs are innovative, flexible, daring and therefore successful. But since they do not really perceive those features within themselves, they do not associate entrepreneurship with their own future. In their perception a private company seems to be an unlikely plan, almost a fantasy with little chance of ever being realised. According to the young respondents, the main obstacles are insufficient financial strength for starting a company, lack of ideas on which to found the business, and also lack of personal experience needed to run a company. They believe they could perhaps start a business on the basis of leisure activities they are interested in, which are not necessarily related to their education and formally acquired competences:

"I'd like to own a beauty parlour... for nails and other beauty things. If I had enough money, I'd open one."

(Afrodita, 21, young disabled person)

"My own firm? No... in this crisis? I go bankrupt right away. But if I had a firm, it would be a tyre workshop or repair shop... OK, I

can't work, I just open a firm... I see it when I go change my tyres, 40 Euro... Ten customers a day and I got enough money, don't need more."

(Enver, 20, young Roma)

"I'd register an s. p. (registered sole entrepreneur) for athletes, but income is too low for this to pay out."

(Gašper, 23, young athlete)

"No, I don't know why, I tried something, but nothing came of it... I can't be bothered, and I don't have any Ideas."

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(Jona, 25, regular visitor to Pekarna, a youth gathering place)

"I personally am afraid of debts, of getting stuck in debt, unable to climb out. And if not, I'd like to go into eco-gardening."

(Maja, 30, unemployed graduate)

"No; I was thinking I could play... but then I realised it doesn't add up."

(Matjaž, 29, young unemployed)

"No; first you need starting capital... Then you need a stronger desire than I feel... And a plot where you can work... Maybe I could do landscape gardening. I can't do everything alone, you needs people working for you, you can't do it alone..."

(Špela, 25, young waitress)

Those motivated to establish their own firm see entrepreneurship in a slightly different light:

"Ever since I was 18 I've kept saying I'd be rich and successful. At first everybody laughed at me, nobody believed me, for they knew what kind of family I came from. But now they see that a man can achieve things if he works hard. Many people, especially older and successful ones, now see potential in me... It means a lot to me."

"At the moment I'm employed in my own company involved in the wholesale of chocolate and coffee. I also own a company dealing in

secondary production and sales of perfumes. I employ a girl who performs day-to-day tasks, but the company strategy is based on network marketing.”

“I’m happy, but I believe I’ll be even happier one day... I believe money can make you happy... money can give you anything, if you have it, you can get anything, even love and health, it’s all a matter of the amount...”

“My material situation is good... I’ve noticed that people who have money are much happier than those who don’t. This doesn’t mean you have no problems when you have money... You must be careful not to soar too high, because the drop is deeper.”

(Stane, 26, young entrepreneur)

While the majority of the young respondents see obstacles primarily within themselves, the young entrepreneur sees them elsewhere – within the system:

“Taxes are absolutely too high, especially tax on profit... In the future I think we’ll be opening bank accounts abroad.”

(Stane, 26, young entrepreneur)

Some believe that the only solution is active participation of young people and the strengthened role of the state:

“Admittedly, the state could do more, focus on the measures aimed at young people, set up a fund for vocations in excess demand, but individuals have an important role as well. I personally don’t like it when people moan and blame the state for their failure. I understand they’re disappointed, but you can’t blame others all the time.”

“The most important thing for the young is money... They want 5 minutes of glory and material things.”

“Vocationally trained young people will have better prospects, as there are actual needs for those professions in society.”

(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

15.4.3 Mobility

In the opinion of young people the notion of mobility is related primarily to study and mobility programmes promoted by the European Union, for instance Erasmus and Socrates. They claim they are acquainted with the content of these programmes and that in principle they are in favour of studying abroad. However, most of them do not opt to participate in the mobility programmes, mainly because of obligations in the home environment. They most frequently mention school-related work, work through student employment services or at home. Nevertheless many of them do not completely rule out the possibility of studying abroad:

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"I'm interested in going abroad, but not just yet... too much work here at home. Maybe for postgraduate studies or specialisation."

(Mojca, 23, successful psychology student)

Young people also perceive foreign countries to be attractive in terms of employment. Most of them believe it is easier to get a job abroad, and that pay and working conditions are much better than in Slovenia:

"In Austria, for instance, you can't afford to exploit people, politics won't allow it. But here many companies survive by taking advantage of the small people."

(Maja, 30, unemployed graduate)

"I'm not saying it's bad. But it could be better. If it don't get better, I'll go work in Italy."

(Dani, 24, successfully in unregulated employment)

Those young people who have direct experience with mobility, describe their experience as extremely positive and believe that everybody should take advantage of this possibility:

"In 2003 I went to Germany to do practical work for 6 months, and if I hadn't needed a permit, I'd have stayed there."

(Maja, 30, unemployed graduate)

"Studying abroad rules. It's a pity so few people do it."

"I think young people (students) don't really know of all the possibilities. These programmes should be more heavily advertised... more presentations. Plus we should establish closer links (with education institutions abroad) in order to take better advantage of our ECTSs."

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to Pekarna, a youth gathering place)

15.4.4 Globalisation

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Young adults perceive globalisation as a contemporary phenomenon related to modernisation, capitalisation and democratisation of the world. In their perception it is primarily linked to technology and culture, and in these spheres they see it as something negative. According to their understanding, the core of globalisation processes is a trend towards cultural colonialism destroying local features of diverse autochthonous cultures, and they most frequently identify the USA as the source of these processes:

"MTV's everywhere, not just on MTV. McDonald's everywhere, not just in McDonald's."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

In the opinion of some young people globalisation is reaching into other spheres as well:

"Yeah, I think the main goal of globalisation is training individuals to serve capital."

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to Pekarna, a youth gathering place)

"(Education) ... is socially desired, so they count on workers... to perform successfully in their profession... But in Slovenia this isn't functioning properly. The idea is good, but execution is bad. But I don't know which is worse... The American image of a specialist, who's happy and glamorous, but doesn't know anything and is an ideal slave of the system."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

15.5 Political participation and volunteering

Conventional political participation among the young interviewees is extremely poor. They perceive political participation primarily as taking part in the elections and referendums, and as membership in political parties. Although most of them vote during the elections, their interest in politics is very low:

“What do Slon and Sadež (a performing duo) say? I’d like to be an ex-MP...”

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

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“I’m only interested in politics in relation to business.”

(Stane, 26, young entrepreneur)

“No, politics annoys me. If elections could change anything, they’d be banned.”

(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

“I used to be (politically active), since I hoped it would help me get a job. But what happened was they used me and then forgot about me.”

(Maja, 30, unemployed graduate)

“No. Although I was thinking of going into politics. We young people elected the politicians to represent us, and not their parties. Why doesn’t it say anywhere that they represent the people? In fact they represent themselves, not us. Politicians mostly work for themselves and far too little for the people.”

(Vali, 23, young representative of the Hungarian minority)

The interviewees, particularly those who are politically active, have noticed that political participation is extremely important, and that young people should be more active in politics:

“... I take part in the elections, referendums, for it took us as a nation centuries to get our own state. People fought for a long time for what we have today, and we should safeguard it.”

(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

Most respondents believe that young people do not have any real influence on the situation in society, and in their words this is one of the main reasons for the feeling of helplessness and political apathy:

Do you feel young people exert any influence on what is going on in society and politics? (A. N.)

"A little, but mostly not. Sometimes, for instance by throwing stones at the Parliament, young people get their way."

(Helena, 18, excellent grammar school student)

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"Why should (the young) take part in elections at all... they can't change anything anyway."

(Dani, 24, successfully in unregulated employment)

"Judging by the latest demonstrations young people can't even rule in their own heads... It was laudable they were throwing stones at the Parliament, but they should've used different slogans."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

"If there's a huge mass, they have (power of influence). But everything's too fragmented among young people. Demonstrations, for example – the effect was negative, though huge masses went out in the streets. There are too many separate youth societies and clubs, who can politicians then talk to in order to properly hear the young?"

(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

Another reason contributing to poor participation in politics is a relatively low level of faith in politicians:

"... Although I was thinking of going into politics. We young people elected the politicians to represent us, and not their parties. Why doesn't it say anywhere that they represent the people? In fact they represent themselves, not us. Politicians mostly work for themselves and far too little for the people. Young people within the minority aren't politically active. Maybe only those from politically active families."

(Vali, 23, young representative of the Hungarian minority)

The respondents mostly see little scope for improving political participation among the young; some believe that a link between politics and the particular interests of individuals might have a positive influence on political participation:

How could you be politically active? (A. N.)

“If political work were connected to minority issues and if I got a job I’m capable of doing, and which would be meaningful for the minority and our village. But going into politics just like that is a waste of time.”

(Vali, 23, young representative of the Hungarian minority)

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Some interviewees are entirely disappointed with the current political system and see the most favourable conditions for political participation in the not too distant past:

“You know what it was like in Yuga [Yugoslavia]... The main problem was you weren’t allowed to speak your mind, but the system provided everything else – jobs, housing and pensions. And then those old people rebelled... on top of having everything they wanted freedom of speech. So we got a capitalist and democratic Slovenia. Now you can say what you want, and nobody cares... but jobs, housing and pensions are your own worry now.”

(Necj, 26, reluctant employee)

There seems to be slightly more interest related to volunteering. The respondents are quite willing to do volunteer work related to their immediate environment, their free-time activities, and above all this kind of work is far removed from politics:

“I do things related to the needs of the minority... 15 March, Hungarian minority holiday, the anniversary of the 1848 war of the Hungarians against the Russians and the like.”

(Vali, 23, young representative of the Hungarian minority)

“I don’t know... I like to help if I can. I was selling drinks at some football event for free... I take part in the Let’s Clean Skorba project... I help serve tables at the drama workshop for free, I also do the clean-

ing up... I help friends at home, grape picking, for example... I'd like to give blood, but haven't had the chance..."

(Špela, 25, young waitress)

What would stimulate the young to greater participation in volunteer activities is above all easier access to such activities and more pronounced altruistic ingredient:

602 *"Volunteering comes from within yourself, you just want to help somebody. If it was formalised, like work references, for instance, abuse would be possible. There's a strong drive when it's informal. Both should be (adequately) related."*

(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

15.6 Free time, culture, virtualisation

While politics remains marginal, free time, culture and virtualisation are at the core of life for young people. Among the young people included in the qualitative research, free time is regarded as the category which, in addition to sport and leisure, includes culture and virtualisation. Free time for the interviewees is the time not spent on work or study, i.e. the time they take for themselves:

"Free time is the time you don't think about problems."

(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

"My free time is the time when I only think about school and the clarinet... but do nothing."

(Dominik, 16, young musician)

"My free time? I have it any time I want... No limits. All day... I don't work, so that's it."

(Enver, 20, young Roma)

"When I do everything I need to do for work and for school, I go for a beer or play games, I don't have a band at the moment, but I'm working on it."

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to *Pekarna*, a youth gathering place)

“The time when you should take care of your mental and physical health with activities you think are right for them. For me, it’s music, sport and hanging out with friends, reading, TV...”

(Matjaž, 29, young unemployed)

In their opinion free time is primarily intended for rest and relaxation, but they spend it quite actively. It seems this is the main reason why young people believe they have too little free time:

“Little (free time)... because I have to study a lot. And when I do have a lot of free time, I’m usually bored. It’s quite OK as it is.”

(Helena, 18, excellent grammar school student)

“I have as much free time as I can spare, but I could use more. I usually spend it on education, sport, books, my dog...”

(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

“I spend most of my time at work... and this is why I’m dissatisfied. I don’t have any free time. Free time for me is when I don’t have to answer to anyone and I can stare into space. When I engage in my thoughts and music, that’s real spare time... or anything not connected to the job.”

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

The interviewees spend most of their spare time with friends, at the computer or other digital media, practicing sport or attending music events; they devote slightly less time to reading and other culture-related activities:

“It means being carefree, doing what you like doing... Some people sit at the computer and that’s their free time. I don’t have a computer, I prefer to chat with my girlfriends or go to the drama workshop... At home I help, I work in the garden with Mum, I hang out with friends, with my boyfriend when we can find the time, with my family, on Sundays lunch with Grandma...”

(Špela, 25, young waitress)

“It used to be the time when I did sports, but now it’s the time when I can relax, when I don’t think of business, and when I have children, I’ll spend it with them.”

(Stane, 26, young entrepreneur)

“Most of my friends are in the virtual world, and some of them outside it. Those ones I know from secondary school. We used to play football and go for walks. But I can’t be bothered any more, it’s easier to just play games and talk, but I’ve had a few moments when I thought I could be doing something else. Most of my virtual friends are scattered around Slovenia. Sometimes we arrange to meet at somebody’s place, everyone brings their console and monitor, we get together and play games over the weekend. The other day we gathered at a friend’s in Tržič, got food for a few days and played shooting games from Friday to Tuesday.”

(Aleš, 20, virtualised young adult)

The interviewees believe young people have too much free time and spend it irrationally or even improperly. Regarding themselves they believe they do not spend their spare time in an optimal way, but according to them the majority of young people spend far too much time at the computer. They are particularly critical of Facebook users:

“Most young people actually have too much free time... they smoke, drink, do drugs... or sit in front of computers or on Facebook...”

(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

“I think they (young people) sit there (at the computer) all afternoon, as much time as they can... on the one hand it’s interesting, it’s OK, they have friends... but they no longer know how to communicate face to face. You can get useful information, don’t get me wrong, but I’m not interested...”

(Špela, 25, young waitress)

“Too little actual socialising, too much internet... Even mobile phones are no longer fashionable, everything’s on Facebook... It’s good for the business world, a great opportunity, but it’s not good for society.”

(Stane, 26, young entrepreneur)

15.7 Housing conditions and economic situation

Most young people describe their economic situation as relatively good. Here it needs to be stressed that the young people included in the qualitative research draw a strict line between their own and their parents' material situation; of the latter most of the respondents claim it is stable, but not too good. The majority of respondents live with their parents, but nevertheless emphasise that this by no means implies they are sponging off them, and that "Hotel Mum" has no actual basis in their lives. They describe living with parents as good, and at the same time explain that certain internal borders had to be drawn first, which enable the independence, privacy and freedom of all family members.

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"I can't say I have a hard time... I can go for a beer and have enough for fags... I live and eat with my parents, for luxuries I make my own money... I make money through odd jobs..."

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to *Pekarna*, a youth gathering place)

"Not rosy, but I can afford almost everything. I have to think what I want, and then save up to buy it."

(Helena, 18, excellent grammar school student)

"I'm happy with it... I don't have to count every cent I spend. As an economist I'm very thrifty by default."

(Davor, 22, young politician)

The personal budget of young people is mostly combined, and frequently includes three pillars: permanent, partly permanent and variable income. Permanent income is understood by young people to be scholarships or other income (for instance, pocket money), which is fairly regular and stable. Most of them spend it on covering fixed costs, for example subsidised student meals and halls of residence rent. According to them this amount accounts for 30 to 40 percent of their total personal monthly budget. The greatest part of the personal monthly budget comes from fairly regular sources, mostly work through student and pupil employment services. In addition to these jobs some of them perform various tasks in exchange for undeclared cash payment. According to their evaluation this type of income accounts for 40 to 50 percent of their personal monthly budget, and they spend this money mostly on personal needs:

"In principle I've never had real financial problems, there was somehow always enough for luxuries..."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

"(My material situation) Very good now, I have a scholarship and I work. I have a lot of my own income. It really suits me, I'm financially independent of my parents and I can plan certain things with my boyfriend... a car."

(Mojca, 23, successful psychology student)

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"Fairly okay... I don't feel any shortages, although I can't buy much. I usually have enough left for smokes and coffees, I give Mum some money for expenses ..."

(Matjaž, 29, young unemployed)

In the perception of the young, variable income is the least regular form of income, which – although it is very welcome – cannot be relied upon. Variable income includes various donations and gifts from relatives and friends, and young people mostly spend it on hedonistic purposes.

They describe their housing situation as good, even when the perceived family material situation is on the verge of poor. Young people do not complain about spatial shortages or general quality of life. Each of the respondents has a room he or she describes as his private space. Given that the majority of young people live in their parents' house or flat, it could be claimed that their housing situation is extremely good. Young people themselves claim that, in principle, living with their parents does not bother them, as long as the family respects their privacy. However, living in a community demands a high level of cooperation, but the respondents do not see any particular problems with this:

"As Mum's at home, since she doesn't go to work, she's in charge of assigning chores. Father's home very little, he mostly does field work. Mum delegates chores to us children, she asks who has time to do the dishes, stack logs and such. For us children Mum's the head of the family, since she spends most time with us. Dad's formally the boss, but he's home very little, when he is, he has it his way, but I believe Mum holds everything together. Mum can handle anything. Dad comes home and gets angry at us, but Mum takes our side. And she knows

how to overrule him, she shouts at him to leave us alone. For instance, Dad threatens us with punishment, but nobody's ever been punished. I personally am more upset if Mum says something to me or is angry with me or sad. But when Dad's angry, it doesn't hurt me much."

(Helena, 18, excellent grammar school student)

"Mum cooks, does the washing and ironing... Division of chores depends on the situation. My brother and I, we do... well, technical things, male jobs."

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to Pekarna, a youth gathering place)

"... we do everything together. I'm in charge of keeping my things in order, my sister takes care of her things and helps Mum, my younger sister is on her own, but has the same obligations as the elder sister, my brother helps Dad... My father is on dialysis... well, my brother helps with repairs, father does the driving. Otherwise we lack nothing. The flat is rather small, but we love each other, hah hah ..."

(Afrodita, 21, young disabled person)

However, all the young interviewees expressed a desire to live in their own house or flat. According to them, this is one of the major steps, and this is why one "shouldn't rush into it" (Dani, 24, successfully in unregulated employment). Here it needs to be stressed that, for young people, living apart from their parents and managing their own household is not essential to achieving adulthood. In their eyes adulthood involves financial independence from their parents and having their own children (own family). According to them, intergenerational cooperation in the family can significantly add to a higher quality of their lives as well as the lives of their parents.

"You can do nothing without parents... It's good to have your own family, but it's not enough. My grandpa always helps me... emotional support, social support, financial support."

(Enver, 20, young Roma)

"I'm very happy I have such a family, I'm very proud of my parents and grandparents. I feel very good in my home environment. I like it very much there's so many of us."

(Vali, 23, young representative of the Hungarian minority)

15.8 Sustainable activities

The interviewees perceive sustainable activities as a twofold process – in terms of ecological awareness and intergenerational continuity. Regarding the environment they particularly emphasise environmental awareness and activities often bordering on eco-activism:

“Yes, environmental awareness is extremely important. But we all believe that not much has been done regarding waste and problems with waste. In Slovenia, for example, they still give you plastic bags in shops, which we then throw away at home. Something should be done about pollution; we should use less plastic and more recyclable things. We could have electric cars.”

(Helena, 18, excellent grammar school student)

“We don’t pay enough attention to the environment in Slovenia, above all in relation to dumping grounds in the wild.”

(Dominik, 16, young musician)

“It is important, after all – if we don’t watch what we do, we’ll bear the consequences... I can say I’m environmentally aware.”

Could you say you’re actively involved? (A. N.)

“Yes. I separate waste, I save water... that’s it.”

(Jona, 25, regular visitor to Pekarna, a youth gathering place)

“Of course I’m aware, but I’m not particularly active. Generally speaking, hyperindustrialisation is to blame for destroying the Earth... People simply consume much more than they actually need. It’s mostly for unnecessary prestige, and nature suffers.”

(Matjaž, 29, young unemployed)

“I got into biodynamics... you can actually do this stuff at home, on a small scale, and you can live quite sustainably. Especially if I had the money for solar cells and a heat pump.”

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

"I take part in the Let's Clean Skorba project..."

(Špela, 25, young waitress)

The question of generational continuity is extremely important, particularly for those from the countryside or representatives of minorities. It seems that this kind of continuity is part of their identity and an important channel of expression ensuring national awareness:

"Intergenerational continuity is very important, particularly when related to preserving the tradition of the minority."

"I'm very, very proud of what my father has achieved, although we kids have too much security now. It's harder for us to grow up..."

(Vali, 23, young representative of the Hungarian minority)

"To be a Slovenian abroad means maintaining, respecting and nurturing culture and tradition... this is important for everybody, not just the young."

(Barbara, 29, representative of the Slovenian minority in Italy)

"Sure... some day I'll have to take over from my father what he took over from Grandpa."

What is it? (A. N.)

"Care for the entire family."

(Enver, 20, young Roma)

Would you like to continue the work of your father? (A. N.)

"Of course, that's the most important thing... you can't do otherwise, or the farm will go to ruin."

(Uroš, 22, young farmer)

"Both are important – young people should respect the work of their elders, but this shouldn't be forced upon them."

(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

Some interviewees, primarily those from urban environments, have slightly different views:

"It's out of the question, because I have a chance to rule it out. I've no desire to be like my dad or my mum, I'm not interested."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

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In general, the interviewees conclude that environmental awareness and awareness of the importance of intergenerational continuity are important notions for young people, but their level is too low. In their opinion the key to both problems is establishing respect both for the environment, as this would solve most of the ecology-related problems, and in interpersonal relations, which would solve the majority of personal and consequently social problems. Great responsibility rests with individuals, but the state should also assume a more active role, primarily through active education of children and later young people.

15.9 Values and expectations about personal and social future

The qualitative data show that young people do not perceive their environment as anomic. They believe that certain values are present in their environment, which are not universal and firm, but nevertheless exist and are relatively clear. The interviewees were not of one mind regarding these values:

"It depends on the young... how well read they are, values are important to my friends, otherwise I wouldn't hang out with them."

(Afrodita, 21, young disabled person)

"Values are clear. You have to be honest, compassionate."

(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

"I come from a rural environment, values are more conservative there... Values are important, but whether they're true or false depends on the individual."

(Davor, 22, young politician)

"Where I live we pay attention to the social environment. For example, my parents keep saying 'What will others say?'"

(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

"There are values, I can see them: family... but material things less and less."

(Helena, 18, excellent grammar school student)

Respondents see young people in a very positive light regarding values:

"For me, a value is an achievement... Many people have such values; everybody's striving for something... But there are also a few losers."

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(Jona, 25, regular visitor to Pekarna, a youth gathering place)

"For young people values are related to helping others, and also money, though this is no longer the most important value."

(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

"Young people have values... solidarity, for example."

(Maja, 30, unemployed graduate)

"My own happiness and the happiness of my loved ones."

(Mojca, 23, successful psychology student)

"Young people are individualistic no matter what, even at the cost of being socially isolated."

(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

Of the personal values quoted, young respondents most frequently emphasise good relations with family, partners and friends, and success in studies and work, but they have a slightly negative attitude towards accumulation of material goods and what they describe as "careerism":

"I don't know which is worse... The American image of a specialist, who's happy and glamorous, but doesn't know anything and is an ideal slave of the system."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

The interviewees claim that, in addition to clear and firm values, one of the fundamental conditions for society's survival is trust. They have greatest trust in their parents, relatives and friends, to a certain extent they trust their teachers, but their trust in politicians is very low.

Who do you trust? (A. N.)

"My mum, absolutely, and my boyfriend, and that's almost it... My dad, so that he knows what's going on... And my brother and sister, and then everybody else..."

(Špela, 25, young waitress)

"Friends and my boyfriend, parents less and less..."

Why less and less? (A. N.)

"Ahm... probably because I'm growing up."

(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

"Jernej (boyfriend), Grandma, Mum... teachers and politicians the least."

(Helena, 18, excellent grammar school student)

"Grandpa, parents, wife."

(Enver, 20, young Roma)

"Friends... and perhaps my mum..."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

The interviewees see the future of society as slightly dark and unfriendly towards young people:

"This (the future) is alarming: practically speaking, there will be problems with pensions and wages. The young population, which is strong, won't be able to provide the pensions for the elderly."

(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

"You can see what it's like... Who will have a kid at 25 if they're studying until they're 35?

My mum had my brother at 19, and me at 25. To me this seems so far away, I see it in the same way as a loan or a car. I don't want to be committed to anybody... but I'd like something more from my life than a sour face at 65 and thank you very much for the pension. It's sad you can't have kids unless you kill yourself working, and I don't want them...

Ever new brilliant and outstanding laws, they're to blame... pension reform, not enough support for art and things that people enjoy, politicians don't do shit for the factories, so – forget it, let'em have their fun...."

(Nejc, 26, reluctant employee)

The situation is different regarding their personal future. They see it as extremely bright. In their eyes, one of the key values in life is adulthood, defined as a combination of achieving financial and emotional independence, and forming their own family. Young people are extremely optimistic about their future:

"I keep saying I'll be retired by 35... Hah hah hah, hope not... I'd like to have a nice flat, a family, 2 children... I'd really like to live in Barcelona... a beautiful city, the sea and many people with great potential. In terms of personality I'll stay the same, perhaps I'll be a bit more serious. I'll have my own company and do what I like, and I'll co-own at least 10 companies from which I'll charge commission."

(Stane, 26, young entrepreneur)

"I'd like to work abroad, anything, just to go abroad. I'd like to be in a managerial position. I'd also like to have my own centre for helping people. It would be nice to have children, too. But at this moment my career is more important to me than children. In certain ways I'm happy, and in others I'm not. For instance, I'd like to live in my own house, but I don't have this possibility. I do have a whole floor in my parents' house, and that's that. To sum up, I must admit I haven't achieved certain things I should have by my age by society's standards. For example, I don't have a family, which I should have by 29, by social norms. These norms bother me a little. But personally I'm quite content and happy."

(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

"(In 10 years' time) I'm more relaxed, no longer worried about the money... I can't clearly see my professional future... if I could have it my way I'd own a café, I'd serve tables and be the boss... that wouldn't be a problem at all. When Ines is 12 years old, she has a little brother and a sister, we have our own house, which is no bigger than 85 square metres, doesn't have a white fence and a dog, but a hunting room is a must... for Oto is a fanatical hunter."

(Andreja, 25, unemployed young mother)

"In terms of personality I'll be what I am, and professionally I want to own a manicure salon, I'm dreaming about having two children, a boy and a girl, and that's all."

(Afrodita, 21, young disabled person)

"Married, children... at least two boys, a little house in Dolina near Lendava, I work for the family company."

(Vali, 23, young representative of the Hungarian minority)

"(about the future) Don't know professionally, but sometime I must find a job... can't be on the dole forever, but family stays as it is..."

(Enver, 20, young Roma)

"Married, my boyfriend wants to have three children, I want to have one or two, but if this turns out well, we'll see. We live in a larger flat or in a smaller house in the suburbs with easy access to the centre of town, with a lot of greenery, by a stream sports facilities in the vicinity, enough room for a dog. And I work as a psychotherapist."

(Mojca, 23, successful psychology student)

"Matjaž has developed into a stable person, he's financially all right doing something he's at least partially interested in and happy with. I play in a band, and I make extra money working... Work is just a safety net. Yes, the future is bright!"

(Matjaž, 29, young unemployed)

16 Zeitgeist of young people

The “Zeitgeist” or “spirit of the time” of young people, which was included in the qualitative research, can be discussed solely from the subjective point of view. Indeed this is the general culture, psychosocial and intellectual environment of a group of young people, which is extremely sensitive. It seems that as soon as it is subjected to quantification and operationalisation it vanishes, or rather moves back into the sphere of premonition – of what is present, yet unattainable – and almost into the sphere of philosophy. The point of entering and interpreting, or rather representing this spirit must therefore include a subjective ingredient. As the notion of the subjective – in classical, and therefore also contemporary positivist science – has almost blasphemous associations, let us first make it clear what subjectivity implies in this case.

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I myself am still struggling with my own Cartesian anxiety characterised at its core by the basic objective-subjective duality. Historical development of the Western thought has caused the objective to prevail at the core of positivist sciences and to become the measure for ensuring “scientificity”, while the subjective has moved to the margins. Numerous authors in the peripheral (cf. Bernstein, 1983) as well as in central sciences (cf. Annet, 2002) have tried to preserve the concept of the subjective and establish it as important, for they proceed from the premise that the subjective resides at the very core of the human being, regardless of whether we try to research human perceptions or psychological structure (cf. Annet, 2002), or a human as a member of a society/culture (Spiro, 1996). The dilemma is therefore epistemological, and includes ideological elements as well.

Because of this dilemma I myself have been faced with a fundamental schism: on the one hand my research is based on the clearly subjective views of my interviewees, regardless of whether they talk about their

perception of the external or internal world, and on the other my primary task is to place the subjective views within positivist science and therefore accord them a certain degree of objectivity. At this point, the dilemma is not too difficult to resolve. There exist methodological procedures recognised by the science as scientific, and this implies that in order to ensure scientificity, one need primarily ensure consistence in the methodology, as this contributes to achieving a certain degree of objectivity. It seems that the dilemma is easier to resolve in quantitative methods. However, my own research shows that when dealing with qualitative data, greater attention should be paid to a tricky balancing in order for objectivisation not to overrule the subjective ingredient in both interviewees and the researcher, and therefore ruin the main potential of the qualitative method. I therefore suggest that in this case the objective-subjective duality not be interpreted as a concept of two binary opposites, but rather as a continuum with the absolutely objective and the absolutely subjective at both extreme ends, while the interpretation point remains fluid between the two extremes. This form, i.e. a form that is methodologically consistent and correct, and at the same time at its core receptive of the subjective, could therefore be called »scientifically subjective«. A scientific subjective stance could thus be understood as mediation between the directly emotional-subjective on the one hand, and the positivistic-objective on the other, and as a scientist I can thus at this point consciously allow myself scientific subjectivity, for – during the research – I perceived the interviewees individually, and treated them in a methodologically correct way.

Many authors discuss the present time as relatively hard for modern young people (cf. Leccardi, 2005). According to Leccardi (*ibid.*, p. 124), young people have a dual connection with time not only in terms of their own temporariness, which is final, but also in terms of wider societal expectations urging them to delineate their own biographical time and establish their own attitude towards society. Cavalli (1988) stresses that this means constructing significant connections between an individual and collective past, present and future, which gives meaning to life (Leccardi, 2005).

The young people included in our qualitative research, the Y generation, experience the situation they found themselves in as rather unfavourable and hard, particularly in the longitudinal intergenerational perspective, i.e. if they compare themselves to the X generation, or even more significantly, to the baby-boomers. They perceive the future of the preceding

generations as having been relatively well provided for. In their eyes it was easier for the previous generations to grow up, as growing up was a collective social project: the things which, in their perception, are important in order to reach adulthood – job (economic provision), flat (basis for family formation) and pension – were provided by the social system. In such circumstances young people could invest their surplus energy in socio-political activities, development of revolutionary concepts and critical actions. In the eyes of the present young generation, previous generations were included in a partner relationship, and in this light the refrain “...count on us!” is a description of good intergenerational cooperation, and not just a slogan. Nowadays young people perceive society as an unreliable and sometimes even malicious partner, the partner “on the other side” that demands a formal contract for cooperation, for trust and good relations are no longer sufficient. “Who do the young belong to?” and “Who’s responsible for the young?” seem to be two fundamental questions to which young people no longer seek answers for they have judged it is time for action. Growing up has therefore become an individual project and every individual must assume responsibility for it, and it seems that modern young people take this deadly seriously. They see planning as the first step in remedying the current situation. According to Berger and Luckmann (Berger and Luckmann, 1988, in: Leccardi, 2005: 124):

“... the formation of identity in the modern sense is ensured through faith or attachment to the logics of a plan... Thanks to planning the future is therefore connected to the present as well as to the past...”

Young people therefore approach solving the problem on the basis of a plan, which can also be seen in their projections about the future, interpretations of the present and the past, as well as in the individual structure of their biographical plan, or in more concrete terms, of their everyday activities:

“My timetable is my responsibility.”

(Helena, excellent grammar school student)

“...I’d find a regular job, which means I wanna play it safe... In fact that’s me, I totally wanna play it safe. You finish the studies, job, car, flat, and you’re on your own.”

(Jona, representative of the subculture from Pekarna)

What many researchers understand as the withdrawal of young people into privacy, or even into passivity and apathy, is in fact the relocation of energy and investment, the main purpose of which is reaching adulthood. Young people have taken responsibility into their own hands. However, as growing up is no easy matter in any culture on our planet, young people do not have much energy left for socio-political or external participation. Parents – once again – become important partners in this process, and co-existence of generations does not seem to lead to spoiling or an overly permissive upbringing, but is a form of good intergenerational cooperation. Young people are extremely attached to their parents and feel obliged to help them in order to “repay their debt”, but mostly to strengthen and deepen their relations.

Apathy does not seem to be an issue among the young, at least not the apathy with elements of serious lack of interest. There seems to be a certain degree of alienation, if we talk about classical political or social participation, which implies alienation of the young from these structures. On the other hand young people seem to be highly motivated in matters related to family, the environment, the virtual world and other youth interest areas, which leads to active cooperation. This motivation is also one of the main drivers for developing competences that young people acquire through informal education forms and in their spare time. These competences include excellent command of foreign languages, general and specialised computer skills and manual skills, which implies that young people possess considerable cultural capital, mostly accumulated voluntarily and relatively easily. Young people are aware of their competences and would like to be given an opportunity to successfully take advantage of them, for instance in education or when they apply for a job. A high level of ambition and motivation can also be discerned regarding their own future. Young people are oriented towards the future, which they perceive with extreme optimism, but at the same time they are aware that success depends largely on their own efforts.

So – what are their problems? Problems, too, are above all related to growing up. They point primarily to pressures related to the transition into adulthood. That this transition period is becoming longer is not characteristic only of Slovenian young people; the same trends are noted by other authors (cf. Leccardi, 2005; Heinz, 2009 etc.). The main characteristic of these transitions is a discontinuity, or rather a desynchronisation with traditional transitions, which among Slovenian young people is revealed as the formation and combination of career, job and own

family. At the same time this transition is made more difficult or postponed due to structural factors. The transition to a large extent prevents them from prolonging their education, as this prolongation means they fail to achieve adequate socially acceptable competence, which is a sign of adulthood. From this point of view the concept of “lifelong learning” presents an even greater problem for the young, as it implies a process that lasts for life and is terminated as late as the physical end of an individual’s life. Young people understand that with the preceding generations transition to adulthood was characterised by completed education; “a diploma used to mean you were grown up” (Maja, unemployed graduate), whereas the concept of prolonged or life-long learning closes up this transition. The question therefore remains, “When do I know *enough*?” or “When am I competent *enough* for the system?” in order to be recognised as an adult. The main problem is not the prolongation of the transition, but rather its destandardisation or detraditionalisation. Young people feel confused and understand this situation as being at the mercy of a kind of vacuum, and parents, their most trustworthy partners, cannot do much to help.

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Furthermore, an important role in this situation is played by the structural conditions related to the deteriorating prospects of finding stable and, above all secure, employment. Young people are aware of their own cultural capital, but they are also aware that in the labour market it is quite unnecessary, irrelevant or even unwanted, and that the modern market demands of an individual elaborate social capital in terms of “good connections” enabling access to jobs. Young people know that accumulation of this kind of capital demands an adequate social background or enough build-up time, but as they mostly lack one or the other, they feel extremely helpless and frustrated in this respect. A typical response to this situation is reinvestment of energy in the family of origin, which means they leave home later. Young people organise their life so that they establish their privacy in the family and form a kind of symbiosis with their parents without having a feeling they are sponging off them. This, however, does not mean they do not want to or do not intend to move out. In their opinion moving away from the parents is an important step, but as it can possibly have a negative effect, they do not want to rush it. It seems that the trend of postponing leaving home has a cultural dimension. For instance, some young people claim their parents are willing to help them, but not in renting a place of their own, only in buying one. Furthermore, a large majority of young people were socialised in families where parents owned a flat or a house, and it is

therefore logical to assume that in the eyes of the young this is a normal situation, “how things are done here”. They themselves believe they must first solve their housing problem before they start a family, which reveals the hierarchy of their gaining independence:

1. economic independence, which demands a regular and secure job, in the first place permanent employment, and in the second, decent pay;

620 *“The main motive young people have for finding a job is security... when you’re unemployed, you’re depressed, and also isolated, since you spend most of the time alone at home. If you have a job, society considers you ‘normal’.”*

(Matjaž, 29, young unemployed)

2. own flat or house;

“I’d like to live in my own house, somewhere out of town... In certain ways I’m happy, and in others I’m not. For instance, I’d like to live in my own house, but I don’t have this possibility. I do have a whole floor in my parents’ house, and that’s that.”

(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

3. starting own family and have children;

“... my boyfriend wants to have three children, I want to have one or two, but if this turns out well, we’ll see.”

(Mojca, 23, successful psychology student)

“It would be nice to have children. But at this moment my career is more important to me than children. To sum up, I must admit I haven’t achieved certain things I should have by my age by society’s standards. For example, I don’t have a family, which I should have by 29, by social norms. These norms bother me a little. But personally I’m quite content and happy.”

(Mateja, 29, employed in the Parliament)

For the young, this hierarchy implies a kind of evolution, which is universal, unilinear, phasal and progressive. In the perception of the young

these phases allow for variation; for instance, many young people are economically fairly independent, yet they still live with their parents for they have not found suitable lodgings yet, but in general this path is rather firmly set and unchangeable. It also seems to be predictable, which has an extremely soothing effect on the young, for they believe they are on the path towards adulthood, which in our society is considered normal. Here it needs to be stressed that many authors (cf. Galland, 1991; Cavalli and Galland, 1995, in: Leccardi 2005) have concluded that important steps on the traditional path to adulthood occur in a slightly different succession: completed studies – leaving home – entering the stable labour market – formation of own family. The modern, non-traditional variant of reaching adulthood therefore implies an adaptation of the traditional transition. This adaptation, however, has negative as well as positive consequences. Prolonged living with the parents on the one hand implies great flexibility regarding employment, but on the other hand also relative non-flexibility, as they are not totally willing to assume the responsibility and risk being poor, which could happen if they lived alone. The factors driving non-traditional transitions are doubtlessly manifold and interrelated, which prevents a simple and generalised answer or solution.

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As the above-described transitions to adulthood are limited, prolonged and sometimes even blocked, but in any case detraditionalised, young people have no other choice but to start developing their own non-traditional biography. According to Heinz (cf. Heinz, 2009; p. 8), a biography is not only a personal history, but a temporal and spatial reflection upon “past events, transitions and plans for the future” (ibid.). The development of a biography implies a personal agent, and could be understood as a current sum of desires, evaluations of past successes and failures, interpersonal recognitions and rejections, concepts of autonomy and responsibility, social expectations and other elements young people are faced with in society. Many authors maintain that the biographical models of young people, which move away from traditional linear models (cf. Wyn and White, 1997; Leccardi, 2005, etc.), are based on strong individualisation and emphasis upon risk features, and are as such termed *choice biographies* (Beck, 1992) or *risk biographies* (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997). Heinz even maintains that young people thus perform a certain kind of self-socialisation (cf. Heinz, 2002, 2009). Fluidity and adaptability are two main positive characteristics of these biographies as compared to traditional linear ones, which are relatively rigid. Modern young people in Slovenia are individualised, adaptable and fluid.

It seems they successfully incorporated these characteristics into their cultural capital. Individually speaking, we can perceive a certain degree of deviance, but no obvious risk biographies can be discerned. This could partially be explained by prolonged living in the family of origin, which in this respect functions as a safety net allowing enough choices with the existing traditional structures, and yet preventing the choices from being risky. It also seems that young people handle their cultural capital well, particularly in the temporary and therefore unstable labour market, in informal forms of education and in spare time, i.e. in areas where priority is given to fluidity, adaptability and individualism. It can therefore be concluded that young people are obviously extremely well adapted to modern social and economic conditions, particularly those that affect them directly.

I can therefore conclude that in Slovenia we have good young people, admittedly different from the previous generations, but by no means “the worst” and “the most terrible” ever, as the popular belief frequently holds, but in fact charged with potential, motivation and competence. Slovenian society must first recognise this potential and then establish the conditions necessary for its full fruition. To sum up – just like the preceding generations, present-day young people, despite expressed and implied deviations, convey to Slovenian society the fundamental message of the popular refrain:

“... count on us!”

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17 Key conclusions of the Youth 2010 study

The number of young people in Slovenia is rapidly decreasing. In the last decade this number was reduced by 11 percent, and in the coming decade we can expect a further 20-percent reduction. According to estimates, the number of elderly (65+) per one young person is expected to triple by 2050. These demographic changes imply that in terms of long-term stability and development of Slovenian society the importance of full social inclusion and activation of the potential of every young person is now greater than ever before.

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It is well known that in late modern societies the transition of young people into adulthood is highly individualised and unpredictable. Growing up, which in the past was mostly standardised and predictable, has become an individual project and every individual must assume responsibility for it. In our data this is revealed on the level of values, where the only major shift is one towards greater individuality and competitiveness. Our quantitative and qualitative data also show that present-day young people in Slovenia are well aware of their responsibility for their “choice biographies” and consequently know how to adapt.

However, this does not imply that in order to establish the conditions for a successful transition of the young to adulthood the role of the state or wider society is unimportant. Certain trends reveal interesting peculiarities in Slovenia, many of which are not conducive to the successful transition of young people to the labour market, independent life and formation of their own families.

The share of young people included in the education system has been growing much faster in Slovenia compared to the EU-27 average. Regarding secondary school we can conclude that young people have good feelings about it, and the share of dropouts is the lowest in the EU-27 coun-

tries. The higher-education system seems equally friendly towards the young. This, among other things, can be concluded on the basis of data showing that in Slovenia, in 2008 the share of higher-education students aged between 20 and 24 was by far the highest in EU-27. This increase in the number of students coincides with a decrease in the proportion of GDP allocated to tertiary education, which raises doubts about the substantive quality of this type of education. Whereas young people like the inclusiveness and friendliness of the education system, they express considerable dissatisfaction with the poor connection between the education system and the needs of the labour market.

626 Furthermore, our data also show that on average young people feel very good in their families of origin. Certain studies reveal that Slovenian adolescents have the best relations with their parents in EU-27.

However, the situation in the labour market as compared to other European countries is highly unpredictable. Among the EU-27 countries Slovenia has the largest share of temporarily employed young persons (aged 15–24). The share of regularly employed young people has dropped significantly in the last decade. In 2000, approximately 60 percent of young people aged 29 had a steady job, but in 2010 this percentage dropped to 48. The share of those young people who see themselves as unemployed has also increased during the same period. What is particularly disturbing is the rapid growth in the share of unemployed graduates. If in 2000 a tertiary level of education reduced the possibility of unemployment more than twofold, this advantage had almost totally disappeared by 2010.

The situation of the young in Slovenia is therefore defined primarily by the combination of considerable family support and prolonged inclusion in the (relatively socially-oriented and friendly) education system on the one hand, and the extremely uncertain labour market conditions on the other.

In such circumstances it is therefore not surprising that young people in Slovenia are among the last to leave home in EU-27. According to our data, this is further stimulated by the relatively favourable conditions of living with the parents (who mostly own houses), and unwillingness of the young (and their parents) to assume the risk of poverty in the early stages of managing their own household.

Here we need to stress the importance of young people gaining independence for the birth-rate in Slovenia. By 29 years of age, 50 percent of the young people managing their own households have at least one child, while this percentage of young people living with their parents is as low as 15 percent.

Given these statistics we can therefore conclude that the social frameworks (including the prevailing cultural patterns) in Slovenia make it harder for the young to reach the key thresholds of adulthood, such as steady employment, leaving home and starting their own family. The qualitative part of the research also revealed that the young experience the situation they found themselves in as rather unfavourable and hard, particularly in comparison with the conditions in which previous generations were growing up.

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It should therefore come as no surprise that young people's opinion of the political elites has considerably deteriorated in the last decade, and was distinctly negative in 2010. Young people feel they have very little political influence, and in comparison with the EU-27 average tend to be much less interested or involved in politics. On the other hand we observed in them a strengthened potential for protests and participation in individualised forms of political participation, particularly those related to information technology. In a wider sense it would therefore be hard to speak of a general disinterest of young people in political matters. But in any case, the trust level in the existing political structures seems to be extremely low.

Another factor that disproves political apathy in young people is the conclusion that young Slovenians are becoming increasingly involved in volunteer work, and are in this respect considerably more active than young people in Germany, for instance. In the last fifteen years students have also become more willing to participate in voluntary drives aimed at improving the situation of the young. Our qualitative data furthermore reveal a high level of youth involvement in family, the environment, the virtual world and other areas of interest for the young.

In the last decade there has been a steep increase in computer usage in free time. As much as 82 percent of young people in Slovenia (almost) use the internet daily, which is well above the EU-15 and EU-27 average. Compared to the year 2000, in 2010 young people dedicated considerably more time to sports and cultural-artistic expression. Despite the time lag,

insecurity and problems related to achieving adulthood, young people in Slovenia remain just as (highly) optimistic regarding their personal future as they were fifteen years ago. There also seems to be no deepening pessimism among the young regarding the future of our society. However, there is an increasing feeling of anxiety related to lack of money, housing problems and employment insecurity. And these are the key problems related to the situation of young people in Slovenia, which is also confirmed by other studies.

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